COAST SALISH SENSES OF PLACE:
Dwelling, Meaning, Power, Property and Territory in the Coast Salish World

by

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Abstract

This study addresses the question of the nature of indigenous people's connection to the land, and the implications of this for articulating these connections in legal arenas where questions of Aboriginal title and land claims are at issue. The idea of 'place' is developed, based in a phenomenology of dwelling which takes profound attachments to home places as shaping and being shaped by ontological orientation and social organization. In this theory of the 'senses of place', the author emphasizes the relationships between meaning and power experienced and embodied in place, and the social systems of property and territory that forms indigenous land tenure systems. To explore this theoretical notion of senses of place, the study develops a detailed ethnography of a Coast Salish Aboriginal community on southeast Vancouver Island, British Columbia, Canada. Through this ethnography of dwelling, the ways in which places become richly imbued with meanings and how they shape social organization and generate social action are examined. Narratives with Coast Salish community members, set in a broad context of discussing land claims, provide context for understanding senses of place imbued with ancestors, myth, spirit, power, language, history, property, territory and boundaries. The author concludes in arguing that by attending to a theorized understanding of highly local senses of place, nuanced conceptions of indigenous relationships to land which appreciate indigenous relations to land in their own terms can be articulated.

Résumé

La présente étude traite de la question des liens qui unissent les peuples autochtones à la terre. Elle explique les implications juridiques de ces liens sur les questions relatives aux titres et aux territoires autochtones. Elle se penche également sur le concept de « lieu ». Ce concept est abordé suivant une approche phénoménologique d'habiter, laquelle sous-entend des attaches profondes à l'égard du foyer, élément fondamental façonné par l'orientation ontologique et l'organisation sociale de la collectivité. L'auteur souligne la signification du terme « lieu » d'un point de vue théorique en mettant l'accent sur les rapports qui existent entre cette signification et les pouvoirs qui habitent ce lieu et qui agissent sur les personnes qui fréquentent ce même lieu. L'étude s'attarde également aux systèmes sociaux liés à la propriété et qui gouvernent la titularisation des territoires. Pour approfondir la notion théorique de « lieu », l'auteur réalise une ethnographie d'une collectivité autochtone faisant partie des Salish de la Côte de l'océan Pacifique, située plus précisément dans la partie sud-est de l'île de Vancouver, en Colombie-Britannique (Canada). À partir de cette ethnographie d'habiter, on examine la façon dont les lieux s'imprègnent de sens riches et profonds et comment ils façonnent l'organisation sociale tout en produisant de l'action sociale. Les récits des Salish, étudiés dans le contexte plus large des revendications territoriales, fournissent certains éléments permettant de mieux comprendre le sens du terme « lieu » lorsque l'on dit qu'un lieu donné est imprégné de mythes, d'esprits, de pouvoirs, d'une influence linguistique, de récits historiques, de la connaissance ancestrale et de concepts tels que la propriété, le territoire et les frontières. Dans sa conclusion, l'auteur affirme qu'en se donnant un compréhension théorisée de la signification du terme « lieu » qui accorde une importance particulière à ses caractéristiques locales, il est possible de se faire une idée plus nuancée des liens qui unissent les peuples autochtones à la terre. Cette affirmation peut se vérifier, pour autant que l'on accepte de prendre en compte la façon unique dont les indigènes expriment les liens qui les rattachent à la terre.

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Chapter 1
Introduction to the Problem of Place in the Coast Salish World

Introduction to Coast Salish Senses of Place

Few issues in Canada with such social significance have had so widespread a gap in understanding as the contemporary land claims of First Nations people. With respect to relationships to the land being claimed, there are major differences in cultural discourses emanating from the Canadian state, mainstream Euro-Canadians and First Nations people. Central to these differences are culturally situated perspectives on, and experiences with, the very places that are being claimed. This study addresses the question of the nature of indigenous peoples' connection to the land, and the implications of this for articulating their relationships in legal arenas where questions of Aboriginal title and land claims are at issue.

Coast Salish people have profound attachments to their home places which are foundational to their social organization and ontological orientation. These places, which range in scale from specific locales as small as a boulder or bathing pool, and as large as a mountainside or a territory, are richly imbued with meaning, and are sites of personal and community identity. They are encountered and experienced by the people who dwell in them, and are the centres for the experience of relationships with others and with the land itself. In Coast Salish peoples' experiences of dwelling, place is the centre of relationships with mythic stories, spirit power, ancestors, and other beings. These senses of place run through the expressions of property and territory that underlie traditional Coast Salish economies and inter-community relations. Engaging an anthropology that

pays careful attention to the way Coast Salish people attend to the experience and meanings of place, this study lays out the ethnographic basis of Coast Salish dwelling in the land. It examines the interplay of these profound senses of place with the attendant relationships of power, community, territory and identity in which place is engaged.

Basso's (1996:54) work with the Western Apache has caused many to reflect on how the discipline of anthropology largely overlooked the ways in which people come to know, experience, embrace and become constituted by place. Feld and Basso (1996b:7-8) have set out a research agenda for the study of place, suggesting systematically investigating how and why places become meaningful, and describing and theorizing the ways in which people experience places, are shaped by them, and invest them with significance. I take this research agenda as central to this study, as it provides a way to understand the many facets of the cultural relationships to land that engage Coast Salish people. Like many Americanist anthropologists (as reviewed by Valentine and Darnell 1999b:6), I subscribe to the position that culture is a system of symbols and that underlying human cultures is the interplay of and inseparability of language, thought, and reality. I argue, as King has done, that the land is an integral part of this system of symbols, that "terrain and culture are not separate in practice, and they should not be separated in analysis" (2002:65). Such perspectives are consistent with the phenomenological anthropology discussed by Ingold (2000c) and Jackson (1989; 1998), where a deep interplay between person and place, society and nature, language and culture is highlighted. These perspectives are essential for grappling with Coast Salish worldviews on their own terms, and lead to a way of knowing how Coast Salish people experience and understand the

land.

Thus, this study sets out the ways in which Coast Salish senses of place are founded in their ways of knowing, experiencing and relating to the world around them. These ways of knowing are expressed, transmitted and learned through discourses, narratives and other linguistic practices about land (Ingold 2002:249; Abram 1996). In relating to the land, Coast Salish people tell stories of their First Ancestors, the Transformer and other mythical beings who connect people to communities of kin and to the ancestral places where they live. They practice spirit dancing and seek power from non-human persons who dwell with them in the land. Though Salishan languages are endangered, people still widely carry Indian names, evoke Aboriginal place names, and tell the many important life stories and legends associated with these names, reflecting and reinforcing personal and cultural identities. Property relations are maintained with respect to particular descent group held resource sites, and residence group held resource areas. These relationships with place inform the different degrees of identity with and ownership of territories that continue to generate important community structures and social meanings (Thornton 1997a), even when formulated within, and sometimes seemingly subsumed by, the property and economic systems of the state. It is these senses of place that I explore in the chapters that follow.

Through narratives provided by Coast Salish people and my own accounts of participant observation experiences, I explore configurations of senses of place which are drawn upon by community members to discuss their connections to the land. These

ethnographic tools present a picture of the world as lived-in and experienced by Coast Salish people. They reflect how place orders beliefs, social lives and fundamental relations of power among Coast Salish people. In my on-going conversations with Coast Salish people, relationships to the land (and expressions of it) often flow back and forth between embodied, mythological, storied, named, influential senses of place, and the gritty reality of poverty and social inequality that state-driven land alienation has imposed on them. These Coast Salish expressions of connections to place have been articulated at a point in history when community members are concerned about social inequality, alienation from ancestral lands, continued engagement in ancient embodied religious and spiritual practices and the ongoing negotiation of social and political relationships. These senses of place, as I have come to know them, anchor Coast Salish people in the world, which in spite of vast social inequalities and powerful contemporary forces of cultural homogenization, continues to be experienced and thought of in uniquely Coast Salish ways. The discourse revealed in the narratives and the ongoing cultural practice show Coast Salish peoples' resistance to both the intellectual and political separation of culture from nature, which underwrites much of the mainstream western ways of framing relationships to land.

Tension exists between powerful mainstream western views of the land and those held by Aboriginal people (and others) who view the land through their experiences of dwelling in it. This particularly becomes difficult from western perspectives when faced with challenges to claims of exclusive property rights and jurisdiction over the lands where Aboriginal people are rooted. In his study of Aboriginal property, Bryan rightly points

out that western cultures today do not generally view "our land use in terms of climate, dreams, natural manifestations, or other key features of Aboriginal ontology to which we do not have access" (2000:27). Mainstream western cultures are generally not preoccupied with how we inhabit or dwell in the land, much less the complex nuances of people deeply rooted in other cultural traditions.

Indeed in day-to-day engagements with land (and particularly in powerful world-shaping engagements mediated by large-scale capital), mainstream western ontologies precipitate views of land as"a surface that can be parcelled up and appropriated in bounded blocs, with renewable resources of animals and timber above, and non-renewable reserves of minerals and hydrocarbons below" (Ingold 2002:249). Such practices are relfected in and propelled by a long line of influential western philosophical thought has seen 'space' as nature without culture, as land unobserved and unexperienced by people (Casey 1996; 1997). The western separation of space from place is an important part of the colonial project, objectifying worlds-not-lived-in. From the empty 'wilderness' imagined in western thought, has come part of the rationale for the colonization of 'empty lands' and the indigenous people who live within them.

Given the structural inequalities in social power between the state and often marginalised Aboriginal people, the vision of place espoused by the dominant society has in many cases become hegemonic. It is the power to be able to transform the vast potential of diverse cultural experiences into narrower practices of production and consumption. It is intersubjective power, through the tactical (de Certeau 1984) and strategic (Bourdieu

1977) acts of the state, that bring it into being. This view, embodied in institutional forms of the state, corporate and private capital, becomes a bureaucratic antithesis of being-in-the-world, creating a world mediated by maps, texts, laws, administrative systems, capital and commodities. Such tools at their worst impose a violence on Aboriginal peoples who experience them (Blomley 2003), facilitating through the dominant discourse of European colonialism, the attempted re-configuration of Aboriginal relationships to the land. In the Coast Salish experience, these experiences of colonialism were clearly felt through 19th century European practices such as reserve creation (Harris 2002), reordering of traditional Coast Salish house design with government-built housing (Perry 2003), and the Canadian state's long-term reconfiguration of the 'wilderness' in Coast Salish territory as a commodity for capitalist exploitation. The effects of this thinking continue today, as Coast Salish people and others have experienced them in the continued tactics of the state in controlling the lands and resources also claimed by Aboriginal people (Escobar 1996; Willems-Braun 1997a).

Coast Salish people, like many other indigenous communities, resist, defy and directly engage these competing cultural visions of the land. Coast Salish people are no more able to turn their backs on the colonial processes that have attempted to alienate the land and resources than they are able to cease being-in-the-world as a Coast Salish person. Just as story and myth telling, vision questing, spirit dancing and singing, hunting and fishing, plant gathering, spirit dancing and singing are all ways of engaging in the reciprocal relationships of respect with non-human beings, who dwell alongside humans in the land, claiming the land has become a central feature of contemporary Coast Salish

cultural practice. A spiritual bather is at once claiming the land while she engages a spiritual relationship with the beings and ancestors within it. Responsibility to the land, to the ancestors, to other Coast Salish people, and to one's own cultural identity are wrapped in these kinds of engagements with the land in the Coast Salish world. From this view, land claims are as much about engaging and being-in-the-world as hunting, fishing and myth telling. The lawyer or negotiator who evokes the practice of spirit bathing in land claim talks is drawing on the power of the very act to establish and legitimize the claim.

By drawing on narratives and observations about the land, I argue that a Coast Salish view of the land may be understood and interpreted within the existing Canadian legal framework of Aboriginal title. As Scott and Mulrennan have argued, if the indigenous tenure systems which underwrite legal formations such as Aboriginal title are to be taken seriously, "indigenous cosmologies and epistemologies... [can not be considered] merely epiphenonomenal to more narrowly political and legalistic dimensions of spatially situated rights" (1999:150). I argue that senses of place such as those described in this study are the foundations of Aboriginal customary laws and practices which give rise to the existence of Aboriginal title.

Scott has addressed the issue of the political consequences of such an anthropological study as this one, arguing that descriptive goals of the discipline may focus the discourse in directions with certain political outcomes:

> Anthropology, as scientific authority for the relativistic interpretation of

> cultural 'others', is politically consequential, whether intended or not. The language of anthropology is not a neutral medium that conveys ideas formed in the isolation of a discipline; rather, as one vector in the field of intersystemic discourses, it directs political action along certain paths, which become institutionalized. (1988:51)

I think one of the central challenges of a social science that is so philosophically engaged, as is the work of Ingold (2000c), is to bring such a conceptualization to bear on practical political realities. The ethnocentric characterization of the lives of indigenous peoples as 'primitive' and 'unsophisticated' did not end with the likes of Engles and 19th century anthropologists (c.f. Ingold 1996:146-147). Such ideas persist in the views of contemporary judges (Culhane 1998), academics (Flanagan 2000), and the bureaucrats, politicians and others who are influenced by them. These perspectives commit the fallacy of perpetuating the dualistic notion of culture-nature that Ingold has drawn our attention to. Such a vision of culture-nature has perpetuated the social, economic and ecological inequalities experienced by indigenous people whose perspectives do not make such a culture-nature divide. I believe we need to scrutinize these ideas by providing detailed, specific and theoretically informed ethnographic understandings of indigenous cultures. In presenting these issues, I intend to engage in the political discourse of Aboriginal title and rights, and the larger issues of social equality and justice that this discourse seeks to inspire.

Much of the anthropology applied to the question of Aboriginal title in Canada in the past has focussed on demonstrating land use and occupancy, an approach that responded to the narrow criteria that the courts had previously defined as necessary to make a land claim. These criteria for establishing the *primae facie* evidence for Aboriginal title have

led to projects of varying degrees of theoretical sophistication, geographical coverage, and political explicitness, much of which occupies the 'grey literature' of unpublished consultants reports and factums used in court cases. This literature seldom more than superficially engages ontological perspectives of Aboriginal relationships to land, favouring instead site and activity specific descriptions of historic or contemporary practices of land use. Such narrowly framed approaches to describing connections to place have the practical effect of being justifications for the state limiting the degree and scope to which Aboriginal people should have a meaningful say in what transpires in their territories.

Since the 1997 *Delgamuukw* decision, the Supreme Court of Canada has clarified the nature and extent of Aboriginal title in Canadian common law (Slattery 2000; McNeil 1997; 2000). The now more detailed legal description of Aboriginal title has provided for a more complex, wholistic views of Aboriginal land relations to be taken into account in establishing an Aboriginal title. claim. Under this model senses of place imbued with the stories, practices and experiences which underlie Aboriginal peoples' relationships to place can be argued as forming an important component of the basis of Aboriginal common law title to land. In this study, I lay out the foundations of cultural understanding and practice on which an Aboriginal title claim could be based. While I do not make any claims that this study is a complete picture of Coast Salish Aboriginal title, through detailed ethnographic engagement with Coast Salish senses of place, I hope to make a significant contribution to these theoretical and political goals.

In the following section, I delve more deeply into the theoretical framework that informs my understanding of Coast Salish senses of place, and discuss the ways in which I have come to learn and experience something of Coast Salish relationships to the land. I conclude by a summary of the remaining chapters of this study.

Toward a Theory of Place: Dwelling, Experience, Embodiment, Meaning and Power

In this section, I lay out the importance of the phenomenologically influenced perspectives[1] that take seriously and give primacy to hunter-gatherer[2] world-views. This concretely descriptive approach, as Casey (1996:27) has pointed out, does not attempt to impose structures or superstructures on Native views and reflections on how the world is experienced and understood. I provide a historical context to the discourse of place in philosophy and social science, then describe several central features of this perspective, including the ideas of *dwelling*, *experience*, *embodiment*, *meaning* and *power*.

A comprehensive history of philosophy concerning the idea of 'place' has been written by Edward Casey (1997; see also 1996). Casey has demonstrated that an oscillation

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[1] I hesitate to label my work as a classical phenomenological approach which dwells, as it were, on the minutiae of sensory experience, embodiment, and the reductive (*epoché*) method of Husserl and Heidegger. However, in being concerned with theorizing lived experience (Hallowell 1967) and the collapsing of the nature/culture distinction (Ingold 2000c), I am engaging an anthropology which owes important philosophical debt to the phenomenological tradition (Katz and Csordas 2003:277).

[2] I use the term 'hunter-gatherer' throughout this study to highlight, as Poirier has,"the prevailing influence of social practices and cultural values that are specific to hunter societies" (2001:110), and the ways these practices and values are wrapped up with cultural practice with respect to land. I do not intend to engage any social or cultural evolutionary debates by the use of this term.

exists in western philosophical thought towards place. Early and medieval writers were very aware and concerned with the grounded experience of perception and the intense importance of local places on these experiences. By the fifteenth century, and later best expressed by Kant, place had been reconfigured in western thought to an idea of space, external to mind or body, a blank canvas onto which culture and empire could be mapped. There are important links in this philosophical thought to the colonial mission of the west, whereby "the domination of Native peoples was accomplished by their deplacialization: the systematic destruction of regional landscapes that served as the concrete settings for local culture" (Casey 1997:xii). Since the second World War, the idea of place has re-emerged as an important (though not dominant) theme in philosophy and social sciences, particularly through the ideas of Husserl and Heidegger that have developed contemporary phenomenological understandings of connections to place. Earlier Kantian notions of space continue to pervade the dominant discourses in western cultures, engaged in such practices as land and resource 'development' and extraction (Willems-Braun 1997a), representation of 'nature' in landscape art (Küchler 1993), exercise of social power through architecture and public spaces (Foucault 1980:69; Schirmer 1994), urban landscapes (Zukin 1992; Yoneyama 1994) and built environments (Lawrence and Low 1990), and through the abstraction of space in the law (Blomley 1994). As geographer Timothy Oakes (1997) has argued, the cultural dynamics of socioeconomic transformation, enabled through the restructuring of place as space, has been a powerful way for representing and experiencing modernity.

There have been clear philosophical influences of phenomenology in the social sciences

in relation to the study and understanding of place. Merleau-Ponty (1962) has laid the foundation for understanding the body as it is experienced by and engages with experiences of the world. Sociologists have explored how language, symbolic behaviour (Schutz 1967), and social structure (Berger and Luckmann 1966) shape our experiences of everyday life, which includes place. In the field of anthropology a phenomenology of place has been well articulated by a number of writers who are concerned with hunter-gatherer studies, such as Jackson (1989; 1995; 1998), Ingold (2000c), Tilley (1994) and Basso (1996). They argue for the importance of paying attention to local understandings, engaging the life-worlds as people experience them through the intersubjective moments of communicative acts. This perspective moves away from the reductionist, essentialist, totalizing and dualistic views that emerge from anthropology which take purely materialist or symbolic perspectives.

In the following section, I draw on the major themes of these theoretical perspectives as they relate to the investigation of senses of place. As my study will show, the experience, embodiment and meanings of place engaged by people, powerfully influence the kinds of relationships that are experienced within and through these places. For Coast Salish people these senses of place – from relationships with mythical beings, powerful topography, or relationships of property and territory among and between people – are essentially experienced as relationships with the land.

Dwelling, Experience & Embodiment

The ways in which the land is sensed and made sense of is rooted in the ways in which

our cultured selves experience the world. Dwelling in a particular place engages our being in a web of sense perception, memory, language, environment and the social relationships that are entangled in these places. Places and selves continually constitute each other in our collective experiences of lived-in locales. Hunter-gatherers tend to understand their way of being through an "ontology of dwelling" (Ingold 1996:121). This ontology is reflected in the ways that hunter-gatherers express and act on their connections to the land and their senses of self, creating a sense of belonging and attachment to the land that results in relationships being formed between people and the other beings (human and non-human) who also share in this dwelling. Ingold (2000a:103) frames this ontology of self and land:

> ... the self is constituted as a centre of agency and awareness in the process of its active engagement with an environment. Feeling, remembering, intending and speaking are all aspects of that engagement, and through it the self continually comes into being.

The primacy of place in this ontology of dwelling is underscored by the importance of experience. Places are first and foremost experienced. Casey has observed that we can *never not be* "emplaced in one way or another" (1996:17). It is this continual physical engagement with the world that guides and shapes our sensory perceptions. These perceptions are lived experiences and are fundamental to how we understand and relate to the world. So fundamental is this relationship between perception and emplacement that "we are never without emplaced experiences. We are not only *in* places but *of* them" (Casey 1996:19).

Geographer Yi-fu Tuan has given us a set of particularly rich writings (1974; 1975; 1977;

1984) about experiences of place. These essays are intimate explorations of the tactile and embodied experiences – smells, mental maps, feelings, and world views – produced through our being-in-the-world. The body becomes an important mediator between place and person. Physical presence in a place, the sensing of a strong wind, a vast horizon, a protective shelter produces immediate and powerful forces of place. The differences, for instance, that a body feels between riding horseback and riding on a Greyhound bus are very much about the experience of sense, sentiment, bodily engagement, time and economies of place. Places are not just 'there' in some objective way to be perceived, but exist in the context of one's own being and intentionality. Our perception of places is thus "constituted by cultural and social structures that sediment themselves into the deepest levels" of our being (Casey 1996:18). In the experiential realist school of cognitive science, Lakoff and Johnson have located people as part of their environment, not separate from it in such 'experientialist' discourses place, focussing

> ... on constant interaction with the physical environment and with other people. It views this interaction with the environment as involving mutual change. You cannot function within the environment without changing it or being changed by it. (1980:230)

For anthropologists taking a phenomenological perspective, describing the place-based aspects of social life focusses on the centrality of experience as "located within relationships and between persons, and not produced solely by objective structures or subjective intentions" (Escobar 2001:150).

Bourdieu echoes these sentiments in arguing that the ways in which places are structured reflects certain cultural schema, and that the *practice* of individuals within, around and

between these places creates meaning (1977:2). The practices he refers to are the basic, sometimes unthinking actions that incorporate everyday cultural patterns into the body. This, Bourdieu calls the *habitus*. The idea of *habitus* recognizes that it is in how the world is experienced, particularly through every day cultural actions, that peoples' view of it is brought into being. The physical shape, dimensions and nature of a place (the bends in a road or trail, the intricate footing of a steep rock face), become the unthinking *habitus* of the people who become skilled at dwelling in such a place. As a daily commuter on a regular route of roads, I have frequently experienced this automated *habitus* in deep daydreaming while handling a car at high speeds down a traffic-filled highway. Likewise, skilled Coast Salish clam diggers *know* where and when to retrieve buried clams on their local beaches, sensing the beach in order to fill their buckets in the cold and darkness of a winter midnight low tide.

Like clam beaches and travel routes, ancestors and spirits form part of the experienced world, particularly in hunter-gatherer societies. These beings may be encountered in dreams or visions. They may be invoked in story, song or dance. Their potential to dwell in places guides human actions. Ingold (2000c:14) has compared such spiritual and ancestral presences in the landscape to one's parents, in that they provide personal growth, wisdom, nurturance, guidance, security and food in the hunter-gatherer world. Experiences of ancestors and spirits in the land, when viewed as kinds of 'persons' who may have such parental features, necessitate that the living people who dwell among these other 'persons' have the *kinds* of relationships that they do with other active members of their society. In hunter-gatherer societies, where face-to-face relationships,

economies, and dependencies create a social fabric of respect, obligation, reciprocity, exchange and sharing, such relationships are also held with the land.

Meaningful Places

From this perspective of dwelling, experience and embodiment, places are inherently meaningful. They are mnemonic devices (Harwood 1976) for both personal and collective experience. With the social action of people living in the world, they gather life histories, names, mythological stories, and identities. As Casey observes, places "gather experiences and histories, even languages and thoughts" (1996:24).

The collective experience of dwelling inscribes on the land the lives of those who are emplaced therein. Cruikshank (1990), for instance, has written about how the life histories of First Nations women living in the Yukon are intimately tied to their understanding of their mythological, storied landscape. De Laguna has likewise shown that, for Aboriginal communities in Alaska, places are vested in personal, mythical and ancestral meanings. Such understandings of place are not isolated to individuals. As de Laguna has argued, personal associations with place are all "intermeshed through anecdotes or shared experiences" (de Laguna 1972:58).

Through gathering meaning, place can become an active social agent, engaging people in the kinds of ways other social agents of the world do. The shared meanings associated with place influence and guide the kinds of relations people have with other humans and non-humans who dwell with them. Mythological stories told in Aboriginal communities

in North America, Australia, and Siberia about ancestors transformed to stone provide vivid examples of the agency that features of the land can have (i.e. Bierwert 1999; King 2002:72; Povinelli 1993:137 respectively). In the telling of these mythical stories, stone actually *becomes* the ancestor embodied by it in that it is afforded respect and the potential for the power that it may hold to influence the world. Places and the features in them in essence become sentient beings with messages and stories for people (Poirier 2004:223-224).

Keith Basso has long had an interest in the ways people engage, understand and live in place, his key essays being collected in the award-winning *Wisdom Sits in Places* (1996). Basso explores how his Western Apache colleagues evoke place in highly meaningful ways though the practice of using place names to impart wisdom and moral teachings; the meanings reflecting the complex ways that people have formed attachments to the world in which they dwell. When Western Apache people think of or talk about the places that the stories of their ancestors are set in, they are at the same time inhabiting these places and reciprocally, are being inhabited by them (Basso 1988:102). The development of this kind of local wisdom is wrapped up in relationships that emerge from dwelling. Dwelling, as Basso has written, "is said to consist in the multiple 'lived experiences' that people maintain with places, for it is solely by virtue of these relationships that space acquires meaning" (1996:54).

Other anthropologists have examined the manner in which songs and music are used, like western Apache stories, by Kaluli living in New Guinea (Feld 1996) and Temiars living

in Malaysia (Roseman 1998) to understand and 'map' waters and lands, evoke history and memory and claim property rights. Such perspectives of dwelling reveal how place organizes knowledge, and how knowledge expression is in turn guided by these places. They are subtle and useful means of making sense of our place in the world.

Though much of this literature has emerged from scholars working in hunter-gatherer societies, it would be misleading to represent hunter-gatherers as the only people in the world who are closely connected to place. There are several rich ethnographic studies of elements within western Old World and colonial societies that, over time, have been configured by and engaged with their local places. Examples from the Old World include Frake's (1996) study of place names, local knowledge history and dwelling in rural East Anglia, Gray's (2003) study of the political economies of dwelling in the rural Scottish borderlands, or Barth's (2000) discussion of Norwegian farmers' rootedness in and attachments to lands bounded by notions of property. These studies reveal the importance of the long-term connections of people to particular places in the formation of deep attachment to and the attendant experiences of place. They also belie the generalizations of European cultures being largely long-uprooted diasporas. As Weiner (2002) has pointed out, Cavalli-Sforza's (2000) impressive study of 10.4 million phone book entries in Italy has demonstrated that the long-term (millennia-long) stability of many European families in particular local regions has deeply influenced the kinds of cultural attachments to and identities with place.

Several studies in European colonial contexts have also indicated that senses of place are

not always bounded and constrained by hegemonic power, Kantian spatial abstraction or detachment of memory and identity from the land. The depth of and attachment to land in western cultural communities are made evident through Ryden's (1993) exploration of American senses of place through folklore, literature and personal experience, Stewart's (1996) beautifully narrated study of history and being, in the 'hills and hollers' of rural West Virginia, and Bird's (2002) essay on narratives, folklore and senses of identity and place in the U.S. Midwest. Possibly the best study to date of how these issues rub up against hunter-gatherer connections to the same lands has been written by Dominy (2001). Her book on New Zealand high country sheep herders explores the manner in which social, spatial and property relationships shape and are shaped by place and identity. In setting out how these relative newcomers to the New Zealand high country have configured their lives to the land, Dominy presents a nuanced account of their view of being themselves indigenous to the area. This view is challenged politically and philosophically by Maori land and treaty claims. These issues, as Dominy argues, have complex, personal, experienced human elements to them and are often mediated by how the land itself is experienced.

Indeed, all of these studies of western societies reveal the over-simplicity of the convention that sometimes has characterized all western thought and experience as monolithic and 'out of place'. There is great multiplicity within the western cultural continuum of experiences of and relationships to land. In some ways, however, like the challenges faced by hunter-gatherers in a world of colonized, globalized political economies (though almost always with less stark circumstances of inequality in political

economies), these local western senses of place are frequently challenged and put in tension with dominant configurations of relationships to the land. This tension and force of social change have been described in Raymond Williams' (1973) influential *The Country and the City*, which in turn (along with many others) was influenced by Marx's notion of the 'great civilizing influence of capital' (c.f.. Bender 1998:106). As I have mentioned earlier and will go on to elaborate below, local relationships to place strongly influence the ways such power is configured and experienced.

Powers of Place

At the level of embodied, emplaced experience, some powers of place are evident. Forces like a windy street corner or a rip tide, which are distinctly engaged in particular places can act upon human bodies in ways that significantly shape our lives. Thus shaping our embodied experience of these places, we respond to them and act upon them. In her work describing Stó:lō Coast Salish senses of place in the Fraser Canyon of British Columbia, Bierwert (1999) has provided a rich description of this kind of basic power of place to give and take human life. The river brings abundant salmon that are caught using small gill nets, dip nets and spears by Stó:lō people in the little bays and eddies of the canyon, the hot summer winds providing a means to dry and preserve these fish for year-round food. The Stó:lō deeply root these practices in tradition, wrapped up in relations of property, reciprocity, respect, and spirit. The whirlpools and rocks are also dangerous, as Stó:lō fishers have also lost their lives here, making the landscape one of both critical sustenance and tragic loss. Place in this example is a powerful force on the manner in which Stó:lō people talk about, engage in, learn from, remember and make

meaning of the land.

Places have the potential to hold spiritual power for those who are attuned to encountering it. The spirit quest in northern hunter-gatherer societies taps into the potential power that may be experienced through the relationships with the guardian spirits that dwell in the land (i.e. Ingold 2000a:93). The experience of these relationships often comes in dreams or during fasts or seclusion, when modes of sensory experience are attuned to the sorts of potentialities that the land – and those human and non-human beings who dwell in it – holds.

Spiritual and ancestral power can be transformative in nature. The rocks, mountain, forest or other places may be spirits or ancestors transformed to those places in mythical times or more recent experience. Such places are brought into being in legends and myth, but their powers may be encountered in more immediate experiences. Through the powers that still reside in these transformed places, such special rocks or other non-human beings encountered may act on people with important physical and social consequences. These transformed places may be experienced through sudden changes in weather, or may be observed when boulders are found to have moved or have worked to stay put. Such powerful ancestral figures become part of the social world with whom relations of reciprocity and respect are engaged. Though examples of the power of transformed landscapes are well known from Aboriginal Australia (see, for example Morphy 1995; Munn 1970; 1996; Poirier 2004; Strehlow 1970), there are clear analogies in other areas, such as Fiji (Toren 1995), Papua New Guinea (Kahn 1990), Siberia (King

2002) and, as I discuss fully in a later chapter, in the Coast Salish world (see also Bierwert 1999; Thom 1998; Boyd 2001).

Other forms of power are engaged through the dwelling in place. Social power is encountered and engaged when people actively build places to reflect their intentions of power, and when others (who are on the receiving end of those relations) encounter those places. Structured social orders are mapped onto places that in turn act as checks and control on the social relations within these places. In this view, place is both constituted and constitutive, constructing society, just as society constructs place. Foucault (1977:228) has considered how places become structured specifically as a means of 'discipline' and control in western societies where social inequalities are perpetuated by structural forms such as prisons, schools, and psychic institutions created by the powerful to maintain their control. Blomley (2003) has powerfully shown this same process for western property systems through an analysis of the use of surveys to delineate property to symbolize and at times embody violence. These structures of power become fixed firmly and deeply in these institutions and in turn shape the lives of those who experience them.

In a similar vein, Giddens has considered the role of places – or to use his term 'locales' – in the social production and reproduction of the rules and resources through and within which all social action takes place, a process he calls 'structuration'. In this process, places are settings in which the spatial and physical environments are "mobilized as part of the interaction" between actors "in the sustaining of communication" (Giddens

1979:206). The manner in which they draw on these settings depends on the nature of their relationship to the place. Such structural view of power and domination enacted on, by and through place traditionally have had little recognition in phenomenological analyses (Tilley 1994:26). When grounded in local experience these views are helpful for understanding the kinds of relationships that people have with the land.

Returning to the idea that places are lived-in and experienced, it is important to remember that these experiences are grounded in "actual events, objects and interpersonal relationships" (Jackson 1989:2). Who experiences place, and how, raises critical issues of power. Harvey (1989:239) argues that practices in particular places are "never neutral in social affairs. They always express some kind of class or other social content, and are more often than not the focus of intense social struggle". His examples of the quick and firm ties between capital and the organization of space for the creation of more capital are useful when thought of in the context of the changing landscapes of Native colonial space (Harris 2002).

Issues of power also run through the ways in which particular views of relationships with place compete for dominance, control, or sometimes, even a voice. Rodman (1992) has called for more anthropological attention to this multiplicity of voices in and about places, and the threads of power that weave through these differing voices. Bender's (1998) excellent study of Stonehenge reveals how particular voices and visions of place have become differently privileged, depending on the power that those voices have in relation to each other. Archaeologists, historians, Druids, Free-Festivalers, local

residents, and the English Heritage Boards (to name a few), have been variously engaged in the struggles for having their vision of Stonehenge privileged within society, with the corollary benefits of access and control that go along with these privileged perspectives.

Blomely has given a rich, local example of the nexus of differently lived, and culturally experienced community senses of a local place in the urban landscape of Vancouver (2002), and the ways these experiences inscribe themselves differently on the land. He demonstrates that the land is literally and figuratively inscribed with the lives of the people who have lived there. Blomley drew on current, historic and mythical expressions of relationships of members of different cultural communities to offer a subtle subversion of the kind of power and politics which change the future of how places like urban development sites are experienced. In his example, set in an east Vancouver neighbourhood, Coast Salish and historic non-European settler relationships to land are largely invisible in the face of local market forces that are engaged with the land in an entirely different manner.

Tilley has noted that differently engaged visions of place – ones that are controlled largely by the production of capital and frequently experienced as a commodity – are widespread cultural phenomena:

> ... it remains the case that numerous authors, a massive environmental lobby, and a 'green movement' have consistently remarked on the manner in which landscapes, buildings, places and localities in contemporary society seem to have lost, or be in the process of losing, their value and significance. The space created by market forces must, above all, be a useful and rational place. (1994:21)

Other authors have made largely the same points (for example Escobar 1996; Porteous 1988; Willems-Braun 1997a; 1997b). Such transformative processes result from the powerful practices enabled by dominant discourses which separate nature from culture. In their examples, powerful decision-making people are often physically or technologically removed from the land. Their experience of place, often technologically mediated, is mapped, externalized, objectified, and commodified, all being powerful measures of exerting control over place. The exercise of this transformative power has produced cultures of place as sites of power struggles and identity politics, where transience, nomadism, rootlessness, and diaspora (Clifford 1994; Gupta and Ferguson 1992; Rosaldo 1988) put into question western stereotypes of Native relationships to place (Appadurai 1988).

Hunter-gatherer and other indigenous peoples, Ingold has argued, do not distinguish between mind and nature in order to be effective in the world (1996:120). As Tilley (1994:22) has put it,

> ... pre-capitalist spaces are no less invested with forms of power [than capitalist landscapes], but [are] within a qualitatively different [...] landscape invested with mythical understandings and ritual knowledge intimately linked with bodily routines and practices.

Ingold has proposed that anthropologists take seriously hunter-gatherer understandings of belonging to the world, not separating ontologically nature from culture, as is the dominant discourse in the western tradition (1996:117; 2000c) or in much of the history of anthropological thought (Ellen 1996:17-20). Ingold has convincingly argued that hunter-gatherers do not "approach their environment as an external world of nature that

has to be 'grasped' conceptually and appropriated symbolically within the terms of an imposed cultural design, as a precondition for effective action ... indeed, the separation of mind and nature has no place in their thought and practice" (1996:120).

Ingold reasons that following the dominant western view, "the separation of the economic from the religious ... rests on a very narrow view of the economy. Indeed the distinction between religion and economy, upon which western legal and anthropological argument sets such store, has no meaning for native people" (1996:140). There is a key connection between these kinds of richly meaningful connections to land and the kinds of economic activities that people engage on. As Ingold (1996:144) has said:

> ... the differences between the [economic] activities of hunter-gatherers on the one hand, and singing, story-telling and the narration of myth on the other, cannot be accommodated within the terms of a dichotomy between the material and the mental, between ecological interaction *in* nature and cultural constructions *of* nature. On the contrary, both sets of activities are, in the first place, ways of dwelling.

This position is particularly important for developing a view of place that sees, as I propose Coast Salish people do, humans, non-humans, memory, history, power relations, physical topography, and language all as forces acting on each other in a lived, experienced environment. In rejecting the dualistic nature-culture model, we can more clearly understand a Coast Salish view of their world where property/territory are congruent with the more symbolic notions of place. We need to make intellectual space for Coast Salish views of their own relationship to the world. The imperative for this is highlighted by the kinds of legal tests that the courts require for 'proof' of Aboriginal title (Thom 2001b, see also chapter 10).

Property, Territory and Place

Aboriginal notions of property in land, including individual or common titles and territory, are expressions of aspects of economic, social and symbolic relations between people, embedded in Aboriginal understandings of being-in-the-world. Aboriginal ideas of property and territory are, as Bryan has argued, "indicative of a highly nuanced and different way of understanding the worldliness of a human being" (2000:3). Indeed, as I set out below, to understand Aboriginal property relations, we need to attend to theorizing them in ways that do not exclusively draw on western categories and notions (Ingold 1987a; Scott 1988). As Scott and Mulrennan have proposed, "to seriously engage the game of representing 'property' and 'territory' in indigenous cultural terms, a plurality of theoretical perspectives on indigenous 'connection to country' must be considered" (1999:149), including the hermeneutics of place and notions of local ecological knowledge and practice.

The idea of land[3] as property (and as territory) has been important in recent academic and legal discourses about land in Aboriginal and indigenous communities throughout the world. Both Hann (1998) and Bryan (2000) have reviewed the intellectual history of the idea of property, the former in the context of anthropological theory, the latter in the context of western philosophy, law and Aboriginal ontologies (see also Ingold 1987b:226-227). From these intellectual histories emerges a view that property should

[3] Sea tenure systems in Aboriginal societies, a topic I do not treat in any detail here, have also been the focus of much scholarly and legal debate in recent years (Davis 1989; Langdon 1989; Nietschmann 1989; Sharp 1996; Scott and Mulrennan 1999; Mulrennan and Scott 2000; 2001).

be seen as the social relationship between people with respect to places and things (Bryan 2000:4). Such a view of property helps underscore the "explicitly political" nature of hunter-gatherer property rights, as they relate primarily to "relationships among persons" (Scott 1988:35). Within hunter-gatherers experiences of territory, for instance, Ingold has proposed that the idea of territory provides "an ideological separation between 'givers' and 'receivers' in the case of food-sharing, and 'hosts' and 'visitors' in the case of territorial admission" (1987a:134). In a face-to-face, kin-based society where an economy is based on strategies of sharing, it is often the prestige associated with playing host that is the most important socioeconomic reward of having control of such properties.

Property relationships are a central connecting node between the various phenomenally experienced engagements with place and the experiences and structures of power between people at and between these places. Relationships of power, relationships of property, relationships of territory all intersect importantly in place, just as memory, identity, myth, and kin do. These things are dynamically important elements of indigenous attachments to land (Scott and Mulrennan 1999:150).

It is in the practice of daily life that property can be "both constitutive and reflective of" social relations between people (Bryan 2000:5). It "defines what kinds of relations are possible" among people, and reflects the "metaphors of the ontological structure of a culture" (Bryan 2000:6). In Aboriginal cultures, where daily life is embedded in a world of relationships to care for, respect, and exchange power with the land and other beings

who dwell in it, property becomes organized by and reflects back into these cultural systems and practices. As Layton has observed, "the land itself as socially constituted plays a fundamental role in ordering cultural relations" (1995:229).

Povinelli provides an excellent example of this in her illuminating discussion of Australian Aboriginal hunter-gatherers. For Australian Aboriginal people the link between economic relationships and mythical histories embedded in places produces Aboriginal authority over land based in the practices of "hunting, camping and travelling" which both "produce and were produced by the mythic landscape" (Povinelli 1993:166). Myers (1988a:65) has similarly framed the ownership of land for Pintupi communities in Aboriginal Australia. Pintupi people achieve this through the ownership of stories about mythical ancestors who have been transformed in the landscape and which require their owners to participate in ceremonies at sacred sites that generate and reinforce their particular configuration of property relations.

As I will demonstrate in this study, Coast Salish people similarly understand property through encounters with and relations to ancestral figures in the land. Such encounters are mediated by their spiritual and ritual practices and through evoking mythological landscapes in stories. The ancestral quality of hereditary personal name and named places further order and define grounded social relationships of property. Relations with these ancestral figures require reciprocity, sharing and respect with other persons, including both human and non-human people who are located and associated with place. They create and reinforce property relations where the land at once belongs to the

ancestors who dwell there, and belongs to those living today who encounter the ancestors in it. People in the Coast Salish world organize their property relations with each other by residence in ancestral communities, or descent from ancestors connected to particular places, drawing authority from their association of historical and mythical privileges handed down from the ancestors and learned by engaging in respectful spirit relations with the non-human persons in the land.

In the Coast Salish setting, resource locations owned are usually those that provide access to frequent (but not unlimited), predictable, and abundant staple resources (i.e. Dyson-Hudson and Smith 1978; Matson 1983; 1985; Matson and Coupland 1995:152; Richardson 1982) such as, for instance, salmon fishing areas, clam beaches or starchy root patches. People interact with respect to these places in ways which take into account the owners' control of these locales. Power is maintained in part through the application of private knowledge (Suttles 1958; see Poirier 2004:213-214 for an Australian equivalent), but exercised through an ethic of sharing and reciprocity of the kind discussed by Ingold (1987b:229-234).

These property issues are germane for re-centring a discourse about territory in hunter-gatherer societies. The debate, as summarized by Feit (1992) and Tanner (1986), has classically been one between evolutionists who argue that property principles in hunter-gatherer societies do not make sense outside the context of interactions with state societies (Leacock 1954) and others who characterize expressions of hunter-gatherer territory as something different from but akin to western property notions (i.e. Hallowell

1949; Lowie 1920; Speck 1915; 1928; Speck and Eiseley 1939).

Taken from a view concerned with issues of ontology rather than cultural development, hunter-gatherer territories bring into focus social relationships of individuals interacting at the scale of communities. Individuals experience their territories as 'itineraries' of places, engaging in reciprocal practices relating to their use and respect of the land (Scott 1986; 1988; Poirier 2001:107) within an ecosystem that they continually appropriate (Escobar 1998:71). These relationships with territory become aspects of a person's social identity "which may define him or her for a variety of social relationships within a wider system of organization" (Myers 1988b:271). Such forms of hunter-gatherer relationships to territory persist even in contexts where powerful western states work to undermine them (Tanner 1979; 1983; 1986; Morantz 1986; Scott 2001).

Territories formed of networks of resource sites, mythical and other powerful places are recognized by and reflected in Coast Salish speech communities. Larger regional territories of trade, defence, kin, ritual, potlatch and sport are also salient for larger social groups. Ideologies of kinship and sharing, and engagements through travel underwrite these senses of territory throughout the Coast Salish world. As in other hunter-gatherer societies, it is in these territorial ideas that larger group identities reside (Myers 1988a:65; 1988b:272).

Property relations in the kinds of Aboriginal cultural settings described above have different forms than in the dominant western discourse (Ingold 1987b:226-7). Aboriginal

property relations are firmly wrapped in mythological and other social and historical relationships to land that are not easily separated as they are in mainstream western thought. Property from this perspective of dwelling is not so much a *commodity* (though aspects can be), as it is a way of ordering kin relations, and relationships of sharing. Bird-David (1999:s.76) has argued that a 'relational epistemology' of this kind has authority in hunter-gatherer societies where sharing is normalized, people are intimate with their environment, animistic performances (such as in the case of this study, the Coast Salish winter dance) are celebrated and supernatural forces are encountered as friendly helpers or kin.

While significant crosscurrents exist between mainstream western patterns of property in land and the kinds of Aboriginal property relations described above, not all western notions of property are reduced to commodity relations. Radical title in British common law, for instance, is not treated by the state as commodity but is rather tightly linked to notions of sovereignty. In many if not most Canadian households, however, the everyday experiences of property relations in malls, real estate offices, courtrooms or more ritualized property relations such as the hyper-consumer oriented, often secular celebrations of Easter and Christmas, frequently have more to do with commodity and exchange than with ordering relations of reciprocity and respect with kin or the land. Through exploring these practices of property relations a fuller sense of cultural forms and engagements with the land can be understood.

Boundaries

The final important concept with respect to a phenomenology of place that I wish to review is that of boundaries. Boundaries between social groups, whether porous or permanent, physical or imagined, are frequently conceived through place. Boundaries like fences and gates, patrolled borders and checkpoints, walls and portals are constructed in place to shape social divisions. Boundaries may also influence social and cultural practice through their mere physicality. Over time, this physical presence shapes the ways in which relationships are ordered to these places and to the people who live among and within them. Boundaries are also experienced through less physical, more abstract forms. Survey plans delimiting parcels of private property or state maps marking territorial and jurisdictional boundaries are examples of boundaries whose familiar forms and conventions are very real to physical experience. All these different forms of boundaries shape and are shaped by social relations.

There are many examples of these differently configured cultural imageries that demarcate boundaries. Anderson (2000:148-170) discusses the different ways of what he calls cultural 'knowing' or 'intelligence' that have been employed by Evenki reindeer herders, Soviet bureaucrats and Russian land managers to construct social, political and economic boundaries of the herders' territories. The different views of boundaries become points of intersection and negotiation for the ways that people manage and relate to the land itself. Evenkis at times take on Soviet and Russian ideas in order to defend their means of production from powerful state interests which respond more definitively to familiar concepts. Barthes (2000:18-19) provides highly different ways of imagining

territory without reference to absolute physical boundary markers. The Baktaman are New Guinea rainforest gardeners for whom place is immensely important for social identity, but by whom little cultural attention is given to physical boundaries between villages or gardens of the various Baktaman families and social groups. Likewise Basseri Persian nomads, who are deeply connected to place through their use and experience of the land, recognize grazing rights not through bounded territories, but through migration schedules. In contrast to these examples, Australian Aboriginal concepts of territories are defined by permeable boundaries of paths and itineraries (Poirier 2004), structured not to physically impede movement or exclude others, but to provide for the social interaction of different social groups within common places. Such boundaries, Ingold argues, are "more like sign posts than fences, comprising part of a system of practical communication rather than social control" (Ingold 1987a:156), and stand in contrast to the more rigid formulations of property structured by western states.

Anthropologists have sometimes described hunter-gatherer communities as lacking boundaries to mark clear estates or parcels, mistaking different modes of understanding social configurations of property and identity for there being no boundaries at all (Ingold 1987a:150). Since identity is often constructed in multiple ways, such as when individuals claim belonging in more than one land owning group (Myers 1982:176), boundaries between territories may become difficult or seemingly imprecise for the external observer to apprehend. Ellen Semple, an influential American geographer in the early to mid twentieth century, misconstrued boundaries among Native American tribes as vague, undefined and often overlapping, reflecting a "superficial and unsystematic

utilization of their soil" and being a part of "uneconomic and extravagant use of the land" (1907:396). Such thinking has also persisted in state characterizations of indigenous territories that have used ethnocentric ideology to undermine claims of indigenous ways of relating to, dwelling in and owning the land (Culhane 1998:248-249). Aboriginal people have also adopted western methods of territorial representation, using maps of polygonal boundaries and borders, to assert their claims in a language that is familiar to the nation states with which they are hoping to redefine relationships (Sterritt *et al.* 1998). Such techniques, as detailed in chapter 9, belie the authority of the neat grids of cadastral boundaries and reflect interlinking social systems and multiple attachments to place through their often confusing and overlapping lines.

A boundary is not always just a boundary, to paraphrase Geertz (1973) paraphrasing Ryle. Boundaries are deeply embedded cultural experiences, and can have any number of intentionalities and meanings. A particular form of boundary in one cultural setting may have a very different context or meaning in another. Property, territory, cultural groups, linguistic groups, kin groups, polities, all may be bounded by different concepts and configurations of boundaries. Conversely boundaries identifying the same kind of division (say property) can have many different forms. One does not need a surveyor's plan in hand to know where family or community property boundaries are in Coast Salish cultures: one needs a good understanding of genealogy, toponomy, mythic history and the 'signs posts' of continued use to understand the property relations of any given resource site. Notions of boundaries are clearly rooted in a diversity of cultural concepts.

Coming to know 'Place' in the Coast Salish World: Fieldwork and Methods

Having set out the theoretical context for investigating senses of place and the attendant issues of dwelling, experience, embodiment, meaning, and power, I discuss below the particular methods and settings in which I have come to engage these issues in the Coast Salish world. Following this, I discuss my own intersubjectivity in coming to know and share in Coast Salish peoples' sense of place, and provide an account of my connection with Coast Salish communities over the past ten years.

Foucault (1972) has proposed that all discourses have objects, and the rules of the discourse define what is sensible. By focussing on native discourse, a rich set of texts is generated which can be studied to learn something of a culture's communicative systems and norms, and the ways these norms are put into action through dialogue and the practice of telling stories. It is in this interplay between cultural and linguistic practice and the agency of individuals that culturally-situated meanings lie. Land is very much the object of Coast Salish discourse, as it is in other contemporary Aboriginal communities (Layton 1995:214). The rules of that discourse are grounded in the experience of myth, spirit power, transformation and relationships of kinship, residence and property.

I subscribe to the view put forward by Geertz that "to study place, or more exactly, some people or other's sense of place, it is necessary to hang around with them – to attend to them as experiencing subjects, as the responsive sorts of beings for whom... the world comes bedecked in places" (1996:260). To facilitate this 'hanging around', and the

conversations and grounded experiences which ensued, I moved to Ladysmith on Vancouver Island in June of 2000. I immediately began working through the office of the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group, having conversations, interviews, field trips, and focus groups with people, and attending and participating in public meetings and events. Many of these experiences, which I describe in greater detail in the next section, took place in the context of the community gearing up for land claims negotiations with the federal and provincial governments, of the kind critically discussed by Woolford (2002). In the First Nation communities of Cowichan, Chemainus, Penelakut, Halalt, Lyackson and Lake Cowichan, the single political issue of resolving the 'land question' has permeated community discourses and is the lens through which many senses of place developed in this study are articulated.

Of the tools at an ethnographer's disposal, I have engaged in semi-structured interviews with groups of one to three people (n=42), focus group meetings (n=18) , ongoing conversations with friends and colleagues, and participant observation during field trips, public events, and other activities. The interviews and focus groups took place between the summer of 2000 and the early winter of 2002, while the less formal work has remained ongoing to present time (the winter of 2005). Individual consent was obtained for each of these recordings, and control of and copyright to the tapes was granted to the Hul'qumi'nun Treaty Group. The tapes, transcripts, translations and copies of the associated notes have all being given to the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group, as set out in the letter of understanding between myself and the Treaty Group (see Appendix D). In all, the voices of 27 of the Hul'qumi'num people I have consulted and recorded appear in

these narratives. With the excellent assistance of Lea Joe, I have provided brief biographies of these people in Appendix C.

The narratives that people shared with me on tape are the heart of this ethnography. The interviews and focus groups were recorded on a 1997 vintage Sharp MD-MS200 mini-disc recorder. These MD's were copied to tape for verbatim transcription and proof-reading by several community members working for the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group (Brenda Underwood, Chrystal Nanhanee, Edna Thomas, Jenny Charlie, Naomi Morales), and a court reporting service Key West, run by a member of the Halalt First Nation. Though the vast majority of our conversations were in English, the *Hul'q'umi'num'* language is usually peppered through everyday speech, and occasionally, when the older people were in the thralls of telling a good story, whole passages were spoken in the language. As I have a modest vocabulary of *Hul'q'umi'num'* and a relatively shallow grasp of the complexities of Salishan grammar, I have relied on the expertise of fluent speakers and language teachers Mabel Mitchell, Ruby Peters, and Florence James to provide transcriptions and translations for me. Their transcriptions have utilized the popular orthography used in the region (see Appendix B).[4] They have translated the passages to unembellished English at the level of the phrase or sentence to provide the most clarity for an English reader.

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[4] For consistency, I have normally re-written words from Salishan languages in the Island *Hul'q'umi'num'* practical orthography quoted by other authors. In the few occasions where I am uncertain about the writing conventions used in an original source, I have left the original orthographic representation intact.

To maintain the full context of these speech events for audiences which have a good grasp of the language, I have provided both the *Hul'q'umi'num'* and English versions within the narratives presented in this study. Following the widely advocated practice in the anthropological literature (Hymes 1981; Cruikshank *et al.* 1990; Cruikshank 1999; Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1990), I have presented the sometimes long, sometimes laconic texts of the narratives and dialogues that people shared with me about place, rather than summarizing or paraphrasing,. This approach to narrative practice about place acknowledges the tone, artistry and style of narration of the participants, and properly contextualized, some of the nuances of meaning being expressed. I have not, however, followed the formidable linguistic task of organizing these narratives into an ethno-poetic format, which is the de rigueur method of presenting the performance aspects of oral traditions (Hymes 2003). I felt that this would have required an attention to the detail of speech that I believe, following Barth, represents "only the tip of the iceberg of our anthropological data" (2000:26), and would have added little to the problems of meaning and experience that I have considered central to understanding Coast Salish senses of place.

The major analysis of these texts was made by using the qualitative analysis software QSR NU*DIST 5 to code the several thousand pages of transcripts into themes. I did not have a predefined structure that I coded these transcripts into, but developed a hierarchy of themes by 'free-coding' and sorting as I moved through the body of work. The chapters and sections within the chapters reflect the results of this qualitative coding process.

The narratives themselves provide important stories, but are not in themselves the complete ethnography. They are contextualized in a broader cultural framework that I have developed from my ten years of experience working in and studying Coast Salish communities. I have extensively consulted the published ethnographic record to assist in providing this context, and to a lesser degree the written historical record. I have assembled and reviewed the large majority of Coast Salish published and manuscript form ethnographic materials that have been invaluable in deepening the context and my own understanding of these works. An annotated bibliography of these works can be found on my website (Thom 2004a).

Ethnographic Representativeness: Representing Culture and Community

One of the fundamental underlying assumptions behind the methodology of this study is the theoretical notion that cultural meanings can be understood through local discursive practice. I argue that a subtle understanding of Coast Salish experiences of dwelling in place are found in such narratives, and may be taken to reveal the philosophical basis of thought that continuous Coast Salish cultural traditions have informed, and the ways in which the threads of these cultural traditions are woven through the complex fabric of contemporary life.

Acknowledging the interplay between personal agency and the structures of language and culture is important in the interpretation of these narratives. Though certain expressions and meanings are socially constructed by the agents participating in and speaking about their experiences of dwelling, I agree with Richard Preston, who has argued that "we

humans are mostly unself-conscious of the larger historical domains of experience (tradition) and the deeper symbolic implications of experience (personality-in-culture), most of the time" (1999:150). Such a perspective implies that the deep cultural meanings and significances associated with place can be revealed through a close investigation of the thinking of a few individuals. Indeed, in the skilful use of narratives by people, such as many of those I have worked with, who have reflected on the relevance of oral traditions to both personal and cultural experiences, produces masterful articulations of the thought-worlds that these experiences engender. While such master thinkers may not be evenly distributed throughout the demographic of a society, the kinds of experiences of place they describe are felt by everyone engaged in community life.

Gender, language fluency, and age are basic social categories have been widely accepted in the social sciences as significantly implicated in shaping meanings and experiences. Of the 27 people I have represented in the narratives here, about three-quarters (74%) are men. Most of the people were either fully (74%) or partially (19%) fluent in the *Hul'q'umi'num'* language. The median age of the people whose narratives are included in this study is 69 (with the minimum being 38, the maximum being 85, and a standard deviation of 13). The age demographic of the narrators is not indicative of the Island Hul'qumi'num community, almost half of whom, according to the 2001 Census, is under 25 years old.

Though these facts of gender, language fluency and age significantly shape the perspectives taken in this thesis, I strongly suggest that the cultural meanings of place are

widely held by men and women, speakers and non-speakers, young and old, throughout the Coast Salish community. The Coast Salish senses of place I have engaged, must not be thought of as 'memory culture'. People continue to be richly engaged within the cultural traditions and practices which make places meaningful, and connect Coast Salish people to the land.

To support this assertion, I have compiled statistics (in Table 1.1), from the 1991 and 2001 Aboriginal Peoples' Surveys, which describe Island Hul'qumi'num peoples' participation in self-identified "traditional Aboriginal activities."

Table 1.1. Aboriginal Peoples' Survey Statistics on Participation in "Traditional Aboriginal Activities" (1991) and in hunting, fishing and gathering (2001)

[1991 Aboriginal Peoples Survey]	**Cowichan IR 1**	**Chemainus IR 13**	**Penelakut IRs 6 & 7**	**Halalt IR 2**
% of adults who participate in traditional Aboriginal activities	68%	63%	72%	60%
% of children, 5-14, who participate in traditional Aboriginal activities	54%	25%	40%	50%
[2001 Aboriginal Peoples Survey]				
% of adults who hunted in the past 12 months	13%	9%	[no data]	[no data]
% of adults who fished in the past 12 months	30%	12%	[no data]	[no data]
% of adults who gathered wild plants (berries, sweet grass, etc.) in the past 12 months	39%	24%	[no data]	[no data]

Overall, two-thirds of Island Hul'qumi'num adults over 15, and about half of children under 15 (at a 20% sample rate) participate in a vaguely defined "Aboriginal activities." As significantly fewer Island Hul'qumi'num adults indicated in 2001 as having participated in hunting, fishing or gathering, I would suggest, supported by my own

observations and knowledge, that such a broad category of "Aboriginal activities" must include non-subsistence related activities associated with traditional culture. These include participation in both secular activities (such as major life crisis ceremonies such as receiving a hereditary Indian name, coming of age, weddings and funerals), and sacred practices (such as personal spirit quests or participation in the Coast Salish winter ceremonials). Many of theses practices directly or symbolically bring people into engagements with place.

The statistics regarding the relatively lower involvement in hunting, fishing and gathering also require additional context. Though fewer people are now involved in the subsistence and potlatch resource-harvesting economies that were dominant before the mid 20th-century, harvesters are fairly evenly distributed in the community, with most households having at least one resource harvester (Fediuk and Thom 2003). Thus, while most people are no longer 'on the land' hunting, fishing and gathering, the kinds of relationships with the land and other beings who dwell in it are still important in the daily household-level economies of many Coast Salish people. The land tenure system, for instance, continues to provide important opportunities and constraints on individual resource harvesting practice, though these traditional property relations are made more complex by the powerful and often competing tenure and management systems of the state. Vigorous expressions of territoriality in land claims reinforce the vitality of connections to place among the younger leadership.

In grappling with the interplay of larger historical domains and deeper symbolic

implications of experience within the discursive practices in which these narratives of senses of place have been formulated, it is also important to take into account the multiplicity of peoples' religious views and experiences. Most of the older people I have worked with identify themselves as Christian. Indeed, every group session I have attended has started with a prayer, usually Catholic and sometimes Shaker (Amoss 1990), asking for the blessings and strength of the Lord for our work. The statistics in Table 1.2 confirm that western religious traditions are importantly integrated into the fabric of Coast Salish life.[5] In spite of its influence in many aspects of Coast Salish social and religious life, it has not been my experience that Christianity is the idiom through which local senses of place are expressed and understood.

Table 1.2 2001 National Census Profile of Island Hul'qum'num People's Religions

[2001 National Census]	HTG Total	Cowichan IR 1	Chemainus IRs 11, 12 & 13	Penelakut IRs 6 & 7	Halalt IR 2
Total Population by Religion	*2357*	*1200*	*665*	*377*	*115*
Catholic	45%	58%	35%	19%	52%
Protestant	5%	5%	5%	3%	9%
Christian	8%	10%	8%	5%	
Other Religion	16%	15%	22%	12%	
No Religious Affiliation	26%	11%	31%	61%	39%

As shown in the many narratives that follow, place is one of the few ideas that has not been substantially re-framed in Christianity terms. I do not argue that Christian senses

[5] Though Christian beliefs and practices are also widely held by younger people, there are many who have overtly rejected it as a symbol of the kinds of colonial experiences which were encountered in residential schools, and for whom local Aboriginal religious practices are central to their spiritual way of being. In table 1.3, the figures for "Other Religion" (which was the suggested category for "Aboriginal Spirituality" in the census), and "No Religious Affiliation", I believe, largely reflect this situation among younger people.

are excluded from the powers associated with place. The power of God is understood by many as being woven in with the powers of the animals and other spirit beings. The mythic figure of the Transformer is sometimes referred to as 'the little Christ'. These are examples of the subtle interplay of religion and culture as experience and expressed by Coast Salish people. Though I have attempted to be attentive to important variations in experience, I suggest that both a further concentration on women's senses of place, and the significance of Christian forms of meaning and expression as are experienced in place, are excellent areas for further study.

I now turn to the question of how broadly or narrowly can the senses of place I have described here, be taken to be meaningful for Coast Salish culture, which as Suttles has argued (1987b), is a continuum that extends over a wide region. Though I have extensively consulted ethnographic sources for the whole region, the narratives presented in this study come from people whose communities are members of the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group. These Island Hul'qumi'num communities represent only a portion of the cultural and linguistic continuum of Coast Salish peoples, who, as I discuss in the next chapter, occupy a much wider area. As there are important cultural and linguistic differences within the whole Coast Salish region, and very real historical differences, particularly with respect to land, on either side of the Canada-USA border, it would be an imprecise generalization to extend the views that I present as common to all Coast Salish people. I believe, however, that clear themes of myth, kinship, morality, property and experience resonate throughout the Coast Salish world and that very similar perspectives of the ontological and epistemological basis of dwelling would be gained throughout

these communities.

Intersubjectivity in Coast Salish Territory

As Michael Jackson (1998:5) has written, "anthropology from Lévi-Strauss to the present day has comprised a series of deconstructions of subjectivity". The kind of present-day anthropology that Jackson calls for is engaged in a project of intersubjectivity, where ever-developing relations between self and other, particularly as engendered through social action and dialogue, are acknowledged and made central in examining cross-cultural understanding. For Jackson, this idea of intersubjectivity helps to move the object of anthropological study away from the artificial abstractions of structure, discourse, habitus or systems of symbols to studies of the shared experiences and mutual understandings that emerge from the relationships in which anthropologists engage in the field. This approach is consistent epistemologically with many of the non-western societies that anthropologists come to study to make sense of the world. It helps make sense of Aboriginal perspectives of the world by bringing mutual experience into focus on shared terms (1998:7).

My own intersubjective experience of fieldwork in and writing about Coast Salish people has fundamentally shaped this ethnography. Throughout the text, I have attempted to give insight into the process of dialogue in which I have been engaged. I have not, however, presented this study as a fully narrative ethnography in the mode of Ridington (1988) or Jackson (1995). Following Bourdieu's recent suggestion (2003) that an ethnography that is sensitive to issues of intersubjectivity should be grounded in

"participant objectivation" – the detailing of the intellectual and social histories that the ethnographer brings to their interface with the 'other' – I will provide an outline of my involvement and interests in Coast Salish communities, and the ways in which my ever-changing role as ethnographer, researcher, cartographer, facilitator, culture-broker and negotiator enriched my field experience.

In 1990, as a 21-year-old undergraduate student, I enrolled in an archaeological field school which took place at Crescent Beach in Boundary Bay, close to the home community of the Semiahmoo First Nation. My experiences digging at Crescent Beach ignited a deep interest in the culture and history that surrounded the places where I had lived and thought I knew, but clearly did not. I continued, for several years, to explore and research the local Coast Salish culture, largely under the guidance and direction of professor RG Matson at UBC.

In 1992, I became involved in the archaeological investigations at the Scowlitz site, a large village and burial site at the confluence of the Harrison and Fraser Rivers in the heart of Stó:lō traditional territory. Though the site had clear academic interest, the primary objective was to aid the Stó:lō in their effort to demonstrate a connection to privately held land that was soon to come under the grip of the chainsaw and heavy forest equipment, likely destroying the ancestral place. Here, for the first time, I lived on the Scowlitz Indian Reserve for the summer and developed several friendships in the community which deepened my interest in Coast Salish connections to land. I lived and worked in Scowlitz again while undertaking research at another Stó:lō archaeological site

called Xáy:tem, an ancient village site located at one of the giant boulders that Stó:lō stories tell as being a place where *Xeels* transformed ancestors into stone. Stó:lō community members had been very active in protecting this place from the total destruction a proposed housing development intended. This experience was markedly different from my previous ones working at Scowlitz: the *Xeels* story and the grand visible presence of the transformer rock made visible the connections of the current community members to the places we were working. During this period, I also had the opportunity to prepare several maps for the Upper Skagit in Washington which were later successfully used to support their litigation for the recognition of a treaty right to harvest shellfish within their territory. These experiences highlighted to me the ways that contemporary Coast Salish people relate to place.

In 1993, I enrolled in a graduate ethnographic field school with Drs. Julie Cruikshank and Bruce Miller of UBC. That summer, these professors and five other students were welcomed into the home of Frank Malloway, Stó:lō bighouse leader and Chief of the Yakweakwioose First Nation. My project was to research and write a life history of Frank's father, Chief Richard Malloway, a lifelong politician and a central figure in the local revival of the Coast Salish winter dance (and, incidently, an informant of Claude Lévi-Strauss for his work *The Way of the Masks*) (Thom *et al.* 1994; Lévi-Strauss 1982). My summer stay in the Malloway longhouse was a transformative experience, both personally and academically. A range of experiences of difference stunned me, from the coffee and food shared to the matters of importance and concern brought forward by the people with whom I talked and worked. Archaeological research seemed a more distant

challenge in interpretation and academic story telling (of the kinds talked about by Bender 1998 in her marvellous book *Stonehenge*), compared with the deeper nuance of everyday Coast Salish life in which I only now had the opportunity to become involved. As I came to understand Coast Salish lifeways and worldviews, I saw the centrality of land and particular places in people's talk about history, community, family, morality and spirituality.

In the late summer of 1994, I was hired as a part of an archaeological team to salvage cultural materials from an ancient Cowichan village site at Somenos Creek. We worked closely with Cowichan councillors, elders and younger community members, respecting cultural protocols in handling the remains of the deceased. As we excavated the site, many ancient human remains were uncovered, provoking a strong emotional reaction of the Cowichan elders and community members to close down the excavations and reinter the ancient remains. These events led to a decade-long moratorium on the housing development that had been planned for that location. During my time working at this site – the first time I had worked with Island Hul'qumi'num people on Vancouver Island – I came to better understand the links between the living and the dead, ancestors and the land, particularly through the stories and experiences shared with us by the Cowichan members who participated in the project.

My social networks in the Coast Salish community grew through these experiences. I became employed as a researcher at Stó:lō Nation and worked on place names, oral history documentation, co-organization and implementation of a large-scale traditional

use project, development of research policy and protocols, land and resource use consultations with governments, and authored several papers for senior high school curricula. During my three years as an employee at Stó:lō Nation, I largely suspended the kinds of formal anthropological participant observation research that I might otherwise have engaged in, and worked explicitly as a hired hand. From my position I developed a critical understanding of the larger social and political issues of inequality and injustice that were the foundation of the Aboriginal rights and title claims that Stó:lō Nation has been actively engaged in resolving. The opportunity to work on a daily basis over this extended period of time gave me a privileged grounding in language, history, social structure and the broad cultural world in which Coast Salish people operated. These experiences all reiterated to me the importance of *the land* as a central figure in Coast Salish life.

It was at this point that I entered graduate studies at McGill University to undertake the doctoral research out of which this ethnography has been written. I became fascinated by the relationship between structure and agency in how place names, stories and personal experiences are evoked in making senses of place. During this time, the Supreme Court of Canada gave their judgement on the *Delgamuukw* decision, outlining Chief Justice Antonio Lamer's powerful vision of Aboriginal title (Thom 2001a). I crafted a research proposal to investigate how Coast Salish place names, stories and narratives of personal experience are articulated in contexts that engage or highlight local views of Coast Salish Aboriginal title. In the summer of 2000, I returned to British Columbia to undertake this fieldwork.

The personal and political support for doing contemporary ethnographic research had changed at Stó:lō Nation, leaving me to find a new location for my research in the Coast Salish world. I strongly wanted to work in a Halkomelem-speaking community so that the time I had put into learning the language would continue to be useful. Having worked as an archaeologist with Cowichan Tribes at the Somenos Creek site, and on an ancestral Penelakut village site on Galiano Island, I decided to see if the leadership at the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group would be interested in the kinds of questions I wanted to address.

On May 25th, 2000, I made a telephone 'cold call' to Joey Caro, who was then a Researcher at the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group. I explained my project to him from my cell phone while sitting in my parked car outside a café in my parents' hometown of Abbotsford. I became concerned that his seemingly uninterested responses could mean that I would not have an easy time entering into research in this community. Joey then asked again what my name was. I replied. He said "Brian Thom. You're the guy with the website, aren't you. Your website rocks, why don't you come over and meet with us next week". I was exuberant. In 1997 I had started to maintain a website of my writings about Coast Salish and Aboriginal title and rights issues. The long-lived (relative to the internet) site continually gets between thirty and seventy hits per day and has become the top ranked site for the keyword "Coast Salish" on the Google search engine. I had never anticipated that this modest web project would form the common ground for new relationships back in the Coast Salish community.

Over the following weeks, Joey graciously introduced me to many of the community leaders and workers who provided me support for my project (see Appendix D which outlines the research protocol). I spent the summer visiting elders, holding focus groups, facilitated by Joey, to discuss my research, and volunteering for various tasks at the office. By September, the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group offered me a position as a researcher to assist them in preparation for negotiations with the federal and provincial governments to resolve long-standing Aboriginal title and rights issues in a comprehensive treaty settlement. Two key committees of elders (the Mapping Committee and the Elders' Advisory Board) were formed in the fall and winter of 2000–2001, which were instrumental in providing a forum for group discussion of issues of place, land and reconciling Aboriginal title claims. The Mapping Committee was formed to work on re-crafting the boundary line that the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group had submitted to the BC Treaty Commission (BCTC) as a representation of its traditional territory. The Elders Advisory Board, while formed to provide advice to the Chiefs on negotiations issues, focussed much of its early energy on discussing issues of overlapping claims and 'shared territories'. I also initiated a land use and occupancy study for which two young community researchers and I organized living-room meetings with elders and knowledgeable community members to discuss important places in the land with which people had direct experience or about which they wished to talk. These conversations were highly open-ended and as frequently centred on ideas of territory, kinship and sharing as on map biographies of subsistence land use.

In these meetings and interviews, I found myself often being asked to help make sense in

Coast Salish terms of the legal, political and bureaucratic systems and the concepts they operate within, engaging and sometimes subverting land claims. The time taken to understand the perspectives of the elders, leaders and community members through these interviews, focus groups and committees also became important in developing negotiation strategies. By early 2003, my role as researcher diminished and since this time I have spent most of my working time as Senior Negotiations Support, developing ways to express community mandates in the active land claims negotiations. In this work I have gained much from the opportunity of close association with Robert Morales, a Cowichan lawyer and Chief Negotiator for the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group. He and Joey Caro have been instrumental in shaping the relationships and rapport I have enjoyed in the community, and working through the ideas about place that have informed this ethnography. Though I have not included their voices in this ethnography, their influence and thinking cannot be understated.

Throughout this research project, Island Hul'qumi'num people have continued to struggle against an ongoing alienation of lands and resources in their territory through privatization of crown assets and resources, destruction of important bathing sites and repeated desecrations of ancient and recent burials and graveyards. Nevertheless, the people I have worked with remain hopeful that through dialogue – through sharing their experiences, knowledge, histories and perspectives on the land – power relations will shift and the dynamics of the social inequalities they face will change. It is my hope that by engaging in this work and writing this ethnography I will contribute in some way to these important aspirations.

Outline and Summary of Chapters

Feld and Basso's (1996b) seminal collection of essays titled *Senses of Place* has provided an important guiding perspective for this work. Their book is a collection of visions of places presented as intimately experienced, embedded in history and local knowledge.

> We seek to move beyond facile generalizations about place being culturally constructed by describing specific ways in which places naturalize different worlds of sense. Further, we aim to equate such ethnographic evocations with local theories of dwelling – which is not just living in place but also encompasses ways of fusing setting to situation, locality to life-world. We take seriously the challenge to ground these ethnographies closely in the dialogues with local voices that animated them in the first place – that is, we take seriously the challenge to register a full range of discursive and non-discursive modes of expression through which everyday and poetically heightened senses of place are locally articulated . (Feld and Basso 1996a:8)

In hoping to achieve something of the nuance and groundedness of Feld and Basso's collection of essays, I have organized my chapters along a multiplicity of axes in the Coast Salish understanding of place. The chapters are presented on topics that I perceive form central themes in Coast Salish understandings of their land. Through the narratives provided and discussed, I argue that places are linked to spirit power, kinship, and social organization, how they teach relationships to the animal world, how they can become a medium of history, and how they are the active mediums of social interaction (i.e. a metaphorical device to establish, maintain and change social relationships).

Following the introduction is a short chapter that locates the Coast Salish people, and more specifically the Island Hul'qumi'num communities with whom I have worked closely, in the cultural, social and economic context of contemporary western North America. This context is important for situating the regional ethnography vis-à-vis the

North American ethnographic literature and understanding at a macro-scale some of the major social inequalities that members face and that shape their lives and discourses. Chapter 3 is centred on the place of myth in the Coast Salish landscape. I explore two genres of oral traditions – First Ancestor myths and the legends of the Transformer – which I argue are fundamental to understanding much of the fabric of a Coast Salish worldview.

Chapter 4 draws its title from a recent collection of essays by Rumsey and Weiner (2001) entitled *Emplaced Myth: Space, Narrative and Knowledge in Aboriginal Australia and Papua New Guinea.* This chapter explores the intimate, tactile and experienced senses of place that Coast Salish people encounter when engaging the spirit world. For Coast Salish people, spirit power is concretely rooted in certain places, connected to them by family teachings, stories and the personal solitary engagements a person has when encountering their guardian spirit helpers. This chapter contains accounts of encounters with these powers through narratives of personal experiences and myth-time stories. In these stories, people encounter their guardian spirit powers at secluded sacred bathing pools, in places that supernatural creatures classed as *stlalaqum* live, and at the sites of large rocks imbued with powers to control forces in the natural world.

Chapter 5 deals with two perspectives on names and place. The first section draws out the important associations Coast Salish people make between their hereditary personal names and particular places associated with the history of other bearers of those hereditary names. Through these names, place is bound up with the very identity of an

individual. Time is subsumed by place in the stories of ancestral title holders and contemporary networks of kin who carry these names. The second section of this chapter is a discussion of Coast Salish place names, and how place names are evoked in contemporary dialogue and discourses concerning Aboriginal title claims. Place names have been extensively documented in the Island Hul'qumi'num area by previous researchers (see especially Rozen 1985). The importance of the continued use of place names as a way of marking and thinking about the landscape was raised as a critical issue in the context of Hul'qumi'num being a highly endangered language. These first chapters sketch out philosophical and existential connections Coast Salish people have to the land.

Chapter 6 separates this presentation of Coast Salish world views from the later chapters which deal with the social, economic and political relations of place. In chapter 6, I present several oral narratives of historical and contemporary alienations of land from Island Hul'qumi'num communities by colonial processes. Central to the first part of this chapter are narratives by Abraham C. Joe, Fred Modeste and Angus Smith. Each of these individuals frames, with eloquence and insight, the power relations at play in decentring Coast Salish control of their lands. The chapter concludes with a number of narratives of resistance led by Island Hul'qumi'num people over the years, from early land protests and petitions to the King of England to the current treaty negotiations. Land – and Coast Salish configurations of relationships to it – has always been the centre of these conflicts.

Chapter 7 is the first of three chapters that examine the principles and practice of Coast

Salish land tenure. This chapter presents a model of the Coast Salish land tenure system developed through an extensive ethnographic literature review and interviews with community members. Key to the model presented for system is the notion that particular places are owned corporately by residence groups while other areas are held in common by residence groups. The social problems of access and sharing within these owned areas are discussed as well as the logic of exclusion from these lands. I include a critical review of the few historical ethnographies that have treated land as *not* owned in any way, and discuss some recent manifestations of these land tenure principles as seen in the use of *Indian Act* Certificates of Possession on Indian Reserves.

Chapter 8, the second of the land tenure chapters, presents an analysis of the notion of 'territory'. The idea of territory is associated with a larger social unit than the residence group or local residence group, often called (inappropriately, c.f.. Kennedy 1995; Miller and Boxberger 1994) the 'tribe'. In this chapter I begin with a brief review of the Aboriginal territory debate in the ethnographic literature, from which I take that any model of territory must be formulated as being tied to local ideas of sharing, property and kin relations. In the Coast Salish context, I review how ethnographic maps have shown territories as based on watershed areas that include residence group property, or on the basis of shared language or dialect. Each type of ethnographic mapping has produced models which have different shapes and sizes of territories and suggest different social units as the appropriate aggregate which relates to territory. Comparatively similar models of territory are shown to be found in other areas of the Northwest Coast. I argue that one of the distinct features of the cultures in this area are the attributes of sharing

amongst kin, having certain regions held jointly as territories, and aggregates of residence groups holding rights to enforce trespass rules with outsiders.

In chapter 9, I conclude the ethnographic chapters by grappling with the seeming paradox in the notion of Coast Salish territoriality being embedded in a moral ethos of borderless kin networks. I turn to Barth's (2000) suggestion that concepts of borders and boundaries have to be relativized in the context of local cultural and linguistic constructs. I argue that delineating territories based on strictly on Coast Salish land use and occupancy is inadequate to take into account broader relationships between people and place. Property, language, residence and identity are categories which are appropriate to Coast Salish understandings of their territorial boundaries, while ideas and practices of kin, travel, descent and sharing make boundaries permeable. The chapter concludes with a consideration of strategies involved in the boundary lines created by Coast Salish leaders in the context of putting forward to the state their claims to the land, and the cautious treatment of these by community members who are concerned that relationships between kin and to place are threatened by the power that such expressions have to transform Coast Salish social and political relations.

The final chapter concludes that these senses of place are centrally involved in the formation and maintenance of Coast Salish identity and social organization, becoming a key aspect of Coast Salish ways of being. When Coast Salish senses of place are considered as a whole way of dwelling in the land, property relationships can be seen as central connecting nodes between the various phenomenally experienced engagements

with place and the experiences and structures of power between people at and between these places. These property relationships are argued to be important aspects of Coast Salish Aboriginal title. The utility of this claim is evaluated against the tests for proof of Aboriginal title established by the Supreme Court. While theoretical notions of dwelling challenge many western cultural assumptions embedded in these tests, overall, there is important legal space for senses of place to be recognized and affirmed as central aspects of the relations to land which give rise to Aboriginal title and the place of Aboriginal people in Canada.

Chapter 2
The Island Hul'qumi'num Coast Salish People in the 21st Century

The goal of this chapter is threefold: to provide an overview of the locations and names of the many communities in the Coast Salish world; to provide a portrait of the contemporary social and economic situation of the Island Hul'qumi'num communities; and to review very briefly the main scholarly works which review the major features of Coast Salish culture and life, in particular those few works which have dealt squarely with questions relating to place and relationships to land. This introductory context provides something of the outline of the shape and complexity of regional and local Coast Salish social and political organization. As I have worked most closely with Island Hul'qumi'num people, I provide the most detail about the relationships of these First Nations communities. This context also reveals, through the view of census data collected during my fieldwork, the demographic, social and economic status of the Island Hul'qumi'num communities, and in particular their relative poverty and the historic reasons for the recent paucity of secure land holdings. The brief review of the ethnographic literature shows that while Coast Salish culture and history are relatively well described, few of these works have considered issues of the phenomenology of place.

The Island Hul'qumi'num People in the Coast Salish Continuum

The Coast Salish are a large number of First Nations and Native American communities in and around the waters of the Strait of Georgia, Juan de Fuca Strait, Puget Sound and lower Fraser River (Suttles 1987b; 1990, see also Figure 2.1 in this study). All of the

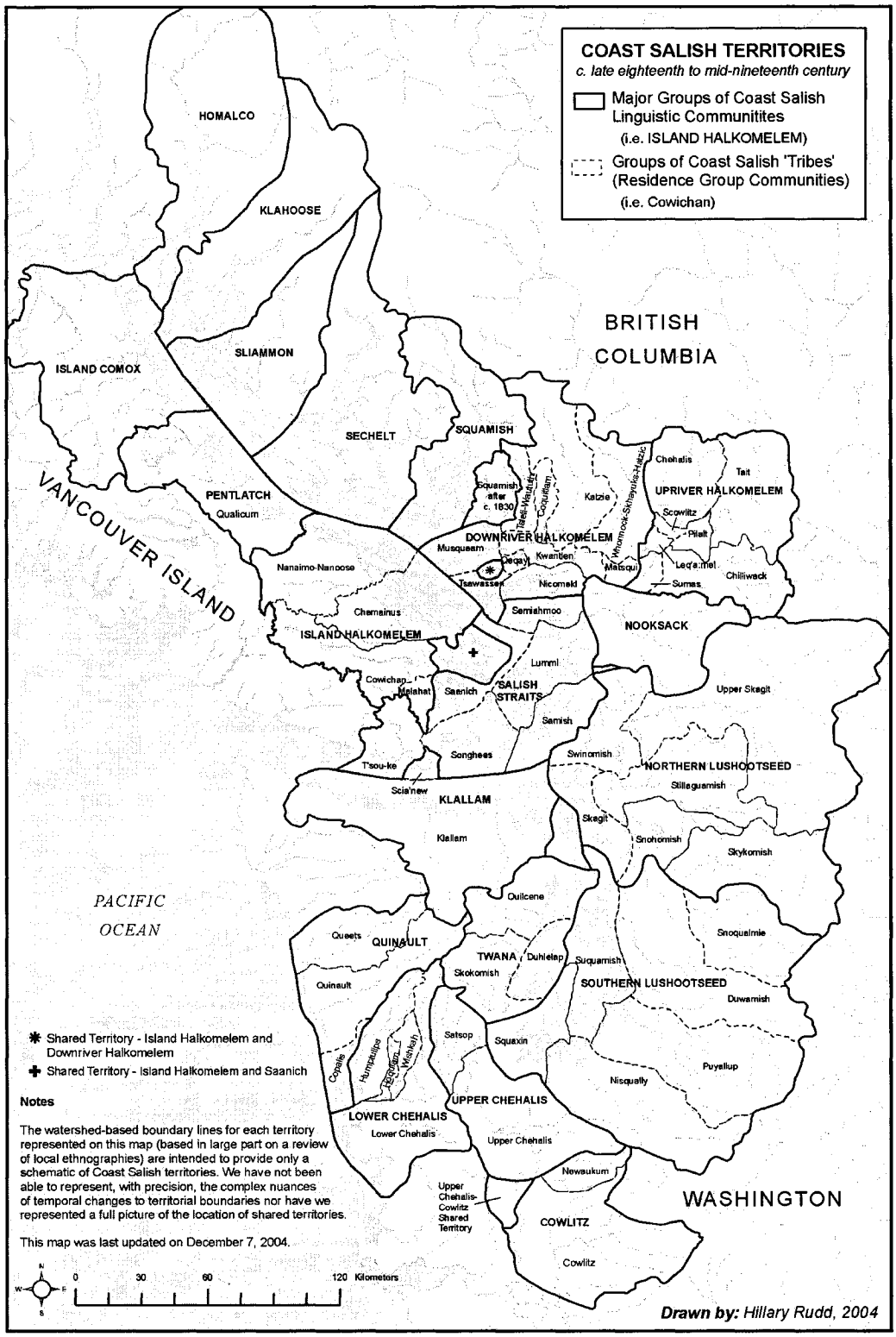


Figure 2.1. Coast Salish Territories (drawn by Hillary Rudd, 2004)

major languages and language communities in the Coast Salish world are summarized in Table 2.1. Another seven languages are proposed by linguists as being members of the interior branch of the Salishan language family (Thompson and Kinkade 1990:33).

Table 2.1: Principle Coast Salish cultural regions and languages

Northern Coast Salish*	Central Coast Salish†	Puget Sound Salish§	Southern Coast Salish ‡	Oregon Salishan ✣	Bella Coola Salishan¤
Homalco	Halkomelem	Lushootseed	Lower Chehalis	Tilamook	Nuxalk
Sliammon	Straits Salish	*(~40 named communities)*	Upper Chehalis		
Klahoose	Squamish		Quinalt		
Sechelt	Nooksack	Twana *(9 named communities)*	Cowlitz		

* (Kennedy and Bouchard 1990b; Suttles 1990)
† (Suttles 1990; Suttles 1987b)
§ (Suttles and Lane 1990)
‡ (Hajda 1990)
✣ (Seaburg and Miller 1990)
¤ (Kennedy and Bouchard 1990a)

The Northern Coast Salish, Central Coast Salish (with the exception of Nooksack) and Bella Coola Salishan groups are all in Canada. The Puget Sound Salish, Southern Coast Salish and Oregon Salishan groups are all in the United States. As I will discuss further in Chapter 9, there are strong social, kinship and ceremonial ties between all of these communities, despite the imposition of an international boundary through the middle of the Coast Salish world.

This study is centred in a particular area of this Coast Salish world, which I will refer to as Island Hul'qumi'num. Though in common speech, people do not normally identity themselves as "Island Hul'qumi'num" people, most people acknowledge that their language *Hul'q'umi'num'* is the island dialect (spoken on Vancouver Island and the Gulf

Islands) of the language known in English as Halkomelem. Upriver and Downriver dialects are spoken by Coast Salish communities along the lower two hundred kilometres of the Fraser River. The complex contemporary political landscape on the lower Fraser River has been described by Kew and Miller (1999) and Miller (2001). Also very closely connected through kinship, social and ceremonial life are the neighbouring Straits Salish speaking communities. The relationship between languages, Indian bands and contemporary umbrella political organizations for these two language groups is set out in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2. Relationship of Coast Salish languages, Indian Bands and Political Groups

Language ***(English spelling)***	**Dialect (in bold), Contemporary Indian Bands and political affiliation**
Halkomelem	**Island (*Hul'qumi'num*):** Cowichan*, Chemainus*§, Penelakut*, Halalt*§, Lyackson*, Lake Cowichan*, Malahat†¤, Snuneymuxw§, Nanoose†, and Qualicum **Downriver (*Hun'q'umi'n'um'*):** Musqueam, Tsleil-Waututh (Burrard)§, Katzie, Qeqayt, Coquitlam, Tsawwassen§, Kwantlen‡, and Matsqui‡ **Upriver (*Halq'eméylem*):** Aitchelitz‡, Chawathil‡, Kwaw-kwaw-Apilt‡, Lakahahmen‡, Popkum‡, Cheam‡, Scowlitz‡, Seabird Island‡, Shxw'ow'hamel‡, Skawahlook‡, Skowkale‡, Soowahlie‡, Squiala‡, Skway‡, Sumas‡, Tzeachten‡, Yakweakwioose‡, Chehalis, Skwah, Peters, Union Bar, and Yale
Straits Salish	**Saanich**: Tsartlip⁜¤, Tseycum ¤, Pauquachin⁜¤, Tsawout⁜¤ **Victoria-Area:** Scia'new (Beecher Bay Klallam)†, T'sou-ke (Sooke)†, Songhees†, Esquimalt **Mainland:** Semiahmoo⁜ **Olympic Peninsula (USA):** Klallam
Key to political affiliations	* Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group member bands † Te'mexw Treaty Association member bands § Naut'samawt Tribal Council member bands (and also Homalco, Klahoose, and Sliammon) ‡ Stó:lō Nation member bands ⁜ Sencothen Alliance ¤ Saanich Tribal Fisheries Association

Though there are some linguistic and cultural differences between Island Hul'qumi'num

and Straits Salish communities, a very significant historical difference is that all the Canadian Straits Salish communities (with the exception of Semiahmoo) entered into Douglas Treaties in the 1850s (Duff 1969). Aside from the Malahat (who today affiliate largely with the Straits Salish) and Snuneymuxw (who are politically independent from other Island Hul'qumi'numm communities), none of the Island Hul'qumi'num (or any of the other Canadian Coast Salish) communities have ever had their relationship with Canada settled through a treaty.

My fieldwork for this study has been mainly with members of six of the Island Hul'qumi'num communities. The Indian Bands to which these communities belong are the Cowichan Tribes, Chemainus First Nation, Penelakut Tribe, and Lyackson, Halalt, and Lake Cowichan First Nations. The relationship between these Indian bands and the currently recognized and historic residence groups is complex, as the Joint 1876 Indian Reserve commission sometimes established Indian reserves and Indian band organization for several neighbouring communities (Cowichan, Chemainus and Penelakut, for instance), while for others single or multiple Indian reserves were established for single small Indian band populations. Table 2.3 provides an outline of the relationship between contemporary and historic Island Hul'qumi'num Indian Band communities.

Table 2.3. Island Hul'qumi'num Indian tribes and bands, 1850–1999 – modified from Duff (1964:25-26)

Dialect/Regional Groups	Tribes & Bands (1850)	Name given by Reserve Commission (1916)	Present Band Name & Population (Nov 2004)
Qualicum	Qualicum	Qualicum Band	Qualicum First Nation (103)
Nanaimo	Nanaimo (five villages on Nanaimo Harbour & River)	Nanaimo Tribe	Snuneymuxw First Nation (1420)
	Nanoose (Nanoose Harbour)	Nanoose Tribe	Nanoose (Sna-naw-as) First Nation (210)
Chemainus	Chemainus (Kulleet Bay)	Chemainus Tribe: Chemainus Band	Chemainus First Nation (1077)
	Sicameen (Ladysmith Harbour)	Siccameen Band (included:	
	Halalt (Willy Island)	Kumalockasun Band Halalt Band	Halalt Band (198)
	Lyackson (Shingle Point)	Lyackson Band	Lyackson Band (180)
	Penelakut (Kuper Island)	Penelakut Band (included Tsussie)	Penelakut Band (782)
	Yekoloas (Telegraph Harbour)	(joined Penelakut)	
	Lilmalche (Lamalchi Bay)	(joined Penelakut)	
Cowichan	Cowichan Lake	Cowichan Lake Tribe	Lake Cowichan Band (15)
	Somenos (Cowichan River)	Cowichan Tribe (amalgamation in 1888 of:	Cowichan Tribes (3843)
	Quamichan (L. Cowichan R.)	Somenos Quamichan	
	Comiaken (L. Cowichan R.)	Comiaken Clemclemaluts	
	Clemclemaluts (L. Cowichan R.)	Koksilah Kenipsen	
	Koksilah (Koksilah River)	Kilpaulus)	
	Kenipsen (Cowichan Bay)		
	Kilpaulus (Cowichan Bay)		
	Malahat (Saanich Inlet)	(considered part of Saanich Tribe)	Malahat Band (254)

These six Indian Bands are members of the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group, a society formed in 1993 to represent these communities in comprehensive claims negotiations with the federal and provincial governments, for which I have worked in various capacities throughout the duration of this study. There are other Island Hul'qumi'num

First Nations with whom I have had fewer opportunities to work, due in large part to the different approaches to modern-day treaty negotiations that these Island Hul'qumi'num communities have chosen. None of them is a member of the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group.

The Hul'qumi'num Community in the Twenty–First Century: a Statistical View

In 2002, at the time I was actively engaged in this fieldwork, there were 7,850 Island Hul'qumi'num people registered with Indian Bands. Of these, about 5,900 members were in Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group communities. On average, half of the members of Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group communities live on Indian Reserves (IR), with the notable exceptions of Lyackson community members – most live off-reserve, as there is no electricity, water, sewage or ferry transport to their lands on Valdes Island – and Penelakut, many of whom live on the Kuper Island Indian Reserve (see Table 2.4). Though I was privileged to work primarily with elders, according to the 2001 National Census, the median age in these communities is between 22 and 25 years old.

Table 2.4. 2002 Island Hul'qumi'num residence statistics

Band	On–Reserve	Off–Reserve
Chemainus	51%	49%
Cowichan	49%	51%
Halalt	45%	55%
Lake Cowichan	‡	‡
Lyackson	9%	91%
Penelakut	61%	39%
Total	*49%*	*50%*

‡ no residence information for Lake Cowichan was available.

Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group community Indian Reserves are small and scattered, generally located in the river valleys and along coastal bays where their traditional villages and fishing sites were located. Table 2.5 details these Indian Reserves and their total areas.

Table 2.5. Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group Community Indian Reserves

Band	Indian Reserves	Total Hectares
Chemainus	Say-la-quas No. 10 (6 Ha); Squaw-hay-one No. 11 (31 Ha); Oyster Bay No. 12 (116.9 Ha); Chemainus No. 13 (1082.3 Ha)	1236.2 ha
Cowichan	Cowichan No. 1 (2254.1 Ha); Theik No. 2 (30.3 Ha); Kil-pah-las No. 3 (20.6 Ha); Est-patrolas No. 4 (27.8 Ha); Tzart-lam No. 5 (6.5 Ha); Kakalatza No. 6 (9.7 Ha); Skutz No. 7 (7.3 Ha); Skutz No. 8 (14.9 Ha); Cowichan No. 9 (17.9 Ha)	2389.1 ha
Halalt	Halalt Island No. 1 (56.6 Ha); Halalt No. 2 (109.2 Ha)	165.8 ha
Lake Cowichan	Lake Cowichan No. 1 (44.4 Ha)	44.4 ha
Lyackson	Lyackson No. 3 (710.6 Ha); Shingle Point No. 4 (32 Ha); Porlier Pass No. 5 (2 Ha)	744.6 ha
Penelakut	Tsussie No. 6 (15.5 Ha); Kuper Island No. 7 (556.7 Ha); Tent Island No. 8 (34.4 Ha); Galiano Island No. 9 (29.1 Ha)	635.7 ha

These Indian Reserve communities are located in a moderately densely populated corner of British Columbia on southeast Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands. The cities, towns and districts of Ladysmith, Chemainus, Crofton, North Cowichan, Duncan, Lake Cowichan, Cowichan Bay, Cobble Hill, Shawnigan Lake, and Ganges have all grown up around these Indian Reserve communities.

According to the 2001 Federal Census about 81,500 non-Aboriginal people lived in the off-Reserve areas in the territory identified by Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group. About

3,960 of these off Indian Reserve people declared themselves as having an 'Aboriginal identity'. Some, though certainly not all of these people, are Island Hul'qumi'num people who have chosen to live 'in town' while others are members of Nuu-chah-nulth and Kwakwaka'wakw communities from more remote parts of Vancouver Island. Anecdotally, I am told by people who work in Indian Friendship Centres that many other off Indian Reserve First Nations people are part of a prairie Cree diaspora now living in British Columbia.

Land ownership in the territory claimed by the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group communities is an overwhelming factor in the shaping of contemporary relationships of, and experiences with, place. Due to a massive (800,000 hectare) land grant given to Robert Dunsmuir in 1884 to build the E&N Railway along a stretch of Vancouver Island, and an aggressive early colonial policy of granting preemptions to encourage settlement in the Cowichan Valley and Gulf Islands, almost the entire traditional territory of the Hul'qumi'num people is owned in fee-simple by non-First Nations individuals and companies. In 2004, of the approximately 334,000 hectares in the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group traditional territory, 84 percent are privately held, 14 percent is federal or provincial Crown land, and 2 percent are Indian Reserves. Of the privately held lands, four large timber companies hold the majority (60 percent) of Hul'qumi'num territory, with TimberWest owning about 115,000 hectares of land in Hul'qumi'num territory, Weyerhaeuser owning about 65,000 hectares, Hancock Timber Resource Group owning around 13,000 hectares and the District Municipality of North Cowichan owning around 5,400 hectares. Being privately owned, fee simple lands, these forest lands are not

subject to the same provincial government land and resource management laws as are leased and tenured Crown lands in the rest of British Columbia. This massive alienation of the ownership of land has left little room for Hul'qumi'num voice and control in land-use decision-making. The companies have worked in the past twenty years to strip the forest land bare using large-scale clear-cut logging and shipping much of the harvested timber as raw logs to American and other foreign markets. Figure 2.2 maps out the general locations of these various land holdings.

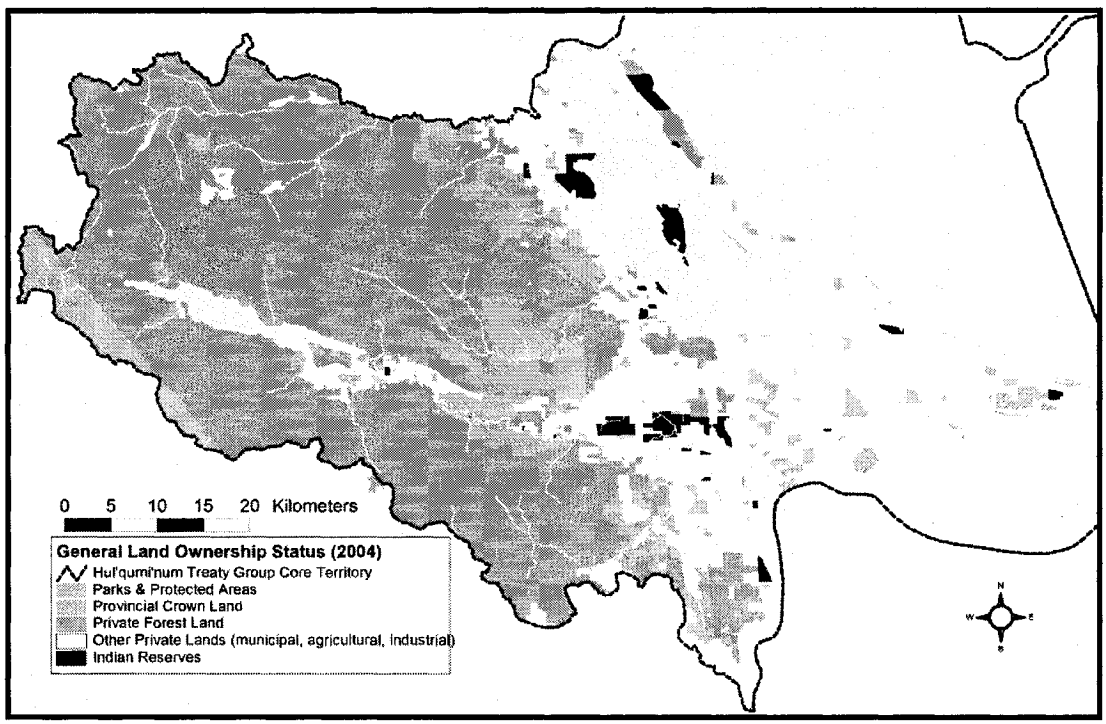


Figure 2.2. General land ownership status, 2004.

Recent economic and social statistics collected in the 2001 National Census indicate something of the lived experience of a people largely dispossessed of their lands. As the sample sizes were greatest on Cowichan IR 1, Chemainus IR 13 and Kuper Island IR 7, I have used the census data from these communities. I will list reported numbers in

parantheses behind the summary statements below i.e: (Cowichan; Chemainus; Penelakut).

Income levels for Hul'qumi'num members are only a third of the provincial median total annual income of CAN$22,095 for people over fifteen years of age ($8,487; $7,344; $8,112) with nearly half of this income coming from government transfers (38 percent; 43 percent; 48 percent). As for the Hul'qumi'num people who are employed, they generally earn half of the provincial average ($44,307 full-time, $31,039 part-time) for both full- time ($29,105; $19,913; $22,824) and part-time ($17,562; $13,638; no data) employment.

Unemployment is very high in these communities (32.4 percent; 24.2 percent; 23.1 percent) compared to the provincial rate of 8 percent. These unemployment figures reflect the stark reality that the majority of adults are currently not working for pay or in self-employment (69 percent; 67.5 percent; no data). By far, Hul'qumi'num women, many of whom find employment in band offices, service delivery agencies and in retail sales and services, face less unemployment than men (22.6 percent vs 39.5 percent; 18.8 percent vs 27.8 percent; 28.6 percent vs 42.9 percent). Though Hul'qumi'num men are not excluded from these centres of work, their labour is frequently found in manufacturing, construction industries and the trades, and as transport and equipment operators. It is notable that few community members are employed in the once widespread commercial fishing operations. The highly capitalized nature of that industry, along with dramatic decline in local marine stock has fundamentally shifted

Island Hul'qumi'num economies away from the fishery.

Though unemployment is high, few people reported having the opportunity to support their families through traditional harvesting activities such as hunting (13 percent, 9 percent, no data), fishing (30 percent, 12 percent, no data) or gathering wild plants (38 percent, 24 percent, no data). A harvest study commissioned by the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group Chiefs (Fediuk and Thom 2003), confirms that people harvest and consume dramatically less traditional food than they desire on an annual basis. However, our study showed that although participation rates were relatively low, and access to traditional land and marine resources is widely considered grossly inadequate, the traditional foods that were obtained were distributed broadly in the community. Almost every household (n=180) reported having a harvester for the house; the largest cohort of harvesters was between 19 to 34 years old. Fifty-eight percent of harvesters were men and 42 percent were women. Seventy-nine percent of the households reported harvesting in 2001, while 96 percent of households reported having used at least one traditional species in 2001.

As I discuss in chapter 5, residential schools along with land alienation are seen by many Island Hul'qumi'num people as the two major factors underlying these social inequalities. Though relatively few living adults attended residential school first hand (23 percent; 16 percent; no data), every family in the community has been touched by the effects of family members having attended them (95 percent; 100 percent; no data). Schools continue today to be difficult sites of socialization for young Hul'qumi'num

people. Of adults ages 19 to 34 years old, over half have not completed high-school (55.8 percent; 53.8 percent; 53.3 percent), compared to the provincial average of 15 percent. Similar to the disparity in employment figures, young Hul'qumi'num women graduate 10–25 percent more frequently than young men.

These statistics are general indicators of the social position of Island Hul'qumi'num people in comparison to the surrounding non-Native communities. There is clearly less economic wealth in these communities than is found in the overall region. The contrast is made more striking by the fact that the Island Hul'qumi'num communities are located around and among the larger non-Native population. One only needs to stand on streets which border the Cowichan Indian Reserve in Duncan (like Boys Road or Tzouhalem Road) to note the visible differences between the communities. One of the primary motivating factors in contemporary political life in these communities is to flatten these economic and social inequalities.

Key ethnographic, linguistic and historical works on Coast Salish culture and place

I have found the most informative ethnographic synthesis of the Central Coast Salish region in Suttles (1951) and Kennedy (2000) for matters concerning social, political and economic organization; Amoss (1978) and Kew (1970) for cosmology and contemporary ceremonial life. On the specific topic of place and relationship to land in Central Coast Salish communities, there are a few important works by anthropologists, linguists and historians. Many of the early ethnographic and linguistic studies provide inventories and

less comprehensive lists of place names and their etymologies[6]. More recently Suttles (1996) has also mapped the distribution of place names in Squamish and Downriver *Hun'q'umi'n'um'* to make an argument for the resolution of overlapping claims in a specific land claims case. Mohs (1994) and Miller (1998) have published on the importance of 'sacred sites' in the face of the rapid recent transformation of the landscape. Suttles (1981) has provided some useful conceptual framing of the importance of 'wilderness' in Coast Salish ritual life in the context of an impact study for proposed hydro-electric and forestry developments.

The work that takes a perspective closest to the one I set out in this thesis is the work of Bierwert (1999, chapter 2). Her work highlights Stó:lō experiences of land, taking an ancient fishing site in the Fraser Canyon and exploring "five ways to know a place": as a natural place; a social place; a source of danger, a historic place and a mythic place. Her carefully written ethnographic picture brings forward the kinds of relationships Stó:lō people have with the land, not privileging one over the other, but relating this place as experienced intersubjectively by her and the community members she works with. The themes she describes weave together the power of the *figures* in the landscape, places which have agency and power in the everyday lives of the people who experience them. Later in her book, Bierwert draws on Coast Salish voices engaged in contests over

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[6] For work on Coast Salish place names inventories, consult Boas (1891:569; 1894: 454), Bouchard and Kennedy (1991:160-170), Brooks (1997), Duff (1952a:30-39), Eells (1985:275-287), Elliott (1990), Elmendorf (1960:29-55), Galloway (1993:649-662), Galloway and Richardson (1983), Hill-Tout (1900; 1902b; 1904a; 1904b; 1907), Jenness (1935a; 1935b), Kennedy and Bouchard (1983:149-170), Kinkade (1997), Parsons (1981), Rozen (1979; 1985), Simonsen et al (1995), Smith (1940b:7-20; 1941:206-211; 1950:339-341), Snyder (1968), Suttles (1951:7-45; 1955:15-20; 1990:454-5; 1996), Waterman (1922), and (1987:215-222).

colonial and state power at the places where these figures dwell to describe how ancestral fishing sites hold great presence in the Stó:lō political landscape. The salmon become the kind of figure she portrayed the land as, with the same kinds of power and agency that shape and are shaped by Stó:lō (and Coast Salish) experiences of the world.

Historians such as Marshall (1999), Lutz (1999a; 1999b; 1999c) and Carlson (1996) have focussed on the long history of alienation of lands and resources by European colonialism, and the active resistance the Coast Salish communities have had to these processes. They each draw on oral histories to paint a picture of Coast Salish relationships to land, and place these narratives in a framework of a social history of colonialism in British Columbia. They spell out, in a historical framework familiar to a predominantly Euro–Canadian audience, connections to the land 'since time immemorial' and how colonization has severed these connections. They are made in collaboration with the First Nations political organizations whose people are the objects of study, and can be held up as examples of successful collaborative research, done with a sensitivity to the political importance of writing about history and culture. These works challenge the 'frontier history' narratives held by a mainstream, Euro–Canadian public who is challenged by the state's current engagement in Aboriginal rights and title issues.

Land, territory and local places have played such major roles in the ethnographic literature suggesting that 'place' is a critically important concept and a need for the development of theoretical perspectives which account for its central place in Coast Salish culture. These ethnographic, linguistic and historical works provide important

perspectives and context for the present study. Possibly the most debated concepts to emerge from the Coast Salish ethnographic tradition are the various models, formulations and terms used to describe social and political organization. In this study, I contribute to this debate by proposing two key units of social organization, the cognatic descent group and the residence group through which relationships to place are engaged. The tradition of ethnographic work on cosmology and ceremonial life has, in my experience, resonated within Coast Salish communities, being at times a touchstone by which people have continued to learn, debate and develop their understanding of cultural practices and traditions. The views of Coast Salish cosmology and ceremonial life developed in this study are largely consistent with this ethnographic tradition. My study, however, does depart from the tradition in distinctively focussing on the ways in which spirit power is embodied and experienced in place, breaking down the ontological and epistemological separations of culture and nature which have limited prior understandings of Coast Salish views of humans and their relationships with other powerful beings and places in the world. Finally, I recognize that the existing Coast Salish literature often emphasizes and challenges the legacies of colonial power, particularly as such power has been applied to shaping modern landscapes in the Coast Salish world. I argue that a loosely phenomenological anthropology, which is attentive to narratives of history and culture, and which brings together divergent theory and data on territory, property, language, history, cosmology, and mythology, contributes a subtle understanding of the ways Coast Salish people resist these colonial powers. The relationships of meaning, power, property and territory that are experienced by dwelling in the place may indeed, as I set out in chapter 10, significantly contribute to local definitions of Aboriginal title. It is

through such a theory of senses of place and the ethnographic description of its manifestation in Coast Salish culture that I contribute to the local ethnographic tradition.

Chapter 3
Myth, First Ancestors, and the Transformer: Foundations for Place

Myths, 'True Stories' and Place

Stories bind people to place, mythological stories especially so. The mythological canon of a people sets out important cultural figures and imagery. In hunter-gatherer societies where land is central to daily experience, it is richly rooted in these figures and imagery, setting out modes of relating to and understanding one's presence and place in the world. Hunter-gatherers live in a "storied world", where shared experiences and familiarity with the land, its people, resources and features create a way of knowing that is revealed in stories (Ridington 1999:19). In Coast Salish culture, oral traditions about the First Ancestors of local communities and the mythic journeys of the Transformer who travelled the land, provide some of the basic cultural material by which people develop and express their relationship to the land. Through these stories, ancestors are associated with and embodied in the land. The myths themselves *are* the legendary people who are fixed in these places. The telling of the stories, along with the experience of these beings at these places, bring the legendary people into being (Ingold 2000a:92). Places come to be these ancestors, having their intentionality, powers, property and ability to provide for those who practice the respectful relations that ancestral reciprocity requires.

Any investigation of oral traditions opens up the problem of meaning and interpretation. How can one understand the meaning of oral traditions when they are told in frameworks based in the languages, assumptions, root metaphors, and discursive conventions of cultural traditions entirely different from one's own? Is it possible to interpret any given

telling from such traditions across sharp cultural divides? Some scholars have argued (i.e. Morantz 2001; 2002; Vincent 2002) that in the context of using oral traditions to inform western accounts of histories, the ontological and epistemological divide is too great to take into account indigenous worldviews of their own histories. Part of the difficulty that these problems pose arises from the incongruent objectives of western discourse and indigenous oral traditions. The gap between the intended meanings of oral tradition, as told by native narrators, and those meanings sought by scholars widens as the theoretical or historical objectives become further removed from understanding local, culturally and historically situated contexts.

For the scholars who have struggled with these issues, part of the resolution is in acknowledging that the telling of oral traditions is a social act (Cruikshank *et al.* 1990). Though the form, content, imagery and figures in oral traditions tend to be quite stable, the meaning of their telling is as diverse as the intentions of a story teller's imagination. Individual narratives thus reveal the power of the storytellers to make sense of the world which the stories help bring into being (Bringhurst 1999:66). While there is personal creativity involved in the creation of such meanings, they are formulated in the framework of broader cultural discourse. Through sorting out communicative norms and framing particular narrative events within larger discursive practice, oral traditions can contribute to the understanding of culture (Valentine and Darnell 1999a). Land, and more specifically the relationship between people and place, is an important object of Coast Salish discourse. In this chapter I demonstrate how, through several individual narratives of the mythological stories of the First Ancestors and the Transformer, Coast Salish

people have engaged a discourse of place which reveals the power of place to bind people, ancestors and the land in complex and dynamic networks of relationships (Poirier 2004:211).

Interpreting these individual narrative and discursive practices remains a challenge, even once the importance of the narrative event itself is acknowledged. Scholars of the oral traditions of indigenous people have provided some guidance in suggesting that understanding narrative genres and the manners in which tellers situate their performances of stories within these genres are important means to situate local understandings (Jacobs 1959b; Hymes 2003). The anthropological discourse of Northwest Coast oral traditions has often been framed in terms of the analysis of the genres of myths and legends. Myth is a slippery word that has been used imprecisely to describe a wide array of narrative forms. In general, oral traditions of mythical form can be taken to have a number of key elements: they are accepted as 'fact' on faith, often being sacred narratives; they take place in a remote time and in a different world; and they have non-humans as main characters. Myths often explore themes of creation of people and the challenges which may be experienced by people in their lives. Legends are a contrasting category of oral tradition. Frequently taken as factual and sometimes sacred, legends occurred more recently, in a world like that of today, and largely deal with the affairs of human characters (Bascom in Finnegan 1992:147).

Starting with Boas (c.f. Jacobs 1959a:132), anthropologists writing about Northwest Coast oral traditions have generally held to this distinction between 'myth' and 'legend'.

Authors usually support making this distinction by referencing words elicited from Native languages which share the semantic content of myth and legend in English (see Table 3.1).

Table 3.1 Ethno-literary categories in several Northwest Coast languages

	myth	true history/lore	legend/ historic tale/ true story	reference
Tlingit	*λa·gú*		*škaɬni·k*	Hymes 1990:593
Tsimshian	*ʔatáwx̣*		*máɬəsk*	Hymes 1990:593
Haida	*q'aygaang*	*q'ayaagaang*	*giʔahlralaang*	
Squamish	*sx̣^{w}əx̣^{w} lʔámɬʔ*		*syəc*	Kinkade and Mattina 1996:245
Halq'eméylem	*sx̲wōx̲wiyá:m*		*sqwélqwel*	Galloway 1993:613
Hul'q'umi'num'	*sxwi'em'*	*syuth*	*sqwul'qwul'*	Hukari and Peter 1995
Skagit	*siyaho'b'*		*teɬsiyz'cəb'*	Snyder 1964:26

However, as Jacobs (1959a) and more recently Kinkade and Mattina (1996:270) have pointed out, there are important categories of oral tradition, not so readily translated, that must be discerned. Some oral traditions have mythical elements, yet are more than (or other-than) myths. Gitksan *adaawk̲* (as discussed by Sterritt *et al.* 1998) have clear mythical elements, with people marrying animals, voyages to the sky-world, and the transformations of human ancestors into stone. However, they might better be thought of as a kind of oral history, with temporally stable content about genealogies and ownership of land and access to resources. Linguist John Enrico supports such a tri-partite division from Skidegate Haida, which divides stories into *q'aygaang* (myth), *q'ayaagaang* (lineage history), and *giʔahlralaang* (real history, news) (1995:4). In Haida:

> the boundary between 'myth' and 'lineage history' is blurred somewhat by the incorporation of some episodes taken from myths into lineage

> histories, and by the semi-mythical nature of early events and individuals they describe. For the most part, however, lineage histories can be said to begin where the major creation myths leave off. (Enrico 1995:4)

Cove (1987) suggests a different tripartite division of Northern Northwest Coast oral traditions into myth, legend and folktale. Importantly, Cove recognized that Northern Northwest Coast myths further divide into house narratives, shamanic narratives, and secret society narratives. All these sub-divisions of the myth category are the intangible property of individuals or local kin groups. Though no Native terms are given for folktales, he distinguishes these from legends and myths in that they are explicitly thought of as fiction, often with a moral purpose.

These subtle debates about genre and classification of oral narratives have potent currency in Coast Salish communities. While I was producing this study, I had classified the oral narratives following a two-part scheme of *sxwi'em'* and *sqwul'qwul'*, the former being stories rooted in ancient or mythic history as *sxwi'em'* and the later related to more recent events. A very strong sentiment was expressed to me by a several Island Hul'qumi'num elders that the ethno-literary category *sxwi'em'* and its English gloss'myth' were a inappropriate. Their understanding of these terms connoted a sense 'fable' or 'fairy tale', and would imply that their oral traditions were fictional and lacked any grounding in truth. A third category, *syuth* (Hukari and Peter 1995:90) was suggested to me as being appropriate for narratives such as First Ancestor or Transformer stories, which were of mythic character, but were in no sense to be taken as fictional. As found by both Enrico and Cove in the Northern Northwest Coast, the Coast Salish ethno-literary scheme takes into account the particular nature of stories which relate people to

the places were properties and prerogatives of certain social groups are established.

With the above clarifications in mind, I cautiously use the convenient and familiar English term 'myth' or the more precise Island Hul'qumi'num term *syuth* to describe the First Ancestor and transformation stories shared with me[7]. First Ancestor stories are key for understanding aspects of the complex relationship between residence groups, residence groups and an individual person's identity and property relationships in this social world. Transformation stories are at the boundaries of myth and legend in similar ways. The actions of *Xeel's*, the Transformer and the characters that he encounters are set in the times of mythic ancestors, but their presence and power is felt and experienced in the places created or embodied by them. The ancestors which *Xeel's* has inscribed in the land through the exercise of his transformative power require the same kinds of social obligations of reciprocity and respect that other social beings in the Coast Salish world are afforded. Through the narration of these stories, I argue, some of the multiple senses of place begin to be brought into being.

Kwu Yuweenulh Hwulmuhw – "The First Ancestors"

When I began my work in Island Hul'qumi'num communities in 2000, I wanted to get my bearings to communities and places, mythologically speaking. I knew from the ethnographic literature, and to a degree from my work with the Stó:lō in the Fraser

[7] My usage of the term 'myth' throughout this study is meant to convey a category of canonical oral narrative set in ancient times and embedded in the local environment. I do not intend to imply any disrespect or judgement of truth or fact by my use of this term.

Valley, that First Ancestor stories would make a good starting point for this understanding. The First Ancestor canon, I have argued elsewhere (1998) rightly implicates identity, landscape and personal social affiliation. Part of the intent of the telling of these stories has been to express in Coast Salish terms, the legitimacy of their claims to land and resource ownership, and to self-government. They are analogous to a Gitksan *adaawk̲*, made famous in the *Delgamuukw* case (Sterritt *et al.* 1998) in sorting out issues of social affiliation and property. Central Coast Salish communities, like other communities on the Northwest Coast (Adams 1974:172), have 'charter myths' that recall the very First Ancestors on the land who established the original communities, many of which have continued to the present day. This particular mythological canon is unique in North America to Northwest Coast communities (Kinkade and Mattina 1996:270), and is somewhat rare among hunter-gatherers more generally (Ingold 2000a). This reflects the uniqueness of Coast Salish social organization among hunter-gatherers as being settled in large permanent winter villages while recognizing local descent groups, having pervasive notions of property, and having long-standing class-based social stratification (Suttles 1958; 1960).

In the Coast Salish forms of these stories, powerful people drop from the sky or otherwise appear in the world and found the original villages (e.g. Barnett 1955:18, 20-1; Miller and Hilbert 1996). In the days of the First Ancestors, the people experience the extent of their powers, sometimes creating certain abundant resources in an area, sometimes overextending their power and threatening the stability of the communities. The stories frequently refer to fundamental teachings about the importance of exogamous

kin relations and extended family networks. They also commemorate prominent landmarks in the Coast Salish world through the places that the ancestors landed or exercised and experienced their powers. The places at which these First Ancestors first fell from the sky, visited, settled or had some adventure, are frequently recognized by toponyms that have a mythological association with the stories.

These oral traditions (*syuth*) are distinguished by Island Hul'qumi'num people from the Animal people myths (*sxwi'em'*) told to children. In the *syuth*, the ancestors *actually* existed and community members can trace their descent from them or live in the villages they founded. The deeds of the First Ancestors very much form a part of contemporary lived history and experience. These First Ancestors thus provide a spatial and temporal source for present-day social structures (Boas 1898:122). They represent an important record of residence group 'title' to these areas of land and resource locations where ancestors established or taught harvesting techniques. They are recognized by the people living in the community as 'ancestors', but direct lineage or descent from these ancestors is not recognized by all. For the residence group, the figures whose deeds are recounted provide a 'charter' for the communities, outlining rights and privileges of resident members.

Local descent groups, the other major unit of social organization, trace their ancestry from legendary (but not necessarily mythic) or prominent ancestors. Only certain families are able to trace their descent from mythic First Ancestor figures. Such notable families are called *hwnuts'aluwum* (or cognate terms in several Salishan languages) and,

as I discuss in detail in chapter 7, are similar in many ways to a 'House' in the sense of European nobility (Jenness 1935b:52). These local descent groups have property, both material and intangible, that has been inherited over the generations within the group. This property includes: names of these First Ancestors; certain family-owned *sniw'* (private knowledge such as special ritual teachings or detailed resource harvesting knowledge (Suttles 1958); family ritual property (*ts'uxwten*) which these First Ancestors brought with them from the heavens (Barnett 1955:291); certain *hwnuts'aluwum*-owned legends, songs, dances, secret words, medicinal remedies and ceremonial prerogatives (Barnett 1955:141, 291; Jenness 1935b:52). People claiming these hereditary privileges know and often develop a special relationship with the places from which these things originated.

Many of the First Ancestor stories, while not as widely known as some would prefer, continue to be told and taught. Situated in the local context of their telling, these stories have been employed to frame the relationships between contemporary village communities. They are evoked to challenge colonial histories, stretching the creation of residence groups far back past the arrival of Europeans and the creation of Indian reserves to the antiquity of the First Ancestors. Differences in the telling of these stories reflect the continuing tradition of property relations and the internal challenges these relations present.

The First Ancestors of the Island Hul'qumi'num people

In 2000, I set out to learn first hand who the prominent First Ancestors are, the locations

they are associated with, and how they are related to Island Hul'qumi'num communities. The latter issue – how mythic ancestors are related to Indian bands – presented me with the most difficulty. I had previously read some published Cowichan First Ancestor legends[8] and found a diverse range of accounts. Much less was available on the First Ancestor stories of other Island Hul'qumi'num communities such as the Chemainus communities at Kulleet Bay[9], Ladysmith Harbour (Cryer 1939) or the settlements on

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[8] I have found Cowichan First Ancestor stories published or in manuscript form in the following sources (in chronological order of the telling): (Kutkwaton 1963; Boas 2002; Hill-Tout 1907; Curtis 1913; Cryer 1939; Humphreys n.d.; Jenness 1935a; Barnett 1955; Norcross 1959; Wells *et al.* 1966; Indian Children 1973; Rozen 1985; Turner 1992; and Marshall 1999).

[9] The First Ancestor stories of the people from the Chemainus village at Kulleet Bay and Ladysmith Harbour largely eluded me during my fieldwork. Those stories in the published literature told by Cowichan informants frequently described Chemainus people as being related to Cowichan through descent from one of the Cowichan First Ancestors. Boas (2002:140) recorded from a Cowichan informant that ten unnamed people dropped from the sky at Mt. Brenton, and then moved to the Chemainus River, but gives no further detail. Curtis recorded that *Swutun* dropped from the sky and made the earth shake at Chemainus Bay, becoming a First Ancestor there (1913:37). Hill-Tout (1907:365) did not record a First Ancestor for the Chemainus, nor did Jenness (1935a). Rozen reported that the place name for Chemainus, *Shts'um'inus*, is also located in its diminutive form *shts'uts'm'inus* [little Chemainus] on the Cowichan River, with little Chemainus being the "original village" (1985:85, 157-158, 275). Edward Curtis, writing at the turn of the century, reported being told the same thing (1913:175) and James Douglas, writing very early in the contact history of the area, recorded a village of Chemainus at the mouth of the Cowichan River (1854). Olsen, a local historian, recorded a story told by "the Indians of the Cowichan River Valley" (1963:2-3), where the "Tsa-mee-nis" moved from their original village below Comiaken at the mouth of the Cowichan River to their summer camp near the former Penelakut village of *Sun'uw'nets* at the present-day town of Chemainus. Rozen writes that Abel Joe, Abraham Joe (from So'mena) and Alexis Louie told stories to him where *St'uts'un*'s descendants intermarried into Chemainus, connecting them to the community at Kulleet Bay (1985:180) and that Abel Joe and Abraham Joe (from So'mena) believed that in more recent times people from 'little Chemainus' intermarried into a community that was already established at Kulleet Bay (1985:85). Though the archaeological evidence at Kulleet Bay and Ladysmith Harbour suggests a very ancient occupation, it is clear from these historic tellings of these stories and the closely related place names that there are very strong links of property, resource rights and identity between the Chemainus people and the Cowichan River, the largest salmon-bearing stream on Vancouver Island. While kin connections to Cowichan are acknowledged widely today by Chemainus people, there is a very real sense of distinct identity. Such stories may reflect the very strong historic and contemporary political presence of the Cowichan populous people in the social, political and mythological landscape of Coast Salish people living on Vancouver Island.

Galiano and Valdes Islands (Boas 2002:148). There is a great deal of variation in the details of where and how the ancestors first appeared in the world, and what items of significance they brought. Seeking to better understand the variation in the content of these stories, and the meanings implied in their telling, leads to a deeper understanding of Coast Salish relationships between property, identity and place.

Syalutsa and St'uts'un

Early on I had a meeting with Abner Thorne, Ross Modeste and Angus Smith, three elders whom the staff at the Hul'qumi'num Treaty office considered essential authorities in discussions of legends and history. They came to discuss how principles of social organization that operate outside the terms of the Indian Act could contribute to the self-government aspirations of the communities. Abner Thorne voiced concerns that elders were 'checking out' and that their stories were being lost with them as the older generation of elders 'wouldn't divulge or they became too possessive with their information'. In this discussion, Abner implicitly recognized that the telling of these stories or at least aspects of these stories involved property relations and had asked Ross and Angus to witness the discussion of the stories. Asking Ross and Angus to act as witnesses was an aspect of respecting these relations: they validated his legitimacy to tell the stories and the accuracy of their content. This was a recurring concern during my work with the Hul'qumi'num communities, as it had been for Barnett (1955:141) 50 years earlier. Abner, with Ross and Angus in agreement, felt that such stories *should* be told more widely in the current context of cultural revitalization:

> That is coming from our elders that they told us all of this information to

> carry on the traditions. There is no written form of history, it was just handed down. Lots of it is changed over the years. Mainly, because of the people that gathered information. Like anthropologists and historians. There were knowledgeable people [in the Hul'qumi'num communities] but they [the academics] went to the person that spoke English better or was free to talk to people. Some of this was wrong. [TA-MR-SA-i:01:82-87]

Abner's resolve to discuss those elements which he felt comfortable making public, and the affirmation by Ross and Angus that future generations needed to know these stories, provided a unique licence and a freedom to speak on these matters, and for me to record and discuss them. The telling of the stories, however, remained circumspect. Abner went on to outline the broad strokes of some of the stories and his concerns around the different versions known and being told in the community. In the following paragraphs he sets out important notions which he elaborates on later. The first is that the First Ancestor stories connect families and residence groups to particular places: different Ancestors provide linkages to each residence group and a particular prominent place. Abner perceives that these stories can provide a charter for the way communities relate to each other in a contemporary context of self-government which challenges the imposed relations of the Indian Act. This brief discussion was an important prelude to the complexity of community politics of land tenure and identity that underscore First Ancestor stories. There is general agreement in the community that these stories forge important links between local residence groups and the lands they identify with and hold. Abner is quick to point out, however, that there is not unanimous agreement as to which ancestors – and by extension which families and residence groups – are related to which locations.

> We have our *St'uts'un* and *Syalutsa* [names of two of the Cowichan First

> Ancestors] stories. *St'uts'un* stories are consistent. *Syalutsa* has two versions. He dropped on *Swuq'us* [Mt. Prevost] in one version, and others say he dropped on *Hwsalu'utsum* [Koksilah Ridge]. I would rather we opted for the story that he [*Syalutsa*] dropped on *Hwsalu'utsum* because that would, for the sake of your proclamation, (you have got to have a proclamation, eh), clarify that *Syalutsa* should be on Koksilah Ridge. I think that is where he dropped.
>
> There are descendants from the First People... *Suhiltun* is one [First Person] and Ross [Modeste] is descended from the *Suhiltun.* And there are other people that dropped from the sky right in the Cowichan Valley. But for *Syalutsa*, we have two versions. The one I opt for is that he dropped on Koksilah Ridge. Other people say that he dropped on *Swuq'us,* Mt. Prevost [TA-MR-SA-i:01:87-92].

In Abner's version, *St'uts'un* landed on Mt. Prevost, *Syaletsa* fell on Koksilah Ridge and *Swutun* first appeared near the mouth of the Chemainus River (see also Marshall 1999:9-23). Abner's *Syaletsa* story differs from most of the published versions of these stories (Turner 1992:77-93; Norcross 1959:2-3; Boas 2002:138; Curtis 1913:37; Rozen 1985:190-191; Jenness 1935a; Kutkwaton 1963:4-5) and, according to Abner, is different from ones that are told in some other families.

Abner was well versed in these traditions and expected that I too, had read these stories and noticed the differences in the landing sites. His understanding of the story situates a unique First Ancestor at each major landscape feature in this area of the territory. It is a story founded in a perspective of local reconciliation, and is grounded in the on-going relationships to First Ancestor place which he and other of his family members engage in. Other stories with different details suggest that such claims of affiliation may not be exclusive, and that other visions of mythic history reinforces other families' relationships to place. Underlying these disagreements is a shared and long-standing cultural

paradigm of property, and clearly demonstrate the on-going, vibrant Coast Salish property system based in relationships between descent and residence groups settled throughout Island Hul'qumi'num territories.

While these stories may suggest the nature of Coast Salish property systems and are able to provide founding principles for the relationship between communities in the context of an incipient self-government, more fundamentally they emphasize the importance of kin in centring relationships between communities and place. Kin networks formed through local descent group mythically link the politically autonomous residence groups throughout the Island Hul'qumi'num community. For Abner, this provides a strong bond that can be called on to rally efforts to work together towards self-government. Just as the First Ancestors of the original communities were interrelated through kin, so are their living descendants.

> Now for the descendants of *St'uts'un* and *Swutun*. *Swutun* [another First Ancestor] dropped on Swallowfield [near the mouth of the Chemainus River] and the descendants of these two people [each through different wives, as they were both men] are spread all over. And they start from Halalt, and it is inclusive with some of the people on *Pun'e'luxutth'* [Penelakut, on Kuper Island] and at Lyackson. So if that proclamation could be made on that when you present our claim. So that's another thing that you have to come to terms on, the three groups [TA-MR-SA-i:01:92-98].

A month later, Abner offered more detail about the content of his First Ancestor stories:

> The story of *St'uts'un* is becoming controversial. We have one version and there is another version. See, one version says the first one that dropped was *Syalutsa* and he dropped on *Hwsalu'utsum* [place name for Koksilah Ridge area]. So that is where that fireweed, *sala'uts* [weeds] connects with *Sala'utsum, Syalutsa* [*sala'uts* is the root form of the place name and possibly the First Ancestor name], and that is the version that I was taught. And *St'uts'un* was one of the last ones that was dropped on Mount

Prevost.

And his house [*St'uts'un*] had designs on it. *S'xul'el't'hw thu lelum* [His house had painted designs]. That is where the name Halalt comes from [the term for 'painted design' and 'house' are the roots in *Xul'el't'hw*, the place name for Halalt]. And the Halalt people moved down to, closer to Somenos Lake and one [house site] near *Siyey'qw* [a place name near the Silver Bridge] on the Cowichan River. And they gradually moved to Chemainus River and Willy's Island. *Xul'el't'hw* [house with designs] or designed houses.

We'll have to decide which version you want of *Syalutsa* dropping on Koksilah Ridge or Mount Prevost. You see *St'uts'un* stays on one place, never moves. Always on Mt. Prevost.

And *Syalutsa* from what I gather, is on *Hwsalu'utsum* and *Swutun* he is one of the last ones who dropped on Swallowfield. He dropped on that rock. You know where the house is on Swallowfield [very near the mouth of the Chemainus River, about 350 metres due west of the northwest corner of Chemainus IR 10]? that is where *Swutun* dropped. *Swutun.*

I don't know who is going to decide on it. Our version of the *St'uts'un* story about the woman being carved out of wood, it is handed down through our family. That kind of tree is sacred to our family. So that is a version that was brought down. See I've got to stick by what I was told. And Angus [Smith] will be sticking by what he has been told. We both realize that there are other versions.

And Abel Joe [a prominent Cowichan story-teller from the previous generation, who worked with anthropologist David Rozen and on the Cowichan Land Claims committee] has tapes at the band office. Some of these tapes contradict each other too. He says that *Syalutsa* dropped off *Hwsalu'utsum* and another version says, *Syalutsa* dropped on Mount Prevost, so there's two.

And the mask, I guess he wore that mask all of the time, on the Cowichan River, it is further up north. And *stth'e'uw't'hw hay ts'u 'o' sht'es kwso' q'atxthut's* [He was always shaking his rattles] it's that way; shaking his rattles. So they told him that he is scaring the salmon away. "You better get the hell out of here", so he went to the Malahat. See that different version.

We have to come to a conclusion that, that is satisfactory for our purposes I guess. *St'uts'un* is consistent except for one version. This guy from Saanich says that both *Syalutsa* and *St'uts'un* dropped in Shawnigan Lake,

> and that is where they are both making the effigies on Shawnigan Lake. So that is where it differs.
>
> So they and *Suhiltun* [another First Ancestor] are consistent. He dropped on a flat in Cowichan Valley and he was already carrying the paraphernalia that they used for dancers and stuff like that. *Ni'tsu wulh tskwe'luqun 'u tthu ni' ha'kwushus kwsus yaay'us tthu Suhiltun* [He was already wearing his regalia like he uses when he works]. So that's if you want to go for continuity, that is still being used, that custom. They use that *Suhiltun's* family for the Indian dancing or blessing the corners of the houses and stuff like that. *Hwpunshaans* [use of ochre paint] . The paint, and the grass, they burn or whatever. So that's consistent. [TA-AD-SA-i:282-386].

In this narrative, Abner weaves a complex story of four of the First Ancestors, where they landed, what hereditary prerogatives they brought with them, and which communities they founded. *Syalutsa* was the first one to fall from the sky at Koksilah Ridge. He fell from the sky with two of the highest privileges of Coast Salish society, the *sxwayxwuy* mask and goat horn rattle. The published versions of these stories (Jenness 1935a; Rozen 1985:186, 191) inform us that *Syalutsa*'s overuse of these powerful implements stopped the salmon from returning to the Cowichan River, which caused his banishment from Cowichan to Malahat. *Swutun* fell from the sky at a prominent rock in Swallowfield (the significance of these rocks will be discussed below). *Suhiltun* dropped on a flat in Cowichan Valley and carried with him the regalia of a *seyowun* dancer and the teaching of red ochre, a mineral that is used as a paint in *seyowun* rituals. *St'uts'un* fell on Mt. Prevost and had a painted house that became the namesake of the Halalt community.[10] Prior to the settlement of the present-day Halalt communities on Willy's Island and on

[10] In other versions I have heard, he also had painted designs on the breast-plate he wore or tatooed on his chest. What exactly this design is, Abner made clear to me, was powerful, private family knowledge and should never be revealed.

Bonsall Creek at the mouth of the Chemainus River, *St'uts'un* lived near Somenos Lake, and on the Cowichan River. *Syalutsa*, *St'uts'un* and *Swutun* are the ancestors of present-day Halalt, some Penelakut (presumably those at Tsussie at the mouth of the Chemainus River) and Lyackson (who are very closely related to families in Halalt) people, all of whom can trace residence and resource gathering to the Chemainus River. *Suhiltun*, along with several other First Ancestors whose stories, Abner told me, he did not have the right to tell, are ancestors of the different Cowichan village communities.

These First Ancestor stories establish the locations of the major landmarks of property and identity for the current village communities. The important dynamic in the politics of these narratives is reflected by Abner's need to resolve family differences in the stories in order to present a master version of the founding myth. "We", he says (meaning the elders and leaders working on the governance project), need to choose a founding myth. Abner is a knowledgeable storyteller and elder and clearly rejects versions by the neighbouring Saanich community, details of which are notably different; though he does not privilege his version over another Cowichan elder's version, such as Angus Smith. There is an elegance to Abner's stories for this master myth. If *St'uts'un* is the First Ancestor for communities like Halalt, (as concurs Boas (2002:143), Hill-Tout (1907), Rozen (1985), and several Penelakut and Lyackson people I have spoken with) Mt. Prevost is clearly a landmark that towers significantly behind them, and continues to be an important place for food and ritual activities. *Syalutsa*, being the ancestor of Cowichan people at *So'mena* (Jenness 1935a; Norcross 1959; Rozen 1985) symmetrically comes from Koksilah Ridge, which is likewise a nearby and significant

mountain area for this community. Abner's version of the stories blankets much of the Cowichan Valley in First Ancestor stories. It re-affirms ancient and ancestral connections to these now contested lands.

I want to emphasize that these stories are not made up simply to validate land claims or contest neighbouring communities' connections to the land. The meaning in the stories, and which elements of the stories are told, depend very much on the context of the event of narration. An unpublished version of the *St'uts'un* story carefully recorded by Diamond Jenness in the 1930s provides a useful point of comparison. Unlike other versions, it is silent on where the ancestors fall, emphasizing instead important teachings of moral behaviour and respectful treatment of affines and inlaws.

The following story was told to Jenness (1935a:3-4) by Mr and Mrs Bob of Westholme (Halalt). Jenness provided little detail about the context of the telling or who the tellers were. The tellers certainly appear to be pre-occupied with concerns other than self-government and land claims. Since it is unpublished and relatively difficult to access, I reproduce it in full here.

> The first men appeared at Sooke and Westholme. Their weapons were bows and arrows and spears (*smaknans)*, and with these they wandered about the country. *St'uts'un* of Westholme wandered down to Sooke, where he sighted smoke. He investigated it and discovered a man there named *Ti'qamuxw*, who displayed his power by changing the insects on his head to human beings. So now there were many people living at Sooke. *St'uts'un* stayed with *Ti'qamuxw* for a time, calling himself his younger brother; but he did not care to take one of *Ti'qamuxw* insect women to wife, lest other people should scorn him. So he returned to Westholme and planned to carve a wife for himself out of cedar. He carved an image of a woman, seated, then shot some mountain goats,

rolled its wool into yarn and attached the yarn to a spindle, which he placed in the image's hand. Every day thereafter he wandered to the woods, returning at the evening to see if his image had come to life and spun the wool.

Now *Ti'qamuxw* had a daughter who did not always obey him. He warned her that someone would come and carry her away in punishment. She decided that she would go and find this person, and wandered away, accompanied by two slave women, each carrying a wooden dish and some dried fish. After wandering for many days she arrived at *St'uts'un's* place at Westholme. She did not enter the house, but hid in the woods to see who was living there.

Early in the morning *St'uts'un* rose, lit his fire, ate, and went away to the woods. The girl and her two slave women entered his house, and seeing the image, threw it into the fire. As they poked it to make it burn up quickly it made a noise as if crying; finally it was consumed. The girl then sat down in the place of the image, and told her two slave women to hide; then, if *St'uts'un* killed her, they were to return and tell her father.

St'uts'un came home at evening, threw his catch onto the floor, and glanced at the image. The girl was sitting there, spinning the yarn. At first he thought it was the image come to life and began to question her. Presently he discovered his mistake and asked her where she came from. "I have come from Sooke." "What did you do with my image", he asked. "I threw it into the fire." "You have brought some slave women with you." "Yes. If you don't kill me I will show you them." She called in one of her slave women, who brought in her dish and fish and prepared supper for them. The next morning she called in the other slave women, who prepared her fish likewise. So the girl married *St'uts'un.*

In time she bore a daughter, then another daughter, and finally a son, all of whom grew up very fast. She put the boy under the charge of the second girl. One day she heard the boy crying and called out 'Why is he crying?" The girl answered from outside "Oh, he is just crying for no reason"; but really she was stabbing him with wooden pins carved with the head of a *tsinqw'a* (double-headed snake) and was lapping up the blood. Finally the girl ate the boy, and wandered away to the forest, refusing to stay at home. People were increasing at this time, but every time a women gave birth to a baby this girl would devour it. Her mother's people came from Sooke to visit them, and said to her father "Your daughter is not doing right. Why don't you stop her;" but her father said "I can't. She has become a *stl'eluqum* (supernatural monster)."

Now the elder girl announced that her sister had carried off a number of

> children whom she was going to roast and eat. *St'uts'un* ordered his people to make a lot of forked sticks and sent his eldest daughters to watch her sister. The cannibal girl told her sister to keep away and not prowl around her. Her sister said "My father has sent me to bid you dance first on one side of the fire, then on the other. You must close your eyes as you dance or you will become blind; and you must hold up your breasts." The girl began to dance round the fire with her eyes closed. Then the people pushed her with their forked sticks into the fire. She screamed for someone to pull her out, but they only threw more wood on the fire until she was burned. The soot that flew into the air became birds.
>
> The older girl now said to the people, "I shall not return to my parents but remain up here in the woods. But I shall not eat little children, as my sister has done. Instead, I shall show you how to make goat's wool blankets; and if a woman dies, I shall take care of her children." Then she began to sing, and as she sang a hurricane arose that blew down many trees. So she passed from sight into the woods.
>
> *St'uts'un* had now lost his three children and was afraid to have any more, lest they too should become *stl'eluqum*; so he sent his wife back to her father at Sooke.

Reading this story emphasizes the point made by Julie Cruikshank (1999) that the contexts of different acts of telling stories bring out different situated meanings. Here, the Bobs seem to bring out important but, as is often the case in Coast Salish society (c.f. Snyder 1964), tense relations with in-laws. It is also certainly a moral tale. Wives generally do not go looking for husbands against their fathers' wishes and husbands should be careful about the wives they choose. A person should be circumspect about the private objects of another, particularly those that may contain latent spirit power such as the woman made from a tree. Someone must not eat their siblings or offspring, though in the ritually inverted world of the Coast Salish winter dance where an initiate may indeed "bite" their kin, such rules do not always apply (Kew 1970:159).

Mr. and Mrs. Bob's telling of the *St'uts'un* story to Diamond Jenness seventy years ago did not include a discussion of the places where these ancestors fell, focussing instead on the legendary relationships between the original communities that they lived in. Mr. and Mrs. Bob were not engaged in the politics of land claims, but were more concerned with more local issues. Abner, in contrast, believed that I needed to know one of the sources of the title for these communities – the stories of the First Ancestors – and how these myths can provide a charter for self-government. These situated meanings are important to understanding the discourses that oral traditions engage.

Through recounting several narrative events where First Ancestor stories are told, I have revealed how these stories are used, in part, to account for the current and past configurations of residence groups, and the relationships of kin that connect them. In the current context of land claims and political movements towards self-government, these stories are called on for guiding principles – which underlie Aboriginal title and spell out the mythic distinctiveness of and bonds between closely related Island Hul'qumi'num communities – and to provide moral guidance. In the stories presented, such guidance is provided for Coast Salish people encountering past and present tensions between the resource use rights that their extended kin network enables them to activate, and the rights that local residence groups have to manage and restrain such use by visitors.

Like the important social principles of kin and residence group, these First Ancestor stories also evoke principles of spirit power in teaching how the world may be encountered. The journeys and experiences of the First Ancestors help people understand

and situate their own experiences of spirit power within the framework of the ancestral landscape in which they live. As the stories presented in the next section and the following chapter reveal, these engagements with spirit power are important aspects of how Coast Salish people experience and come to understand the land.

The Sea Lion

Having understood the importance of this special class of Coast Salish oral tradition for establishing titles to the land, charters for specific communities, and the possibility of a 'proclamation' for Aboriginal self-government, I set out to learn similar such stories that are told in association with other Island Hul'qumi'num communities. For the Penelakut people on Kuper Island (and in one version, also the former Lyackson village at Porlier Pass on Valdes Island), the Sea Lion story was brought to my attention. Though this story is not, strictly speaking, a First Ancestor story, it is in the same class of stories, being a mythic charter for the rights and powers of certain social groups in the present day.[11] It links people to place by setting out a connection between residence and descent groups from Penelakut and certain locations at which Penelakut people exercise use rights. The Sea Lion story provides the foundations of understanding the importance of sea lions as a source of spiritual power for certain families, and reinforces an important

[11] Unlike the Cowichan stories, there are no heaven-born First Ancestors in this story. Cryer recorded (1939) a Penelakut origin story by Mary Rice (Tzea-Mntenaht) and her brother Tommy Pierre from Penelakut. In their story, set at Penelakut Spit in the time when the Sun made the world, the First Man emerged from the bark of a cedar log baked and split by the Sun, followed by the First Woman who emerged from the sand between the split log and a second cedar log. The first house was built here and named Penelakut, meaning "two logs half covered with sand". A very similar story and meaning was given by the late Rose James to Rozen (1985:102).

ethic of sharing.

The story of the Penelakut First Ancestors was first told to me by Robert Guerin, in a discussion on the history of families and regional land use. Robert's family is from Musqueam and Penelakut, two communities which have extensive kin ties. He is viewed by many as a knowledgeable younger person on Coast Salish oral traditions and family histories, having been an expert witness in a number of court cases.

In Robert's telling of the story, sea lions move into the Strait of Georgia area following the migration of eulachon (*Thaleichthys paciificus*), a small anadromous fish (Drake and Wilson 1992) which spawns on the Fraser River. Penelakut people respond to the call of their neighbours and travel to the east side of the Strait of Georgia – presumably in the Musqueam/Squamish area – to participate in the sea lion hunt. One year, too many people join in the hunt and the Penelakut, who have a special relationship with the sea lions, ask the others to leave. The people whose homes are in the area[12] become concerned about the Penelakut people's request, and ask a powerful Indian doctor to create a wooden sea lion. It comes to life and is harpooned by several canoe loads of over-zealous Penelakut hunters. The wooden sea lion drifts back across the Strait of Georgia; some hunters break free and return to Penelakut, but the remaining hunters do not realize that they are attached to a wooden sea lion until it smashes up on a rock far away from their homes. On their return to Penelakut, after one man is eaten by a whale,

[12] Specifically who these people are, Robert carefully does not mention, but in other stories discussed below they are Squamish.

their canoes capsize and they enter an underworld where they are enslaved by tiny people who only eat the maggots from rotten sole, which itself is not a staple or preferred fish. After some time, the hunters learn to escape by choking them with feathers. Eventually, they make it back to the Penelakut village but a lifetime has passed and they have been forgotten.

Robert has a distinctive style of narration, frequently punctuating his story with the informal interjections "hey" and "you know", which I have left in the transcript in recognition of his unique performance sense.

> The Penelakut people are original people hey. That's what I was going to talk about. I'm part Cowichan and I can tell you *how* I'm part Cowichan. But the Penelakut as a people, have always been Penelakut hey. And it ties into their history hey. [...]
>
> They were great warriors, hey. But the Penelakut people by themselves, how were they different from *T'eet'qe'* [Lyackson people] over here... You know it's their ancestry, you know, it's who they are. [...]
>
> If you look at the beach in Penelakut you'll see what I'm going to talk about here. If you were to walk down in front of old Eddie Edwards' house there, you'll see the sea lion teeth, you know, it's laying on the bottom, hey. And I've seen it, hey. The story of the sea lion is the story of Penelakut. It ties together hey, like the, you know the original stories. I certainly respect it. And so if you follow that story you'll see that the Penelakut people are real distinct people.
>
> It's the story of the sharing of resources, hey, [...] and of how the sea lion was really really important to them because they have a history with the sea lion hey. It's a story of how they protected the Penelakut people, and they protected the sea lion because it's an important food hey. But if you go back to 'what is the sea lion?', I've had to look at that, to try to understand that, hey.
>
> The sea lion that came through there [Strait of Georgia]. They knew it was coming hey. It was about this time of the year [early April]. It's actually right now, but why they were coming? The eulachon, *swi'wu* we

call them, are out on all these beds off Oregon, Washington, British Columbia even as far as Alaska. And when the eulachon moved to come up the river [Fraser River], hey. The sea lion follow them. So that sea lion get here when the eulachon are here and they're right now hey. So when the sea lion is coming through here [Porlier Pass]..., the people had very strong voices, very loud. They could call Penelakut or Chemainus people to come for the hunt, hey. [...]

Most people, they're not strong, you know, not exceptionally strong. [If they are] strong they stand up on the canoe, they kill the sea lion, hey. But when they do that they say their 'words'. And they know when to hit the sea lion so it doesn't sink, hey. I don't know if it's coming up or down but it's one or the other.

And Putiis' father, Baptiste George's father, was a person that threw with his left hand and he could kill the sea lion with one [blow], that's what I'm told hey. Yeah, he could kill the sea lion with one blow and by the prayer.

They would keep that sea lion and that was their food. But it was not just their food, every part of that sea lion was important to Penelakut, hey. Penelakut, Chemainus, our people in Musqueam we're all related hey. Cowichan, they were there too hey. But it's a story of how this existed for a long time, this sea lion hunt hey. And when more people keep coming, more people keep coming, what happened is that they become concerned that other people were taking advantage of something that was really important to these people. We're looking at Penelakut.

And so they [Penelakut] asked them [other harvesters] to stay away, you know how we talk to each other. They call it *snuwalhtun*, 'the people from the other side' [of the Strait of Georgia]. The 'people from the other side' got very upset because they realized how good this was, hey.

And so that's what the story is about. It's said that those people that were asked to leave now – I don't want to talk about who they were – they said, "well we got to do something about this", hey. And they approached a doctor [Indian Doctor, *shne'um*] to create a wooden sea lion, hey.

And the doctor then took the parts of a sea lion and then placed them to bring [the wooden sea lion to life]. It would go like that and they made it talk hey. So it was the *Pun'e'luxutth'* [Penelakut, Kuper Island] people who were out hunting and they found this sea lion. And there were many canoes, six or eight or ten canoes, which had lots of people. They speared the sea lion. I don't know how many times they speared it. [...] They held on and they drifted and the water was drifting and various times the water drifted this way, drifted south hey.

> So it reached a point out here somewhere that their spear let go and they were free. And those people came back to Penelakut. Okay the other people, they hung on hey. And then they went out and then when the sea lion hit the rock and when their canoes [came up to] the rock they realized it wasn't a sea lion at all that they were following. So the story is about the people coming back. [...] If you talk to some people who are more spiritual, they'll tell you some of the really important things that relate to that...I don't feel privileged to talk about that. What they practice today is from that happening.
>
> And what happened is that when they were coming back, one man was eaten by the whale. So they got the whale story, it's tied to that hey. And then when they were down here somewhere they were enslaved by very small people that dived [dove], and they were forced to work for them. But these people, these divers had very small mouths and very small throats hey. They couldn't swallow anything. The worst thing that could get them, the worst weapon that we got, is a feather. If they get a feather in their throat they would choke and that's what they would figure out hey. And they would die for these, we call them *p'uwi'* [flounder (*Platichthys stellatus*) or sole (*Parophrys vetulus*)] they're little sole, sole-like creatures. So they take that up and they put it up on the rock and then they let it dry, and that's how these people live. And so they couldn't eat the sole, the *p'uwi'*, they couldn't eat that but they what they did is they let it rot and ate the little things from the flies hey [maggots]. That's what they lived on.
>
> So anyway the Penelakut people got away and they came back and they arrived home, they said that when they got home they were really old. They were old people. People had forgotten them. It is a lifetime, this history [of when they were away]. But this story is a story of our Penelakut. That's the story of the history of those people that we come from. [...] And I'm talking about that because it shows that they're for real they're not, nobody could say they're from somewhere else...you know they're original people hey [GR-i:110-230].

In this story, one can come to better understand how people's membership in the Penelakut community, or in a family descended from these original Penelakut ancestors is a tie between the self, the land and sea lions. In his discussion leading up to this story, and in the last few lines, Robert draws a number of important connections between sea lions and Penelakut identity. Penelakut as a people, have always been Penelakut. The

sea lion story is 'who they are'. This prelude helped me understand this story as being in the same class of stories as First Ancestor stories. It evokes feelings of a fundamental sense of identity in ways similar to First Ancestor stories. Specific places that are present to people today are also invoked, particularly, the place on Penelakut spit where sea lion teeth can still be seen on the land. Ancestral myth is made present in seeing the physical manifestations of it in the land.

Robert affirms the special relationship and powers between Penelakut and sea lions, pointing out that sea lions protect the Penelakut, and the Penelakut protect sea lions . In other, more detailed renditions of this story founding Harris (1901) and Cryer (1939), the sea lions shared with these hunters spirit powers and ritual knowledge that are linked to their special hunting knowledge and privileges. They learned the powerful *si'win'*, the ritual words and prayers discussed at some length by Suttles (1958:501-502) and Lane (1953:120-133), which they invoked to aid them in their pursuit of sea lion as food. The Penelakut, in reciprocation for this sharing, have had a long history of protecting the sea lion by managing harvests responsibly and sharing food.

Lane (1953) and Suttles (1987c) have discussed at length the distinctive practise of sea lion hunting in Porlier Pass by the Penelakut and Lyackson people.[13] Members of each group, hunting from resource locations they own on either side of Porlier Pass, draw on

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[13] Archaeological evidence of Stellar sea lion and toothed-whale (false killer whale *Pseudorca crassidens*) has been discovered at the Lyackson village at Cardale Point (*Th'exul*), Valdes Island (McLay 1999a).

their specialized hunting and ritual knowledge to be successful hunters. Like their ancestors, people have continued to experience similar problems of sharing resources, especially those to which competing groups have claims of harvesting or property rights. When the Penelakut hunters display hubris in asking local groups to leave, the wooden sea lion tests their strength and teaches humility and respect through the consequence of their long mythic journey to the underworld.

The Penelakut hunters enslaved in the underworld undergo a transformation. Robert does not elaborate further on this spiritual aspect of the story as, he explains, this is not his right. He suggests I look elsewhere for these details. In Cryer's account (1939), songs and medicine were received in the underworld (though some other aspects of the story she records differ significantly from Guerin's). The journey of the Penelakut hunters to a land of 'the little people'(the common English name for *siyeeye'*, small often notorious spirit beings who are still encountered in the world today) has interesting symbolic parallels to the one taken by a new dancer, who must also endure physical hardships, observe food restrictions, and come back to the community with new powers (Amoss 1978). Like the new dancer, the people who return to their community at Penelakut will have taken with them important ritual knowledge and powers learned in the world of the non-human people. By engaging the ancestors through telling of these stories and practising Coast Salish winter ceremonies, people continue to experience the transformations their ancestors underwent, acquiring and reaffirming ancestral powers, and forming a distinctive part of the way Penelakut people dwell in the world.

In the story Guerin shares, he emphasizes that Penelakut people *originated* from Kuper Island, and that the conflict in resources was a result of over-harvesting. These emphases differ in significant ways from published and unpublished versions (Cryer 1939; Harris 1901:29-33; Wells 1987:169-170; 1985:105) where variation included hunters being identified as Squamish or Cowichan, sea lion hunting rights being established specifically at Porlier Pass, conflict in the story being unwillingness to share (a very common and much elaborated theme), and the rival hunters in the story being specifically identified with rival families. This variation led me to look further to understand the variation in narrative intent related to a story so clearly identified as important for Penelakut identity.

A few months later another version of the sea lion story was told to me by the elderly master carver Simon Charlie. Widely regarded as one of the most knowledgeable people alive when it comes to Coast Salish culture and traditions, he was awarded the prestigious Order of British Columbia medal in 2001 and the Order of Canada in 2004 for his contributions to the global recognition of Coast Salish arts and culture. I had asked him about First Ancestor stories of Island Hul'qumi'num communities outside of Cowichan. Simon, who is now quite deaf, is a man in his eighties who went to school until grade three and was raised by his grandparents. He shared a version of the sea lion story. In the version Simon shared, people from Squamish were divided over resource harvesting. One group was led away from the area by chasing a sea lion created from wood and ended up establishing one of the former Lyackson villages on Valdes Island.

> Oh yes, well these were people in Squamish. They were two rival sea lion hunters. And the one group wanted to get rid of this other group. So the guy that does the Indian prayer, he made a cedar sea lion but when it

> surfaced it jumped out of the water cause it was too light. He tried all kinds of wood and he got to the arbutus it surfaced just like the sea lion. So he made it go out – tapping on the wood – and made it go out in front of this other group and they were already waiting for and looking for the sea lion. When they saw it they got on the canoe and went after it and speared it and it come across the channel [Strait of Georgia] and it got as far as Cowichan Gap [Porlier Pass] and it was too far. So they had to cut the line, and it was getting too late so they went to Valdes Island and they liked the place. So they went back home got the family and moved over to Valdes. That's how we got there [CS-ii:234-246].

This version is different from Robert's telling in a few important details. Simon's version can be understood as a charter myth for the Lyackson people on Valdes Island at Porlier Pass. The charter myth explains the historic and contemporary kin connections between the Squamish and the Lyackson families whose residence affiliation was the village in Porlier Pass. Unlike Cryer's Magic Sea Lion version story (1939), Simon's emphasizes how a community came to be as an outcome of conflict over competition to commonly held resources. Agnes Thorne, who was born at this Lyackson village *(Th'xwum'qsun)* on Valdez Island, told Rozen that a magic wooden sea lion drifted across the Strait of Georgia from Squamish to *Th'xwum'qsun* (Cayetano Point in Porlier Pass) where the hunters cut their lines free (Rozen 1985:71). This village, Rozen (1985:70) records, was until 1915 recognized as a separate village from the larger Lyackson village of *T'eet'qe'* at Shingle Point. The people at *Th'xwum'qsun* were the holders, along with the Penelakut, of the sea lion hunting rights at Porlier Pass discussed by Suttles (1987c) and Lane (1953). It is important to note that both groups draw on the same story to emphasize their particular rights to hunt sea lion at this location. The details of the story are mutable, but the main narrative framework contains the elements which provide for the right.

Simon's story also emphasizes the significance of the arbutus tree (*Arbutus menziesii*). This, I argue, reflects another aspect of identity of the Coast Salish people implicated in this story. The arbutus is a tree that is unique to the now-endangered Coastal Douglas Fir biogeoclimatic zone (Meidinger and Pojar 1991), a highly localized region that roughly matches the territory in the southern Gulf Island and east coast of Vancouver Island where Island Hul'qumi'num people live. This tree has come to have a special significance for the identity of these groups of Coast Salish people as it is wrapped up in their distinctive landscape, experience and mythology.

I turned to the ethnographic literature to see if I could discover more of the nuances of this story. There are several other accounts which situate the sea lion coming from Squamish (1939; 1985:105).[14] In 1965 the Squamish story teller Dominic Charlie was recorded in an interview with Oliver Wells, a local ethnographer from Chilliwack. Dominic briefly told the sea lion story and since it is not published in a well known source, and has some important contextualizing comments by the teller that are not offered in other publications, it is helpful to quote in full here:

> This fellow dance all the time. This first man he get tired of his brother. See, he never give him a chance to do anything. All he does is dance and dance. And this first man, he's a powerful man, and he think, "I guess I better do something"; and he tell his brother, "You better move." You know that bay over Gibsons Landing, right where that ferry lands; there's a nice bay there, and he tell his brother, "You better move over there, build your own home over there." And this man tell his brother, "All right, I'll go."And he moved there, and he built a house. And I don't know how he get the woman, but I guess she just come just like them two, see. And

[14] Other versions of this story, with some significantly different details can also be found in Lane (1953:76), Boas (2002:213-215) and Harris (1901:29-33).

they grow, the family grow.

> And this first man, this man couldn't give him a chance; he's always greedy for everything. It's a reef out there on the point there where this nice beach, reef there, and that's where the sea lion comes on when he goes to sleep on the rock, and he goes there and they spear 'em. And this man never give his brother a chance to get any sea lion. And this man get sick and tired of him, and he thinks what to do, because he's a powerful man. And he carved that thing just like sea lion, see. And he carve a fir, fir log, he carved it just, oh, about as big as a sea lion. There's a lake there, I guess – I never seen that little lake – and he goes in there, and he get a kelp from the salt water; he rubbed that on to that, in the lake, see. And when he gets finished rubbing that kelp that thing gets alive. And that fir is too heavy, I guess; he just come up once, and he go down. And he change it, he made a cedar, red cedar; and that cedar come good. He come up just like sea lion. Sea lion come up, you know, sshoooo! Goes like. He always come up; he don't go right down. He go around in that lake. This man he say it's alright: salt water, and he tell that sea lion: "You go around here," he says, "go around this bay. They'll have their spear; they'll spear you, see. When you got 'em all, well, you go straight across". He tell that to the sea lion. And that they call Gabriola Pass: "You go in through there," he tell that sea lion. And when that people reach there, some of them cut loose on that side, see, and some of them cut loose on this side, both sides. He tell that sea lion: "You keep on going; go through Cowichan Pass [Sansum Narrows], see". Some of them cut loose on that Kuper Island, a nice bay there, nice beach. And that thing keep on going till they come into Cowichan Bay, and they all cut loose there. We don't know what happened to that sea lion. (Charlie in Wells 1987:169-170; also published in Wells *et al.* 1966).

Key to the context of understanding this telling of the story are the comments that Dominic made to Oliver Wells on the tape after he had finished telling this story. He said "That's why we all friend to these people who live there. They're Squamish, see. They're all Squamish. Penelakuts. What they call *hwlumelhtsu* [Lamalchi Bay]. They're all Squamish. And we all friend to them. My mother come from Penelakut, that's Kuper Island" (Wells 1987:170). There are important parallels here to Robert Guerin's emphasis on this story as being essential to Penelakut identity and personhood.

Another twist in how the story relates identity and place is the Squamish perspective presented in the story, on the western red cedar, not the arbutus, as being the wood used to make the magical sea lion. Arbutus is rare in the wetter environs of Howe Sound and the traditional territory of the Squamish people, and does not have the same symbolic significance in Squamish lore as it does for Island Hul'qumi'num people.

As I mentioned earlier, the sea lion story is almost always told in the context of the dynamic of kin connections between Coast Salish communities on either side of the Strait of Georgia, and the tensions that sharing resources can cause between them. As Dominic Charlie pointed out, these Coast Salish communities 'are all friends', 'they're all Squamish'. Coast Salish people are closely related, not only linguistically and culturally, but through intermarriage, inter-community ceremonial and social activities. This tight network of inter-community ties has been the subject of extensive attention by ethnographers (Amoss 1977a; 1978; Elmendorf 1960 :296-305; Miller 1989b; Richardson 1982; Suttles 1963), yet the tension that these ties create within and between communities in times of scarcity are seldom discussed. Clearly, from the versions available, not sharing (a central concern in a classic Coast Salish economy) or over-harvesting (an important contemporary coast Salish concern) are counterposed imperatives. Powerful forces are needed to resolve these differences, including transformation by a powerful *shne'um,* dramatic transformative trips to the underworld, or the splitting and resettlement of family and residence groups (see also Miller 1989a:124-140). Such social challenges over shared but at times competing claims to land and resources persist today, as I discuss in chapter 9 on overlapping claims in the

treaty process.

Sorting out Syuth

After carefully examining the narrative context of how the First Ancestor and Sea Lion stories have been told, and providing a literary analysis of their content, we are left wondering why, in Coast Salish narrative practice of this genre of stories, are the details of location and personality variable in stories that are clearly founded in the same narrative framework. It is not satisfying to say simply that traditions are being lost. Such variation in the details of stories has been repeatedly noted by careful observers of Coast Salish culture since at least 1886 when Boas was puzzled and frustrated by a Cowichan husband and wife contradicting each other on the details of oral tradition (Rohner 1969:55-6). Oral traditions were very a part of the narrative practice of Coast Salish adults in these pre-residential school days. I propose that the variation in the stories told must be understood as a discursive practice, not merely the product of idiosyncratic practices of individual narrators.

In Coast Salish culture, narrating these oral traditions occurs in the context of a social system of flexible bilateral descent groups and ambilocal residence groups, each of which has particular exclusive claims to property and resource rights, qualified always by the ethic of sharing. These stories are engaged in particular aspects of dwelling in the world, evoking in mythic terms the experience of personal life choices within a field of social rules, rights, privileges and boundaries. Knowledge of these stories is appealed to as a criterion of legitimacy by people who, in their contemporary situation, may have

different if not competing access and title rights. Members of descent groups (unlike lineage members in northern Northwest Coast communities) can potentially claim descent from multiple ancestors, depending on which aspect of their family history their situation (or knowledge, such that family teachings are frequently kept private) allows or encourages them to draw on. Similarly, stories of importance for residence groups may differ depending on the particular perspective of the teller and the internal politics and negotiations of history and identity. The objective of the narration can determine when and which details may be drawn on from stories owned by the members of a given descent or residence group to set particular elements of kin networks and places into familiar narrative frameworks. In the previous example, most performances of the sea lion story highlighted the problems of not sharing, a classic problem in Coast Salish ethics, and situated the stories from a Squamish perspective. Guerin's telling, in contrast, emphasized a theme of over-hunting, a concern expressed by many in the contemporary era of scarcity of once-abundant resources, and situated the story from the perspective of the Penelakut. The common narrative framework of the sea lion story is used in each of these instances to highlight different points and perspectives.

In an external context, these stories take on a different political nature. They come to stand for organizing principles – or as proclamation – for a negotiated Aboriginal self-government and Aboriginal title. They blanket highly significant areas of land, their mythical weight comparable to Jerusalem or Bethlehem. As Abner Thorne pointed out, however, this context produces a paradox. A western discourse does not handle variation well. It seeks singular truths. It has little tolerance for variation, contradiction and

change. People then feel pressure to make inherently political choices, privileging one family's stories over another's, as Marshall (1999) did in his treatment of Cowichan First Ancestor stories, or homogenizing versions, as Rozen (1985) tried to do to a certain degree in his discussion of the St'uts'un and Syalutsa stories, so that everyone is left equally dissatisfied about important points in an 'official' version which is consistent, but not his own.

To meet the aspirations of an amalgamated Island Hul'qumi'num self-government within the institutional context of the Canadian state, there has been a recent effort to re-imagine the political identity of the local residence groups, which are now the Cowichan, Penelakut, Chemainus, Lyackson, Halalt and Lake Cowichan Indian Bands[15]. Abner's discussion of the First Ancestor stories as a 'proclamation' for these communities is a part of this re-imagination of community identity. The notion that the different versions should be reconciled and that the First Ancestor stories should form a proclamation for all the communities relies on the logic that all communities have First Ancestor stories that fit into this charter. While the stories of the First Ancestors of the communities of the Cowichan and Chemainus River valleys provide extensive links between these communities and their traditional territories, they do not completely integrate all Island Hul'qumi'num people into a common mythic or political identity.

Integrating stories poses a challenge for a cultural system based on bilateral kindred in

[15] The relationships between these Indian Bands and the 19th century local residence groups are discussed in detail in chapter 7.

which an individual may be comfortable with multiple identities, where connections to multiple places and mythic histories may be played to economic and social advantage. The manifestation of the themes of ambiguity, multiplicity and overlapping connections to place illustrated by these First Ancestor stories reveals how these notions are rooted in some of the deepest metaphors and discourses of Coast Salish culture, and is indeed part of what Bird-David (1999) has called their 'relational epistemology'. If ever the internal competing claims of property and identity could be resolved, then perhaps a resolution of the 'right versions' of these oral traditions could be decided on to provide a master narrative for organizing Island Hul'qumi'num political structures. The difficulties of overlapping claims and political divisions will however, likely continue to challenge Coast Salish people in their self-government aspirations. Such ambiguities are less tolerated in the bureaucratic and institutional world of Aboriginal-state relations and land claims, where community identities are imagined with neat boundaries and borders based on concepts of mainstream western political geographies.

Xeel's and the Transformation of Place

While First Ancestor stories provide a mythic charter for communities and their ownership of and attachment to particular places, another narrative canon provides the foundation for the process by which Coast Salish people develop relationships to the land, the resources and to each other. These stories are found in *syuth* about the Transformer *Xeel's* and the people he encountered. *Xeel's* is a mythic figure who travelled throughout the Coast Salish world at the end of the myth time, turning animals, people and their possessions into large stones, or fixing an ancestor's form into the fish,

animals and plants that are found in particular places today. Such places where these transformed beings are found today are, in the words of Povinelli who studied similar stories in Australian Aboriginal communities, "the congealed labour of mythic action" (Povinelli 1993:137). Much like the specific features in Australian Aboriginal sacred landscapes, these places hold meaning and history for people through the narratives associated with the transformed ancestors (Myers 1991:49-56). These histories and meanings continue to be experienced in everyday ways, through the encounters and relationships people have at, or through, these places.

This canon of transformation stories is well documented in Coast Salish literature. Boas was the first ethnographer to comment on their significance to Coast Salish understandings of place. Following his brief fieldwork with Coast Salish communities in the late 1880s and early 1890s, he published a number of important Transformer stories in German (Boas 1895) which have recently been translated into English (Boas 2002). In Boas' subsequent analysis of Northwest Coast mythology in the publication *Tsimshian Mythology* (1916:602-619), he observed that one of the unique features of Coast Salish Transformer myths was that "in almost all cases individuals, and very often ancestors of village communities, are transformed" into "stone of remarkable shape" (1916:618). Boas observed that while the canons of northern Northwest Coast mythology (ie: Haida and Tsimshian) featured transformations of certain characters to stone, it was generally by the Raven or Trickster figure, and never involved venerated ancestors becoming part of the land, with the attendant connections between these stones and social groupings. The Coast Salish Transformation stories suggested an important social relationship

between the descendants of those ancestral figures and the places the stones are found at today.

Other ethnographers have noted the significance of these stories in the context of modelling Coast Salish social organization. At the turn of the 20th century, Hill-Tout (1978:49-50, 73, 109-113, 150-151) argued, contrary to Boas (1894:454-455), that these stories indicated a form of totemism. More recently such discussion has centred around the definition of Coast Salish local groups (Duff 1952a:85-86; Suttles 1987f:104; 1990:466; Wells 1987:88, 94-95). David Rozen had the opportunity to record several *Xeel's* stories associated with place names throughout Island Hul'qumi'num territory[16]. Other observers theorized little about the stories and simply presented them as important myths (Hill-Tout 1902a:80-82, 84-84; Jenness 1955:57-58; Cryer 1939). Much as Boas observed, I argue that these stories are an important metaphor for articulating long-standing Coast Salish connections to place, serving as powerful reminders of morality,

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[16] Chris Paul and Abel Joe told Rozen about *Xeel's* turning *Tha'thhwum* to the rocks at Petroglyph Park near Nanaimo (Rozen 1985:47-48). Rose James told Rozen the story of *Smul'uw'* being changed to stone by *Xeel's* at Penelakut Spit. Abraham Joe and Gus Campbell both mentioned the footprint made by *Xeel's* on the south end of Galiano Island. Abel Joe and Abraham Joe told Rozen about several of transformations by *Xeel's* , including a man named *Haam'usum* being turned to stone while drinking water at Skinner Point (1985:143), a whale (*qwunus*) being turned to stone by *Xeel's* near *Qwam'utsun* [Quamichan] in the Cowichan River (1985:171-172), *Syalutsa's* baby daughter being turned to schools of salmon at the ancient fish weir site of *quwem'un* (1985:192), and the deaf man *Tl'uqwune'* being turned to stone by *Xeel's* at Cowichan Bay (1985:225). Abraham Joe added the story of an octopus (*hwqim'uqw'um*) being turned to stone by *Xeel's* near *Qwam'utsun* (Rozen 1985:173-4) and a hermaphrodite (*st'ut'im'yu*) being turned to a pile of boulders on the Cowichan River.

Chris Paul and Abel Joe told Rozen that some of the clam shells which *Q'iseq*'s mother used to bathe him with were turned to stone at *Qw'uqw'aqin'um*, which today can be seen "in front of a church on Tzouhalem Road, where Somenos Creek passes under a bridge" (1985:173). *Xeel's* transformed all of *Q'iseq*'s family to stone at various places around *Qwam'utsun* and Quamichan Lake (Rozen 1985:175).

spirit power, and ancestry.

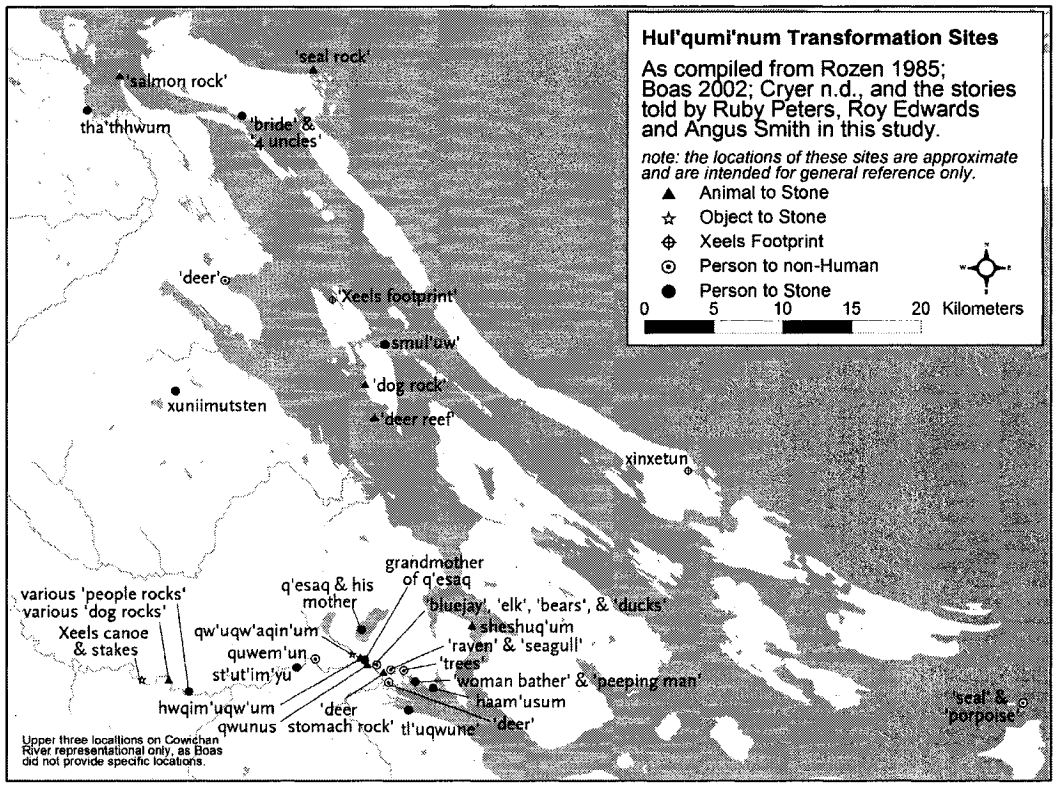


Figure 3.1. Some Island Hul'qumi'num transformation sites.

In the transformation stories that I have listened to in Island Hul'qumi'num communities, two points have consistently been made. The first is that the places where things are transformed at by *Xeel's* may be claimed as being owned by the descendants of the people mentioned in the story. The second is that the stories of *Xeel's* are taken as literally true, that the stones and other beings transformed by *Xeel's* that may be encountered in the world today are the considered evidence of the mythic happenings. The importance of these stories for understanding ownership and their factual basis frequently brings them into the discourse of contemporary land claims.

The transformation stories that I set out in the remainder of this chapter concern the

transformation of people into stone. Though there are many *Xeel's* stories in the Coast Salish canon I have focussed on the stories of transformation to stone in this chapter to emphasize the explicit connections forged by these stories between people and place. These stones are powerful mnemonic devices in the land, evoking the mythologies that are associated with them and embodying the presence of the ancestors whose lives they represent. The map in Figure 3.1 helps locate an inventory of transformer stories in the world of the Island Hul'qumi'num communities, including those mentioned in the text and others found in published and unpublished works.

In the first story presented below, an ancestor of the Chemainus people is transformed to stone, forming part of the range of mountains in Chemainus territory. This transformation story was told by Florence James to remind people that there is a mythic basis to the land tenure system, and that as such, these oral traditions can assist in the navigation of the delicate contemporary politics of competing land claims. In the second story, Roy Edwards recalls how *Xeel's* transforms a seal to stone at Gabriola Island, which has now become the site of contested overlapping land claims. This particular telling has the power to undermine divisive western legal discourses of exclusive use and occupancy in an important area of historically shared territory. The final story, told on two separate occasions by Ruby Peters, recalls the life of a Cowichan culture hero named *Q'iseq*. The telling of this story has significance on several levels. It highlights the tensions of life in class-based Coast Salish communities and the importance of family teachings and personal training in gaining powers and success. In Ruby's performances of the story, the physical presence of the events are connected to real, named, everyday

places in the Cowichan Valley. These places are commemorated by many powerful stones, some created by *Xeel's*, some pre-existing with the residual powers of *Q'iseq* carrying on in the present day world. A few of these stones have lamentably been lost to rapid urbanization and now have less power to impart the wisdom of these important stories.

Xuniimutsten Transformed Over Ladysmith Harbour

On December 11, 2001 (the 4th anniversary of the Supreme Court of Canada's decision in the *Delgamuukw* Aboriginal title case), Florence James told a short story in *Hul'q'umi'num'* to a group of elders gathered together, at the request of Penelakut Chief Earl Jack, to discuss issues related to overlapping land claims and the connections of Island Hul'qumi'num people to the land south of Ladysmith. She said the story was one of the ancestral myths of the Coast Salish people and indicated that it was not her intention to cause any trouble by telling the story. Acknowledging the presence of several non-speakers in the room, Florence repeated the story in English. Though I did not have a recorder on, I took careful notes of her re-telling:

> There was a leader that did some work that offended a *shne'um*. This Indian doctor had real powers in those days. He did something to the leader and it made him very sick. He laid down and was dying. He had something right there in his heart. He was just dying there, laying down. You can see the outline of that man there today, if you look from the water onto the shore behind Ladysmith. You can see in the mountains the man lying on his back, with his knees bent and his chest and his chin. This leader is *Xuniimutsten*, an ancestor of the *Shts'um'inus*. All of the descendents of *Xuniimutsten* own that land today, all the way down past Saltair. Then *Chichulh Si'em'* came and fixed the dying man. He pulled that thing right out of his chest. That is the good work of *Chichulh Si'em'*. He came back to life again. This is the story as my mother told it. I'm not supposed to name that man unless I have 50 cents to pay the witnesses for

> it, but I named him because the Chief asked me to tell the story. I hope not to cause trouble by it.

No one at the meeting contradicted or challenged the story. Florence's elderly mother affirmed Florence's telling. On a boat ride to Kuper Island Florence pointed out the shape of *Xuniimutsten*, lying in profile, his body formed by the topography of Mt. Hall, Coronation Mtn, and Stanton Peak, a forested area just south of the town of Ladysmith. In a subsequent conversation, Mabel Mitchell told me that this transformed person marked out part of the territory of the Chemainus people who could claim connection to the stories.

Xuniimutsten is a well-known hereditary personal name from the Chemainus First Nation. According to Chemainus elder the late Elizabeth Aleck, some of the prominent holders of this name included the second and third Indian Act elected Chief of Chemainus First Nation (James Mitchell and his cousin Peter Mitchell, respectively, following from *Lhowmun* who was the first elected leader). This story embodied Chemainus First Nation's connection to and customary ownership of the area, cementing in the bedrock of the mountains an important persona.

This area was a topic of discussion that day due to a request for support by the Lyackson Chief and Council for a grant from the Provincial Crown of 90 hectares of land in the area for the creation of a new Lyackson Indian Reserve community. The proposed Indian Reserve site was along Stocking Creek, on the low-lying area south of Stanton Peak and east of Coronation Mountain, right in the midst of the area where *Xuniimutsten* lies

transformed. The proposal for a new Lyackson village at this location, while supported by many Chemainus elders who recognize the tight family connections between the two communities, has caused some tension between these communities as there is a dearth of Crown land in the region for economic or community expansion needs of any of the local First Nations. Some Chemainus members have told me that the Lyackson proposal is seen by a part of the community as an encroachment into their traditional lands. The matter has remained unresolved for several years while the Crown has been under increasing pressure to merely sell off the high-value land for the urban and industrial expansion of the town of Ladysmith. The Lyackson and Chemainus First Nations will likely be faced with a decision between resolving traditional tenure issues or seeing the land permanently alienated to non-Native interests.

Xeel's Transforms the Seal at Gabriola Island

The second story returns to the idea that transformation stories state, in part, people's understanding of their rights to land and resources. In this story, told by Roy Edwards, an ancestor who had transformed into a seal was changed by *Xeel's* into a rock that sticks its nose out of the water just like the head of a seal, on the northeast end of Gabriola Island. The story is brief, but the reason why the story was told is revealing.

Roy Edwards evoked this story during a meeting of elders who were discussing the issue of overlapping claims between the Snuneymuxw First Nation and the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group on Gabriola Island. The elders had been puzzling over how the Snuneymuxw could claim to have exclusive rights in this area, as evidenced by their

recent acquisition of an exclusive licence for shellfish aquaculture around Gabriola when there was a consensus among Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group Elders Advisory Board that Gabriola Island was a shared area. They recalled their shared use and occupancy of a well documented village and camp site on the southwest corner of Gabriola named *Tl'eelthw* (Burley 1989). Roy, a knowledgeable, respected individual stood up and added a transformation story to the debate about claiming connections to Gabriola Island.

> You know... our people used to go on the outside [of Gabriola Island] to pick seaweed. So when you talk about Gabriola we're not only talking about that little parcel right out in *Tl'eelthw* but out on the outside too.
>
> That's where you see that *Xeel's* come in. There's a little rock there. I don't know what *niis tsukwsta'mut sis 'o ' kweel* [English Translation: he was doing, that's why he was hiding]. It's inside that little rock.
>
> *' o ' hay ' ul ' tthu s' xuy' usth ni' swi' wul. Tus tthu Xeel's sus ' o' ' iyeqtum sus ' o' hwu smeent* [English Translation: It was only his head that was showing. When the Transformer got there he was changed into a rock.]
>
> That's outside of Gabriola. Out on that side [pointing to the northeast side of Gabriola Island on a map].
>
> *Nilh kwsus qul'qul'uls tthu skweyul 'i ' kw'lhastus tthu s'ul'enhw 'u tthu snas ste 'ukw' 'uy 'ilumstuhw 'us tthey'.* [English Translation: When the weather gets stormy our ancestors would pour grease on it (the rock) to change the weather to nicer weather.]
>
> And so we have only been talking about the inside but, we had that outside area too, because it's a *lhuqus* [seaweed] picking area. It's not a clam digging ground it's *lhuqus* in that area on the outside of it, all along here [pointing to the Flat-Top Islands along the northeast side].
>
> And on this side, it was *Xeel's* that changed him into that, [in that] little area. But that's our seaweed picking area. It's not just any old place where we used to pick. The seaweed is an Indian vegetable, you chop it up and mix it with soup, you chop it up and mix it with fried potatoes and you mix it with herring, herring roe, *ts'um'ush* [herring roe]. [10-07-01-EMM:500-535]

Roy only alludes to the details of the *Xeel's* story here, his main point being that Gabriola Island is an important place to all Island Hul'qumi'num people, not just the local Snuneymuxw who have made exclusive claims there. Roy's story highlights the connection between – or indeed a reliving of – the mythic journeys of *Xeel's* and the journeys of Island Hul'qumi'num people harvesting resources and interacting with their neighbours. The seal rock is powerful for those who know the particular ritual respect it must be paid, in being able to influence the weather. It is powerful too as a marker of place, identity and use rights. These humble seaweed picking areas are 'not just any old place' that can be squabbled over in divisive land claims talks. They are places that have been touched by the Transformer and are deserving of respectful sharing.

For Roy, this provides a contrast with the usual frame of 'use and occupancy' discussions that are so often held with elders as part of preparing for a land claim (Tobias 2000; Elias 1993). Indeed, for several years prior to this meeting, this same body of elders had been asked to share and map their life histories in terms of the places where they remembered harvesting, travelling to, camping or living (as I elaborate in chapter 7). Such litigation-driven research, combined with the process of self-identifying groups of First Nations identifying 'traditional territories' for the British Columbia treaty process, has fuelled overlapping claims disputes between communities (see chapter 9). Stories of the powerful rocks, which were transformed to stone in the times of the First Ancestors of all these Coast Salish communities, reveal more of the multiple connections to land that are belied by simple boundary lines on maps which are frequently depicted to characterize Aboriginal territories or relationships to land. Through these stories seaweed gathering

'use' areas are transformed into sacred, ancestral landscapes, revealing multiple senses of place.

The Story of Q'iseq

The third narrative is the story of *Q'iseq*. This story is an important, well known Cowichan myth.[17] In this story, a boy is born to a widow from a high-status family, survives his murderous uncle, and is raised by his wise mother in the wilderness. Here, he acquires strong spirit powers from infancy, is taught special skills, and returns to raze the village of his wicked uncle and to kill the troubling 'Stonehead' people who were living in his village. Today, the landscape throughout the lower Cowichan Valley is dotted with the mythical presence of *Q'iseq* who left bountiful resources, powerful rocks, and was – along with his family – transformed to stone by *Xeel's*. Though *Xeel's* only appears briefly as the end of this story, the oral tradition of *Q'iseq* is very much a part of the mythic cycle of *Xeel's* stories and makes many of the same kinds of connections between people, place and power.

Ruby Peters twice told me the story of *Q'iseq*. Her versions are largely consistent with the ones in the published record, but are notable in the particular relationship that Ruby has with the places that *Q'iseq* was raised. Her family home is located at the site of the

[17] Most ethnographers who have worked in the Cowichan community recorded a version of this story (Boas 1981:71; Curtis 1913:168; Cryer 1939; Indian Children 1973:8-9; Jenness 1935a). Abel D. Joe, Abraham Joe (from *So'mena*), and Chris Paul all shared *Q'iseq* stories with Rozen, which he compiled into one paraphrased version (1985:150-151, 155, 164-165, 172-175).

stone basin where the infant *Q'iseq* was bathed and gained shamanic spirit power. Ruby emphasized different parts of the story during the two narrations. In the first, Ruby emphasized the success her father had fishing for trout, first created by *Q'iseq*, at their birthplace and the lively encounter between her father and *Q'iseq*'s bath basin boulder. The other story was told with a map spread out on the floor, with Ruby providing additional details about the specific places that *Q'iseq* encountered, and his continued presence at these locations.

The first time I met Ruby we discussed place names in the Cowichan Valley and how stories helped people understand the connection between people and places. I asked if she could tell me about named places where *Xeel's* had transformed people to stone. Ruby replied with a story about *Q'iseq*. Though I had no tape recorder that day, I took detailed notes as she wove her story.

> There was a couple who lived in *Qwam'utsun* long ago. The couple had a son who was going to be heir. The man had decided that they were not to have any more sons, and that if they had more, that they were to be killed. The woman proceeded to have babies, each one being a boy. For 11 sons she had, the man killed each one. On the 12th baby, the woman was determined to keep her son. She took some of her hair and tied it around his penis, and around his waist. When the man heard the baby crying, he said that it sounded to him like another boy. The woman said, no, it's not a boy. Have a look for yourself. The man went and felt through the diaper of the baby and didn't feel a penis, so he let him live.
>
> This boy, *Q'iseq*[18], was a powerful boy. *Q'iseq* was cleansed not by brushing with normal boughs, but by being brushed with balsam. These have little thorns on them. Then the mother took the balsam boughs and

[18] The name *Q'iseq* contains the lexical suffix *-eq* which in *Hul'q'umi'num'* connotes 'penis', as in the place names for *Xeth'eqem* (Retreat Cove, Galiano Is.), *Xatheq* (Hatzic, Agassiz) (Rozen 1985:120, 247).

brushed and swished them through the water at a little bay. Where the balsam splashed into the water, many trout were created. This was why there were so many trout at that place.

Ruby's family used to always be able to get lots of trout there. Her father used to go down and come back in a very short time with a sack half-full of trout. He had a sack cut out so that he could strap it across his back to carry all these trouts back. One time Ruby asked how he got so many of the trout, and he said that he was able to get the trout because he knew how to kill them. If he had killed them by knocking them on the head, they would just disappear. The way to kill them so that they would stay around was to bite their noses. This is what he did, and he was always successful catching so many trout. These trout were quite delicious. She remembers that the old people used to take a trout freshly caught from there and hold it up to their mouth. They would then take their finger and run it along the underside of the trout, and the eggs would come out right into their mouth. Ruby said she never tried this before, but that the old people really loved it. Something has happened to this place now, though, and trout are not to be found here anymore.

Q'iseq's mother used to bath him in water which was held in a boulder that had an indent in it, forming a basin. It was the perfect size to bathe *Q'iseq*. This boulder was on Ruby's property, just down by the river. Ruby mentioned here that her property was originally her grandfather's land, who then gave it to her father and then to her.

One time Ruby's father wanted to take that stone up to his house to show it off. So her father took some big cables and lashed them around the rock. He hooked his horse-team up to it and then started to pull it away from where it had always sat on the river. The stone got so far, but it decided that it just didn't want to be moved away from that place, and it stopped. The horses came right up, their front legs struggling in the air. There was no way they were going to be able to move the stone. When her father got down to have a look, he saw that the cables he had hooked up had made an indent into the backside of the basin-rock, forming a cross where they had started to dig into the rock. Her father just left the rock there. Eventually, when they built the road on the reserve, the rock got buried. It was under there for years, but more recently, when they were digging out along the river, Ruby alerted the men to watch for the rock. 'Watch for my rock' she told them, describing how it was a basin on one side and had the rope-scars on the other. One of the workers found the rock and it is on the side of the road now, waiting to be put back where it had originally been for *Q'iseq*'s bath-basin.

Q'iseq grew up to be very powerful. The people in the village wanted to

> kill all the Stone-heads who lived at Greenpoint. They had tried in the past, but no one could kill those Stone-heads. The usual wood that people used to make clubs would just shatter and splinter against their heads. So *Q'iseq* tried out every different kind of wood, smashing it against a large boulder. Finally, one day, he came across one kind of wood that didn't splinter against the rock. He made a really good club out of this wood and went to Greenpoint, where he was successful in killing all the Stone-heads. Sometime after the battle, *Q'iseq* was turned to stone by *Xeel's* . His grandmother was also turned to stone by *Xeel's*, just upriver from where the basin-rock was. This stone was also covered when they were building the road [PR-i:34-110].

Though I will elaborate more fully on the story following the next version, there are a few elements of this telling that illuminate the potential of mythical places to be experienced in powerful ways by people today. Ruby emphasized equally the formal narrative events of the *Q'iseq* myth, and her own family's encounters with the powers that *Q'iseq* has embodied in place. Balsam boughs are used today to aid in spirit power acquisition. The abundant trout created by the blanket touched by *Q'iseq* have fed the people of *Quam'utsun* through the generations, though the disruption of ritual observances (not to mention intense urban and agricultural development) has now depleted the stocks. The bath basin boulder continues to be an animate source of power, indeed acting today as any Coast Salish person would in wanting to stay in its original home place. Ruby's narration of this story is a powerful account of how mythic action is experienced through dwelling in the local *Quam'utsun* landscape.

Several months later, I talked to Ruby again about *Q'iseq*, hoping to map out more precisely the locations where *Q'iseq* had left a mark. In this telling, Ruby concretely connected *Q'iseq*'s activities to specific places in the Cowichan Valley, lamenting each

time the changes that urban development had brought.

> *Q'iseq* was from Greenpoint [the Cowichan village of *Xinupsum*]. The First Chief in Greenpoint was sick and he was dying. His daughter was expecting a baby. He ordered his brother to take over the chiefdom until the time his daughter has a boy. When she bears a boy, then the brother has to give up his chiefdom to the original one [the family of the First chief].
>
> That's how it always went with our Native people. You can hold only something until you pass it on to another where it's supposed to be originally. So this is what was happening in Greenpoint. And there wasn't just one daughter there was a few of them. So when the brother died, the brother that was left took the chieftainship and he started ordering that if any baby boy should be born that they were to kill any boy that is born because he didn't want to let go of his chieftainship.
>
> So every mother that was pregnant who had a baby boy, that boy was killed. And this daughter of his brother had her baby. And when she had her baby... they always had a nurse, a woman that's a nurse for the woman that are giving birth. And she had her baby and it was a boy. So, what she did was... she had long hair. She pulled her hair and she tied his little penis and tied around his waist and pulled his penis behind him. And when her uncle came in he said," the baby sounds like it's a boy, it's crying like a boy, he's voice is heavy." And she and the nurse said, "No it's a girl." And told him, "come and feel for yourself." So he goes over there and feels the baby and there's nothing there because it was tied, tied behind him. And he said, "Well I must have been mistaken." So he left and the aunt says, "You better leave, get out of here, he's going to find you and he's going find you and he's going to kill your baby."
>
> So she left with her baby, she tied up the baby and she left and she walked from Greenpoint, *Xinupsum* [place name for village at Greenpoint] until she reached just below the St. Ann's church, there's a little pond there. And that's where she stop and she camped there for a while. So they call that the, "crying small lake" that's what they call it, *Shxuxey'elu* [place name meaning 'crying place']. And she stayed there for several days and then she thought "Well it's getting to be time to move". She was getting spooked again.
>
> So she walked along this trail, this has always been a trail for our Native people. She walked along the trail here and she stopped over here by the Four Oaks [very near Ruby Peters house]. And she camped here for a long time and let her baby grow. And then after a while she was getting worried again.

How she fed her baby was with a clamshell, and when she fed him with a clamshell she gave him water through the holes on the clamshell.

She used to bath him. And there was a rock there that was kind of oblong, it was about this long, about three feet long and it had a dip in it and that's where she used to bath him. She used to fill it up with water and bath her baby in this, sort of oblong rock that had a dip in it. And it was there for a long time.

My grandfather thought he was going to show it off so he was taking it, he tied it with a rope and then he got two horses and he started dragging it and just reaching Waldy's place the horse went like this [rearing up] because the rock didn't want to go anywhere and the horses couldn't even pull it. So my grandfather buried it over by the creek there. And I tried getting it back. It was buried by the people that were making the [ditch] when they brought our water. So it was buried under, deeper.

And then about ten years ago Cicero [a community member from *Qwam'utsun*] dug it up. I saw Cicero digging over there and I said, "Cicero, please watch for my rock, that belongs to the Four Oaks where *Q'iseq* was being bathed. I want it back there." So he did and when he found it, it had four burns on the back of it, rope burns and it's still on there. So he brought it back, it's just by my gate now and I want to fix it to put it back where it belongs. By there, by the Four Oaks, there's water that bubbles, a spring water. It bubbles all the time and that's where we used to feed our cattle, when we had cattle.

But that water is what she used for bathing *Q'iseq*. And that big rock basin. She left from here when she got spooked again. And her baby was getting bigger. He was growing really fast. She went to over to St. Peter's Church. She must have went across here then, to St. Peter's Church. There was a big boulder there that was... (I can't remember who that big boulder is supposed to be, but she [Ruby's mother] had names for all those boulders). And she stayed over there by St. Peter's Church for some time and she left there and came back down here, down by the river. And she stayed over here for sometime, right by the river, just past Gary Charlie's place. And then she went up toward Jayne's Road, across the highway to Jayne's Road and there's that creek [Quamichan Creek] that goes up towards *Qwam'utsun* Lake. And she made camp there for quite a number of years.

And she used to bath her son in the creek and she used balsam tree. She used to take that and rub it on her son for the real nice scent. Rub it on him and then she'd shake it and every time she shook her branch it turned to fish and that's how come there's real lot of fish, a lot of trout.

People used to go down there and catch trout and there was a saying that, "If you catch a trout, if you bite it by the nose it will never disappear." And my dad used to come home with half a sack of trout. And the old people used to take the trout and eat the raw eggs from it. And they'd just take it they "sshhluup" [Slurping] like that to it. [Laughter] There was always lots and all he [Ruby's father] took was a little hook about that long and then he'd just hook them and bit their nose and put them into his sack and he'd come home. It won't be long and then he'd be back home again.

But she [*Q'iseq*'s mother] stayed over and that's why there's real lot of trout in *Qwam'utsun* Lake. As he was growing she started showing him things how to hunt birds. She made him a sling shot and showed him how to hunt birds. So for a long time he was hunting, she showed him how to take the skin off the birds, how to strip them. So he made himself an outfit of, of birds, feathers. And pretty soon he had enough on there that he was able to fly.

This was quite a few years later he was already a teenager, 13-14. He was becoming a young man. But the people over at Greenpoint, their heads were made of stone. That's why they called them *Munmaanta'qw* [Stonehead people]. They were really rock-heads. They called them *Munmaanta'qw*. So he kept asking his mother over and over, "What happened? " or "Why was she alone? How come we're by ourselves, why are we isolated from people?" And she kept telling him, "Wait until you grow older and I'll tell you about it". Every time [he asked] as he was growing up, she kept brushing it off, not telling him why they were running away, why they were isolated.

And then she finally sat down and told him what had happened. That he was supposed to be the Chief and why they were running away, that her uncle was killing all of the baby boys.

And he, when he got that outfit made, that was made of bird and he started flying around and going to Greenpoint. And he was gone for, at times he'd disappear from his mother for two, three hours and she'd wonder where he was and what he doing. And she kept asking him.

She sat him down and told him the story about what happened. And she didn't tell him *not* to do anything, to take revenge or anything like that. But she didn't say to kill them. But when he was visiting over there he saw the way they were, how forceful, how they were with other people and he didn't like that. And that's why he eventually went back there. And he killed all the *Munmaanta'qw* men including the uncle. He killed them. And he eventually went back to the village.

I know that when he was going to visit without being seen by these *Munmaanta'qw* people, he realized that nobody could kill them. So he started banging on rocks and making clubs. He got clubs and made them into big clubs and hitting rocks but the club would just break. They were naming all the different kind of wood that he tried, he tried cedar, he tried alder, he tried maple and none of them would work. Every time he hit a rock a club would break. So he finally got, I think its yew wood. That's the one. And that's what he used. And he made it into a club and he went after the *Munmaanta'qw* people. And he just hit them on the head. They were playing a game. He slaughtered them with that club and he was flying when he did that. That's how *Q'iseq* slaughtered them.

I don't know if there's a descendant of *Q'iseq,* that one I'm not sure of. According to the story all the women folk survived but the men they were all gone. So there are some descendants of *Munmaanta'qw.*

The grandmother of *Q'iseq* was turned into a stone over here in *Qwam'utsun.* There was one big boulder that was down by the river here. And there was another one by Jayne's Road. There's a subdivision there now. They made a picture of it[19] and I don't know whatever happened to that. I tried tracing that videotape and I couldn't.

That's when *Xeel's* was here and he turned her to stone. I don't know if this was the one, I thought it was the one by Jayne's Road though. I can't remember if it was the grandfather that's down here. And I can't remember who this one was...there's one big boulder by my driveway there; you could just see the head. That was a big one...so there's big rocks like that, that have stories on them and I can't remember which one this one was. This was her trail though, when she walked this way. She stayed by the Four Oaks. I guess because the mother and grandmother and the grandfather were all changed into the stones. There's one at St. Peter's and there's a big boulder it's quite high, it's about five feet. [PR-ii:28-241]

The story is in one sense analogous to the motif of the return of the rightful King. The child, who is to be heir to hereditary prerogatives and who would hold high social status[20]

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[19] The 'picture' here is a video she had talked about earlier which had been filmed in the 1970s by Channel Three, the local TV station, in which she recalled that her mother names all the people who were transformed into stones. In spite of our best efforts, the video was not located.

[20] Ruby's use of the terms 'Chief' and 'chiefdom' reflect the imprecision with which ordinary English describes Coast Salish political organization (Miller and Boxberger 1994; Boxberger and Miller 1997).

in the community, is saved from the corrupt uncle and returns in his adult life to restore the community. As a child *Q'iseq* is properly raised by his mother, taught the family knowledge and technical skills needed to be a successful person. His isolation from the community, from the time of birth, and the rigorous bathing, cleansing, and teachings his mother gave him bring out his powers, stronger even than those known by shamans, to be able to fly, and create fish. In an act that is the inverse of the transformations by *Xeel's* of humans to stone, *Q'iseq* transforms the community of Stoneheads at Greenpoint back to a place humans can live, invoking his knowledge and powers to kill them.

Q'iseq's basin boulder is a semioticly rich figure in the landscape around the *Quam'utsun* village. As a bathing basin, it plays on the Coast Salish practice of ritual bathing as a part of a person's spiritual cleansing and strengthening. Bathing, or rather spiritual cleansing, as I will discuss in detail in the next chapter, is a central part of Coast Salish people's experience of the land. In mythic fashion, while *Q'iseq*'s mother cleanses him, his spiritual strength becomes a part of the place, dwelling forever in the boulder he encounters. Boulders like this one always have the potential to contain some kind of spiritual power from persons transformed or encountered. As Irving Hallowell's Ojbiwa informants observed for similar encounters, not all such stones are alive, but some of them are, the test being personal experience (Hallowell 1967; see also Ingold 2000a:96). In grappling with understanding how a stone can be experienced as an animate being, Ingold (2000a:97) concludes that the critical feature

> is that the liveliness of stones emerges in the context of their close involvement with certain persons, and relatively powerful ones at that... the power concentrated in persons enlivens that which falls within its

> sphere of influence. Thus the animate stone is not so much a living thing as a 'being alive'.

The boulder itself is indeed a 'being alive', having been experienced as such by Coast Salish people in mythic and recent historic times. Boulders such as these in Coast Salish cosmology are often found to bear the animate potential of the founding transformations of *Xeel's*, or other powerful beings, as they were in the case of *Q'iseq* and his family members at the end of the story. Such boulders can come to be regarded as the very persons who were transformed therein, or at the very least, to be beings which hold the vital power of these ancestors. In this case *Q'iseq*'s bathing basin contains not a person transformed to stone, but the essence of a powerful person, exercising its powerful will to be rooted in the place at Four Oaks which had been *Q'iseq*'s childhood refuge. The desire of the rock to stay in its place reflects Coast Salish understandings of the embeddedness of myth and person in *place*. The power of place is felt in the need to maintain respectful relationships with these figures at these places. When people attempt disturbance, the places resist. When the landscape is transformed by destruction, by people who do not know or understand the mythical features of the landscape, serious problems such as the loss of resources ensue. Subdivisions and road works can disrupt the presence of these mythic figures in the land. Uninformed community members may have never learned to bite the nose of the trout, explaining in part their current scarcity. Community members like Ruby strive, through telling stories and taking action, to maintain respectful relationships with these powerful places.

At the end of the story, *Q'iseq* and his family are transformed into large boulders, some

of which can be still seen today in their original places in the Cowichan valley. Their transformed bodies are a permanent presence in the land. Like such transformations in other hunter-gatherer mythologies, the transformation of such mythical ancestors embody in the land the "essence and spirit of the ancestors" (Poirier 2004:211). In the case of *Xuniimutsten*, the ancestral order which persists today relates to the ownership of land. In the case of *Q'iseq*, *Xeel's* has frozen in place a high status family and the teachings and gifts that this family used to set the world right. The physical presence of these transformed beings in the land evokes their stories, which in turn bind people to these ancestral places. The powers and teachings of these ancestors are a legacy, left forever to be experienced by the generations of people who encounter, experience and learn from them.

During Ruby's accounts, two community members were present. They told me later that they had never heard anyone tell a mythic oral narrative such as this before that day, and were struck with wide-eyed wonder at it. The boulders, creeks and places that they knew from their own experiences around their community, transformed that afternoon into the mythological world of *Q'iseq*. This is perhaps an important indication of the challenges posed for such stories by an influential and homogenizing mass media, whose own stories are connected to anything but the local place of Island Hul'qumi'num people[21]. As I will show in the next chapter, in spite of the reduced dissemination of

[21] To my knowledge, popular culture has cast its eye on a "Xals" story only once, in the science-fiction TV series Stargate SG-1 (season 2, episode 13, '*Spirits*'), where the local understandings of Coast Salish oral tradition are so transformed that they are not recognizable outside a few character names and a simplified notion of transforming bodies.

Hul'qumi'num stories, the potential power of these places continues to be encountered.

Theorizing the Transformer and Transformations

The canon of transformation stories told in Coast Salish communities lays out fundamental relationships between people and place. Just as the stories of the First Ancestors provide charter myths for the communities of Hul'qumi'num-speaking people on Vancouver Island, transformation stories anchor people to places in their ancestral territory.

Beirwert (1999:72-111) has written an excellent chapter discussing *Xeel's* from her work with the Stó:lō. She notes that *Xeel's* stories are unique on the Northwest Coast in presenting a relationship to the landscape, different from the myths of Trickster and First Ancestors, in that *Xeel's* "is a maker with willful intent and moral purpose... he has no direct descendants, rather, he has students" (1999:73). Bierwert evokes the powerful dialectic of *Xeel's* ' transformations. His stories "lodge in the land, referring to and from it" (1999:73). In the stories of transformations of people into rocks in the land, *Xeel's* becomes "a kind of captured image", or in the language of semiotics a 'sign'.

Bierwert explores four aspects of the sign, first as an icon, with hands out like "Christ or Moses or a generic chief in a sepia photograph" (1999:109). He is a "sign of difference", in being other-than-human, with ultimate power, and unable to make mistakes (1999:110). He is a sign of religious authority with "particular – not generic – moral edicts in every context" (1999:110). Finally, he is a sign of verbal inscription:

> Salish rituals, languages and stories formalize the transformative power of words in many ways. Chants and verbal formulae have efficacy equal to that of amulets in other shamanistic traditions. This ritual culture is one of the most performative, least structured. Crystal-like songs and small, dense texts are the architectural forms that house enormous outpourings of the heart. Even the Halkomelem morphology is compressed and performative. Like other Salishan languages, Halkomelem makes most nouns by adding a 's-' prefix to a verb stem. Linguists distinguish this from the nominalization of European languages; they call it a kind of 'freezing.' Xals dictates change. He finds selfish actors and makes them soulless, animals or stone figures. He takes unruly things and makes them immobile, freezes them with his words. He makes icons, metonyms, figures of speech. He makes difficult qualities hold still. Xals is doubly cryptic, the sign of inscription densely signified, its agency figuratively compressed. Which is Other, the Changer or the changed? (Bierwert 1999:109).

If *Xeel's* can be interpreted as a kind of sign, certainly the rocks he creates in the land are important 'signifiers'. The stones that dot the Coast Salish landscape are permanently transformed stories, representing cultural underpinnings that are similarly inscribed in Coast Salish landscape, language, discourse and identity. This is equally true of the mythical (and as will be outlined in the next chapter, the ongoing) transformations between humans and non-humans. The relationships established in mythological terms in these stories continue through their physical and cultural presence to have real and tangible effect in the on-going daily lives of Coast Salish people.

In this chapter I have investigated the modes in which Coast Salish people engage cultural discourses relating to land through the telling of a special class of oral tradition – *syuth* – that plays at the intersection of myth and legend. In the next chapter, I present stories that are largely in the genre of Coast Salish oral 'legends' – *sqwul'qwul'* in Island Hul'q'umi'num. This later is a genre that, as McLaren (2003) has argued, is centred on

the position of the speaker in relation to the story, in these cases dealing with individuals' spirit power and their relationship to the natural world. These include supernatural being stories (including *stl'eluqum*, Sasquatch, and little people stories), and human relations with animals stories. Both genres of oral traditions figure centrally in Coast Salish senses of place.

Chapter 4
Spirit Power Emplaced
S'uylu and *Shne'um:* Spirit Powers and Shaman Powers Emplaced

An important aspect of Coast Salish ontology is the idea that 'spirit power' is emplaced in the land. By emplaced, I mean that spiritual power (*s'uylu*) may be encountered dwelling in a place, nestled within particular Coast Salish landscapes. In this chapter, I lay out examples which have contributed to how I have come to understand how spirit power is emplaced in the land. First, I review the Coast Salish conceptual basis for understanding spirit power as experienced by regular people and powerful shamans seeking relationships with powerful non-human forces. Second, I provide examples from several legends and myths that inform Coast Salish people's understanding of their encounters with the spirit power emplaced in the land. Finally, I draw on Coast Salish narratives of personal experiences of particular powerful places, often in the context of their difficulties in encountering such places in a landscape that is being transformed by urbanization.

To understand what is meant by 'spirit power' in a Coast Salish sense, I will briefly summarize the ontological framework of hunter-gatherers in general and Coast Salish people in particular. A key aspect of this framework is the potential for all things to have the agency of a person. Personhood in hunter-gatherer perspectives is often open to both humans and non-humans (Ingold 1996:131). In the time reckoned by Coast Salish people as being when the *sxwi'em'* and *syuth* took place, all non-humans beings were people (Collins 1952). Today, non-humans who dwell in the Coast Salish world always have the potential for their personhood to be encountered as a form of spirit power. Non-human

and human persons "are not impartial observers of nature but participate from within the continuum of organic life" (Ingold 2000a:90). In the Coast Salish world, like that of the Ojibwa hunters of the Canadian boreal forest, these non-human persons "can be encountered not only in waking life but also... in dreams and in the telling of myth" (Ingold 2000a:91). The dream experiences, and the narrative structure and elements of the myths drawn on are informed by personal and cultural experiences in the land – not just any land, but in particular places. Dreams and stories both shape a storied landscape and are simultaneously shaped by the experience of it. It is this range of phenomenal experiences that reinforces the power of these non-human ancestors as participants in Coast Salish quotidian life.

Non-human persons in Island Hul'qumi'num myth and everyday experience can change form with ease and in many guises. The ontological basis for this power to transform resides in the idea that everything has a soul and a corporeal frame, the latter of which can undergo transformation without deprivation of the soul (Jenness 1935b:106-107). But, as in other hunter-gatherer cultures, "only the most powerful human persons, such as sorcerers and shamans can change into a non-human form and make it back again, and then only with some danger and difficulty ... For most humans, metamorphosis means death" (Ingold 2000a:93). This idea is reflected in the stories where *Xeel's*, perhaps the most powerful of humans, changes people permanently into stone who never return. The spirits of these transformed persons continue to dwell and rest in the place they were transformed. This presence and strength of spirit is attested to in people's narratives of encounters with sentient rocks, abundant creatures in particular places, or even the

stl'eluqum (or 'monsters') that inhabit certain locations in the Coast Salish world.

People are circumspect and sometimes fearful of encounters with the strongest of these non-human persons. They represent the power to transform a person's life completely. If the person who encounters this power is not ready or strong enough, it could mean death. However, if a person is able to manage such transformational power, he will have access to a wider range of "practical possibilities of being, and hence the more extensive the breadth of their experience and the scope of their phenomenal presence" (Ingold 2000a:94). The stories below about the shamanic powers given by *stl'eluqum* are examples of these possibilities of experience.

Contemporary Coast Salish experiences of transformations provide a link between people and the powerful ancestors who dwell in the land. Shamans and spirit dancers transform themselves with varying degrees of power and completeness. Transformative powers are evoked in the First Salmon ceremony, where a salmon is returned to the river or sea in order that it may be reconstituted in the world of the Salmon People (Gunther 1926; Gunther 1928; Duff 1952a:120), thus resolving the potential contradiction in killing these important creatures (Berman 1991:3; see also Brightman 1993). Transformed ancestors have a practical and real importance in the lives of Coast Salish people today, "since the spirit inhabitants of the land contribute to human well-being equally and on the same footing as do human forbearers, providing both food, guidance and security, they too... are ancestors of a sort, albeit ones that are alive and active in the present" (Ingold 2000b:141). Coast Salish people are concerned with ancestral relations with these non-

human persons. They take wisdom from the spirit of the land, through the encounters with these beings throughout their lives. Wayne Suttles, the pre-eminent ethnographer of Coast Salish culture, argued much along the same lines as Ingold, that Coast Salish world views do not make a distinction between the 'natural' and 'supernatural' as do Old World traditions in order to sort out unexplainable philosophical problems about life (1981; see also 1987d:74-77). The more important distinction is between humans and non-humans, all of which live in the 'real' world. Coast Salish categories of non-humans includes sea-life, plants, animals, rocks, Sasquatch *tth'amuqw'us* (Island *Hul'q'umi'num'*) or *sasq'uts* (Musqueam) (see Suttles 1987d), giant two-headed snakes *sinulhquy'*, (see van Eijk 2001), and powerful 'monsters' *stl'eluqum*.

To be successful in life as a Coast Salish person, one must be able to have an enhanced vision to sense the world or ability to control cosmic forces that influence everyday events. Such distinctive Coast Salish successes are seen in a multitude of forms, from an karmic luck in hunting or fishing, to successes in preparing and applying medicines, to accomplished skills in creating masterwork goods and crafts. To do these things well, an individual must establish a relationship with the non-human world. This relationship is formed between a person and their non-human counterpart during a vision quest encounter or while seeking their *seyowun* (spirit song) as an initiate in the winter ceremonial. A person looking for their non-human *s'uylu* or helper, Suttles argued, has "to leave the human part of this world and try to enter the non-human part. Wilderness – places away from humans – provided the essential setting" (1981:712; see also Kew 1990:447-448; Mohs 1994:197).

Encounters with such spirit power may occur in many places throughout the Coast Salish world. Common, but not everyplace, it has the potential to be anywhere. Just as people should be circumspect and respectful to each other as they do not know what kinds of spirit power others might have over them, they should have the same attitude towards places (and other non-human things like animals, or fish). William Elmendorf, an ethnographer who worked extensively with Coast Salish communities in Washington State in the mid-20th century, summarized the Coast Salish concept of power as a means to affect "the physical or social environment". He noted that different kinds of spirit powers generate specific effects.

> Power is never innate or inherent in human beings, but human individuals may obtain power. And most differences in social performance among adult human individuals are due to differences in their powers and in their abilities to control power. (1984:283)

There is more than one kind of power, and power may come from multiple sources. In Island Hul'qumi'num communities, the usual spirit power obtained by people (*s'uylu*) is different from the power that a shaman obtains (*shne'um*) (Suttles 1981:708; Elmendorf 1984:284). As Elmendorf noted regarding the sources of these powers, "different spirits might grant the same kind of power, or the same spirit (as named) might grant different powers to different human recipients" (1984:287). The character of the power-conferring spirits is frequently linked to the pre-*Xeel's* time – the 'myth-world'. The non-humans who have particular powers to confer are mentioned in pre-transformation time stories, and themselves, as non-humans have survived into the present generation, living in the land to be encountered by humans who take the opportunity to find them (Elmendorf 1984:289; see also his chart 1977 :71 for a detailed model of ways Coast Salish people

are empowered).

Spirit power is most commonly expressed today in the Coast Salish winter ceremonies, and most specifically, the winter dance.[22] While these studies richly document aspects of Coast Salish ideology and experience of spirit power in winter ceremonials, few have focussed on developing an understanding of the importance of place to encounters with the spirit world. This chapter is intended to be a contribution to these studies, highlighting the interplay of myth and experience, ontology and power in Coast Salish people's encounters with spiritual power.

Before I begin the detailed discussion of Coast Salish narratives and experiences of spirit power, it is important to set out some of my own perspectives on writing on these issues, as they bear on the way I have described a very spiritually and emotionally charged area of Coast Salish life. I have always felt cautious and circumspect about 'working' with Coast Salish people on matters related to their spiritual lives, when the 'work' being done was the work of the anthropologist, writing, recording and interpreting what has been

[22] Several unpublished theses and dissertations have developed rich ethnographic accounts and understandings of the winter dance – 'bighouse' practices to use the local English idiom (Amoss 1978; Kew 1970; Lane 1953; Robinson 1963; Ryan 1973; Wike 1941). A number of published ethnographies have provided additional description of this important part of Coast Salish life (see Barnett (1955) chapter 12; Bierwert (1999) chapter 6; Collins (1974a) chapter 9; Duff (1952a:97-121); Elmendorf (1960) chapters 12 and 13; Jenness (1955) chapters 4 and 5; Kew (1990); Stern (1934) chapter 8). Others have published shorter articles examining the recent resurgence of the winter ceremonial and the relevance of it and associated symbolism for contemporary Coast Salish identity and community networks (Amoss 1977a; Jilek *et al.* 1978; Suttles 1987g). Also worth noting are a few pieces written from the medical health perspective that have attempted to understand Coast Salish ceremonials as healing practice in western psychological terms (Jilek 1976; 1982; 1992; Jilek and Jilek-Aall 1982; 1985; Jilek and Todd 1974; Jilek-Aall *et al.* 2001).

shared. I appreciate and respect the Coast Salish view that these matters are personal, indeed 'secret' (cf. Amoss 1977b) however, I have had many off-the-record conversations with people about their beliefs and practices. Indeed, I have been invited to attend most of the different ceremonial activities in the Coast Salish community, from the bighouse (winter ceremonial) openings and 'stand-ups' to namings, funerals and memorials. I have worked with the dead as a young archaeology student, and have participated actively in several 'burnings' (*yuqwuls*), internments and memorials. These experiences have led me to feel a great caution and restraint towards writing about spirit power from the perspective of the participant observer. I have chosen not to write directly about my participant observation experiences, though I am always informed by them. I have only provided narratives I feel are appropriate, and only those which illuminate the relationships between Coast Salish people, place and the experience of spirit power.

My deference has not dissuaded people from talking candidly about the acquisition of spirit power and the on-going maintenance of the relationship between individuals and their non-human counterparts, as they related to my discussions with them about their sense of place and connections to the land. Older people particularly felt comfortable in talking about their encounters with the power that the non-human world holds (Robin Ridington reported having similar experiences with older people in a northern Dené community 1988:70-74). Some of the power of the spirits was explained to me by the telling of myths in which the spirit-beings had encounters of their own. Others were deeply personal accounts of lived experience. Not surprisingly, given the Coast Salish

lexical categories distinguished by Elmendorf (1977; 1984), the stories generally fell into two categories: stories about encounters with beings who share spirit power with people, and stories about powerful non-humans who give powers to *shne'um* (shamans) or which may bring harm to less powerful people who encounter them. All of the narratives reinforced my own experiences that the land is charged with power that has tangible, visible effects in the Coast Salish world.

Spirit Power Emplaced in Coast Salish Myth and Legend

Xeel's Comes Along

I will first provide an example of how in Coast Salish myth and legendary history, many animals or other non-humans such as certain rocks have been transformed from their human form. Their descendants such as the deer or trees, who live in the contemporary world, require the same relationships of respect as would their human ancestors. They also have the potential to be similarly spiritually powerful, with abilities to share or wield their power with other persons who encounter them. These principles are set out in myth and lived and experienced by people today. Below I provide three oral narratives told to me by Ruby Peters, Willie Seymour and Simon Charlie, each of whom emphasized the ability of spiritual power to be associated with certain places through the emplacement of the non-humans in the land.

In the first story, which was told by Ruby Peters following her telling of the first *Q'iseq* story in the previous chapter, the Transformer *Xeel's* changes a man into a deer, who is then obliged to feed his descendants forever.

Xeel's did a lot of things when he came around, hey? With the deer, that's how he got the deer.

Everybody heard about *Xeel's* . Everywhere he went [they] hear about *Xeel's* doing this and doing that. So this man was mad because *Xeel's* he kept hearing about *Xeel's* . So he started making a spear. (What do you call those kinds of rocks? They're kind of shale.) He sharpened that, sharpened [it]. He was making a spear.

And this man comes walking along asks him, "What are you doing?" *I'ch tsukwsta'mut?* ["what you doing?]"

"Oh, I'm making a spear. I'm going to make my weapon because this man *Xeel's* is coming around. I'm going to kill him."

And he didn't know he was talking to *Xeel's* . And he says, "Let me look at your spear."

And he says, "I've got two of them, they're real nice, they're real sharp." And you know how they are. They're kind of sharp.

So he says, "Lift them up and show me. Lift it up like this and show me your spear."

So he lifted it up like that and it went on to his head and turned into an ear and he became a deer. Yeah. And he told him as he was jumping away (he turned into a deer) "People, your descendants in the future, will eat you. You'll be meat for the people."

And that was a man but he was going to be a killer. He was going to kill *Xeel's* , so he turned him into a deer. He made him jump like a deer. [PR-ii:290-311]

Ruby's telling was one of several versions that has been shared with me by others including Roy Edwards and Willy Seymour (each taking place in a different, but specific location), and told to prior researchers such as Boas (2002:135-136). This story establishes the well-known relationship between humans and non-humans, in this case deer. This relationship is in one sense, one of kinship, as people may feel they are descended in some way from that ancestral man who, turned into a deer, is in turn

obliged to share his meat with his human descendants. In the 19th century, Coast Salish people are reported to have firmly held that animals transformed themselves into human form when they were away from people. Collins, who worked with the Coast Salish in Puget Sound said that even in contemporary times, animals

> do not live all the year around in animal guise. Except for the season when they spawn, salmon live as human beings in a world which exists beyond the ocean... This belief was so firmly entrenched that when Indians who joined White parties in the last century visited the east coast of North America, they believed this region to be salmon country and reported that they had seen salmon walking around as human beings. (1952:354)

People currently may understand the truth of this transformation in terms of their relationship with the animals, which like a relationship with people, is based on sharing and respect. The story also provides an example of how people may themselves be transformed by the spirit powers that they may engage of a guardian spirit (ie. Amoss 1978; Jenness 1955). A person who encounters a deer as their guardian spirit may have its assistance in hunting, or in some other manner such as in the acquisition of wealth, as described for a Cowichan man by Jenness (Jenness 1955:51). These encounters continue to be important for the relationship between Hul'qumi'num people and their non-human neighbours today.

Beavers Seek Spirit Power

In the second oral narrative, I present a *sxwi'em'* that illustrates the potential that people have to encounter spirit power in place. In this story, told by Willie Seymour, many of the ideas about the potential to encounter powerful things in the Coast Salish world are framed in terms of how the animal-people of the myth time may be encountered as spirit

helpers. Their power may still be found in the location where the story is set, such as in the affluent rural area of Yellow Point, just a few kilometres northwest of the main Chemainus First Nation community at Kulleet Bay.

> I heard the elders one time when I was just a child tell of the people from Chemainus, from *Q'ul'its'* [place name for the Kulleet Bay community on Chemainus IR 13]. Right down here where the big house was, that's where they call it *Q'ul'its'*. This is a myth, I guess you call it.
>
> In the back there was a pool. When the tide was running out, it's like a river when the water runs out. It was at the far end of the big houses in the pictures that you see, on the north, northern side of the bay [referring to the lagoon in Kulleet Bay]. And when the tide would come in it was like a big whirl pool and that's how that place got its name, they call it *Q'ul'its'*.
>
> It was later on in time when they began to get cars that the old people decided they were going to close off that end and open up this end, by the old grave yard. And that's why that, you could tell if you go down there you will see that it was dug out. So they changed the water, the water how it went in and out of this pool area in the back of the big house. There was a couple of big houses there to connect from this end to the big house side.
>
> There was on *Ttheythuts'* land, late Wilfred Aleck's father, Louie Aleck and one by the Seymour's, they had a bridge there as well. One bridge was home-made planks. So anyway they had opened up this end and closed up that end for the convenience of the old car, model-A that they began to bring into the community. But prior to that the elders were telling a story one time and I was just amazed by the story.
>
> They're talking about this family that had invited the people of the community, and there was several hundred. My grandfather, even he doesn't recall this story. As a child he was born in the late eighteen hundreds. So it has to be sometime in history.
>
> But this one family, they invited the community and had a community gathering and stated that they were going to need a large canoe for when they travelled in the spring and summer months. So they decided they were going to go and look for a log. So there were certain people apparently that went up the mountain.
>
> They went way up in the back of the mountains back here and they finally found a log. And then they have this person that goes up there and I guess

you could say he's like a medicine person, who would prepare this log for falling, chanting songs. And they would lay out bows and ferns to where the log was going to land, so no damage would happen to the log when it came down. And it's just like I cushioned it. And you know it just fell straight flat, and of course they had primitive tools at the time.

So they would use these tools. But there was thirty, forty men working on it, maybe more. Can you imagine all these men chopping away with one or two main builders going back and forth saying "This is where you got to work, this is where you got to work." So you had these canoe builders directing these labours, if you will.

So they built this canoe and over a period of time when they finally got it done they went and they cut logs, round logs and they went down the beach and picked up some round logs as rollers and men and women, children were all a part of this. The children would hang on and push and some one would hang on to the ropes and pull, you know have three or four ropes on it and they're pulling this log in from a couple of miles in the bush and it's a huge canoe. You know it's like what we call whalers today, *Qwu'lh, Qwu'lh.*

So anyway they're going," Hup! Whooo!" You know like that they go, "Hup! Whooo!" Everybody would pull, you know one person would holler, "Hup!" And everybody would go," Whooo!"

And it will come along, coming this canoe. And I'd imagine it took several days to get it out. But it was an adventure. Especially for the young kids to see this happen and it was so exciting and they just had a good time. They'd work until someone said "Let's take a break" and you know, they made their [break] right there and then they would start again, until they got the canoe down into the water.

So sometime later in life, in that era, this young man's going up hunting. And he's going up through almost the same area, through the swamp, by the swamp, by the edge of the swamp. All of a sudden he heard, "Hup! Whooo! Hup! Whooo!" he says, "What's going on?" he got real scared, he got afraid hey, he was going to run back to the community to let them know there was strangers up there, but he thought he would go up there and investigate.

So he started sneaking, sneaking and sneaking, get a little closer and he's hiding away, hiding behind bushes, moving along real cautious. Finally he got into position to look to see what it was. It was Beavers. Beavers had been watching human beings and what they were doing, so they did that. They fall these trees away from the pond and there's three or four of

> them, "Hup! Whooo!" And they're pulling this log to the pond the same way the human beings were. So observant they were and he had to chuckle.
>
> He went back to his community and he told them. And one of the elders said, "You know they, one of them, one of them maybe helping us pull." They had the ability to transform in them days, into human being, back into animal. [This happened before *Xeel's* came]. And those beavers were at Michael Lake. [SW-ii:33-106]

In Willy's artful narration of this story, the beavers are non-human people who seek power from their human counterparts who dwell in the world with them. This story is set a very long time ago, in the mythic past, when people travelled by canoe to neighbouring communities to attend potlatches (Willie's 'gatherings'). The person with special ritual knowledge sang songs and prepared the forest floor for the proper felling of canoe logs is a figure who stands in contrast with the implied contemporary loggers who, do not, however use 'primitive' equipment (as Willie ironically puts it), engaging in a very different and less respectful relationship with the non-human beings in the forest.

The young hunter who encounters the Beavers was initially afraid and certainly circumspect in investigating the sounds they were making. Though he chuckled at first at what might be thought of as their 'cute' mimicking of human traits, his elder cautioned him that he was right to be circumspect, as animals had the potential to transform into people, who may indeed become valuable helpers and allies. One should not laugh at a spirit power encountered in the land, but rather respect the assistance and power they may bring.

On a parenthetical note, it is additionally instructive to note how Willie locates the story

in time by referencing landmarks (the lagoon behind the village, the old bighouses, the hand-made plank bridges) that no longer exist. This narrative device puts a subtle emphasis on the importance of place for situating oneself in the world and, in this case, in time. Such a narrative device is interesting from the point of view of cognitive theory which suggests that time may indeed be subsumed by place in certain cultural-linguistic frameworks (Hanks 1990). If we take into account a larger set of contexts by which this kind of discursive practice can become meaningful, Hanks' point may be another useful avenue in understanding how place figures in Coast Salish ways of being in the world.

Finding S'uylu: The Abandoned Boy, Sun and Crow

The final oral narrative is another *sxwi'em'*, this one told to me by Simon Charlie.[23] This story, set in the days before *Xeel's*' great transformations, concerns a boy who has had no success in encountering a spirit helper and is abandoned by his people. In spite of his own laziness, he acquires great power from the Sun, which makes him rich in salmon, and the community returns to share in this new wealth. How the boy relates to the land – particularly his experience of the river – is central to understanding the story's central theme of gaining spirit power.

> If you didn't get a helper, I guess when you were young, then you were an outsider.
>
> Well, on the Mainland,[24] this young guy was trying to get a helper, you

[23] The same story with a few more scenes included was also recorded by Boas in 1886 from a Cowichan storyteller and recently published in English (Boas 2002:145-148).

[24] In a version of this story told to me by Robert Guerin, which in turn was told to him by his mother, the family was originally from *Tl'eelthw* [place name for False Narrows, Gabriola Island] and their leader had told them to move to Point Roberts, which is where the family was on

know. And he couldn't, so they left him. But the grandmother got a clamshell and buried it under the fireplace and told her little dog to tell his master when he gets back. They used the cedar bark, all crushed, and [put a] spark in there, and that was [going to] take a long time before it burned out.

So when they got back, everything was gone and he was crying. The little dog went to the fireplace and started digging. And when they got the clamshell, he went to his master and made noise. So he went there and seen the [clamshell]. He made a fire.

He hunted all the time. The grandmother had some wood for him for a bow and arrow, so he just finished it and he started hunting, collecting all kinds of fur and feathers.

And one day he was out sunning himself by the river and the Sun come along and stopped, and then left. Next day he was out there again sunning himself when the Sun come along and stopped, and come down and admired his outfit. And the Sun asked him if he can trade it [for a] goats wool cape.

So he went along and after they made a trade, the Sun asked him to go down to the river. So they went there and the cape had fringes, the goats wool cape. They pulled it out [the cape] and put it on like that, and shook the strands. Salmon came out of it. So he had all kinds of salmon.

And then the Crow-children were crying. The Crow went to this place where this young man was. And they [the Crow family] seen this young man with all the salmon. And they [the young man and the Sun] gave him [the Crow] some. Told him to take some to his grandmother.

So he did. And the people [the young man's ex-villagers] wondered what happened to the Crow-young people, cause they stopped crying. And here they were feasting with salmon. They asked him [the Crow] where he got it, and they went on [eating] for awhile, but they kept after him. And he told them, "Well, the person that you left, he's got all kinds of it." So they all moved back. So that's one story. [CS-iv:247-268]

In this *sxwi'em'* many of the essential relationships between humans, non-humans and the obligations and tensions within a community are highlighted. Though the boy does

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the Mainland when the boy was abandoned. Robert said the story took place "many thousands of years ago, at the time of creation" [04-04-01-GR-i:244-273].

not have "a helper", his grandmother takes pity on him, leaving him a talisman which helps him hunt and collect furs and feathers to make an outfit. The talisman of the clamshell, ember and wood initially draw on the power the grandmother has to help the boy survive his abandonment. Even abandoned, he continues to thwart encountering power by leisurely 'sunning himself' beside the river instead of bathing in cold creeks and undertaking the rigours demanded of a bighouse initiate. This inversion of the normal practice of *kw'aythut* – bathing and cleansing oneself in cold water to make oneself strong – is a powerful reminder of appropriate engagements with the land. In mythic fashion, however, it is in the repeated act of the inverted behaviour of sunning himself that the boy encounters the Sun, the most powerful of all non-humans. The Sun bestows a most powerful helper gift of the Salmon-cape on the boy, who trades his humble outfit for it. The boy, thus empowered, begins to behave appropriately, sharing salmon with Crow to feed his starving children. Crow, in return, sets the boy's world straight by arranging for his village-mates to rejoin him.

Spirit Power Rests in Place: Bathing Sites and other Powerful Places

This section of the chapter will explore the encounters of spirit power in bathing areas and in forested areas away from settlement by Island Hul'qumi'num people. These stories reveal that relationships established in Coast Salish between humans and non-humans are perpetuated through personal experience. While *sxwi'em'* such as those discussed above provide an avenue to interpret how Coast Salish people frame their relationships with place in mythic terms, the relationships may also be richly understood through people's experiences of spirit power encountered in the course of their dwelling

in their lands. A key feature of Coast Salish discourse about place is the significance of the land with respect to encounters with spirit power. People journey to particular sites or kinds of places to seek spirit powers, performing rituals and exhibiting correct behaviour to engage in appropriate, circumspect and respectful relationships with non-human beings which are emplaced at these locales.

What follows is a discussion of the personal encounters of spirit power in bathing areas and in forested areas away from settlement by Island Hul'qumi'num people. Five community members (Marjorie Louie, Jerome Crocker, Mabel Mitchell, Peter Seymour and Angus Smith) have provided me their perspectives on the relevance of these places. These stories reveal that relationships between humans and non-humans are perpetuated through personal experience and engagement with places. Common in the current discourse about these places is a sense of loss and degradation due to intense urban and commercial pressures on the Coast Salish landscape (Glavin 1994). It is the hope of many Coast Salish people, who have shared their experiences with me, that talking about these kinds of places in a public forum such as this study – without revealing secret or private details related to these encounters with spirit power – will help shift the social powers that have transformed many of these places in ways unfavourable to a Coast Salish sense of relating to the land, inviting a broader understanding of Coast Salish senses of spirit power in place.

Ritual bathing – *kw'aythut* is one of the most important on-going practices of Coast Salish people in the landscape today. *Kw'aythut* involves going into the mountains (or

for some people to the seashore) at the crack of dawn, especially in the winter, to cleanse oneself and become strong. It is a critical element of Coast Salish spiritual and ceremonial life. The published ethnographic literature provides insight and detail into the importance of the practice of ritual bathing. When looking for "the thing that's going to help you" young people are encouraged to fast, bathe in the early morning, scrub themselves with cedar, fir and hemlock branches or moss (Amoss 1978:13; Lane 1953:29-30; Robinson 1963:124-125; Suttles 1981: 706). Bathing when mourning the loss of a loved one, or after handling the dead is important for purifying oneself and not having something of the spirit dead stay around (Barnett 1955:219; Lane 1953:77; Jenness 1935a:94). An initiate in the bighouse must bathe himself every morning during the dance season (Amoss 1978:62; Kew 1970:178). Bathing in this way keeps a new dancer (or anyone for that matter) strong (Amoss 1978:62). This practice is maintained throughout a dancer's life, particularly in winter when spirits may be more readily encountered. Ritual bathing is also performed by Coast Salsh people who wish to become spiritually clean and strong before engaging in other work such as hunting, canoe racing, or fishing (Barnett 1955:104). What has not been so clearly articulated in the literature is the importance of the land, and in particular locally known, special places that have qualities such as seclusion and a certain feeling to them deemed appropriate for having cleansing experiences.

On the east coast of Vancouver Island, finding appropriate places to *kw'aythut* is becoming increasingly difficult. With a forest land base that is mostly held by private companies and intense urbanization along the coastal areas, few creeks are left intact.

Nowhere in the territory are there significant old-growth stands of timber and all of the watersheds have, at the very least, been 'opened up' in an extensive network of logging roads. The Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group has compiled an extensive documentation of important bathing creeks to assist in making land selection decisions at the treaty table. This information, however, is private, confidential and not appropriate for scholarly analysis and dissemination. The information that was shared publically with me centres around the tragic loss of some of these important bathing locations. These narratives of loss speak to the power and potential of the land to provide for the community in ways that are at odds with commercial forestry and urban development.

In a small-group conversation when one person asked about 'sacred' sites, Marjorie Louie, an elder from Chemainus, lamented how difficult it has become to find an appropriate place to *kw'aythut* today, given the large amount of industrial forestry, tourism and most insidiously, new housing developments.

> The only sacred areas that I knew about was the mountains. You know, they used to tell a young person or maybe somebody that was a widow or widower, somebody that lost their parents *Nem kw'aythut* [Bathe self in cold water to make self strong]. Go up the mountain, you know. To me, those must have been sacred areas to our people. The mountains.
>
> Where they tell you to go to a river and wash yourself in the river. Make sure that the water is running so that when you go it will all drift away. All your worries, or whatever it is that you carry with you is washed away in the river. So, those rivers must have been sacred to our people.
>
> Like, our people from here [Chemainus First Nation], they have their own sacred place to go as in Ladysmith. And, right now you can't go there because they closed it. I used to hear my grandfather talk about that mountain, that first one over here [pointing to the range west of Ladysmith]. It used to be sacred, that place. And, he never used to just go there and, you know, just look what's there.

> That's sacred to us. And the day I would say "uh uh, I'm still going along with...", 'cause I'm old already. I want it to be private if I go there. I don't want nobody following me, because it's sacred. I'll take all my tears out and I'll sing my own song. There are religious songs. Shaker people, that's where I came from [referring to the Shaker Church]. And I'll sing that one to get rid of all the hurtings I carry.
>
> And now today they don't do it anymore. And it hurts. I wish sometimes they'd, you know, take it back but it's really hard for our new generations to understand that one. They don't want to listen when you're trying to talk to them. Even my own family don't understand that, you know. It takes a long time to keep pushing them and telling them what's right and wrong, before they understand in their head. [AM-LM-LM-i:597-645]

Marjorie speaks in general terms of how the mountains and rivers can be sacred places, places people can go to become strong or to wash away troubles people carry with them. One area in particular which her grandfather went to was powerful for their family. Unlike the Abandoned Boy in the previous story who simply sunned himself beside the river, Marjorie mentioned that such a place is not appropriate for a casual visit, bur rather is a deeply private, purposeful place.

The changes to these special places are not merely a result of long past historic alienations. Jerome Crocker, an active, middle-aged hunter discussed in 2000 how a number of bathing holes in the area north of Ladysmith and on Saltspring Island have been more recently alienated from the people who use them for *kw'aythut*.

> You can't bath up in Timberland [pointing to the map, Timberlands Road area, just west of Cassidy, south of McKay Lake], there's an excellent bath hole there, it's got a flat rock to stand on, like white rapids there, you get a bubbling sensation when you walk in there. They got a big rock you can rub up against when you walk out to the flat rock. But there's a trailer court there now. When you go there a light goes on and the dogs all start barking. So you can't get there to bath.

[...]

> We've been getting chased out of Saltspring and everything too. Indian bath hole in here too [pointing to Burgoyne Bay on a map], we're trying to go hunt up there, and a guy owns a fish farm, saying that he's the landlord of the island and he stopped and even towed our boat off when we were trying to walk away from the boat. That was just last summer. [CJ-i:1228-1258]

Residential development in areas which *kw'aythut* places are located is incompatible from the Coast Salish view. These places need to be quiet and secluded. Their character is particular and individual. Dogs, artificial light, and intrusive landlords permanently change the character of these places, and the power they exude for Coast Salish people to experience.

The loss of the bathing site near Ladysmith mentioned by Jerome, has remained a frequent topic of discussion with me, and in the Chemainus First Nation community. Mabel Mitchell, a Hul'qumi'num language specialist, teacher and translator further discussed the loss of this *kw'aythut* place. My notes from that day read like this:

> Mabel told me today that not every bathing spot has the same kind of power. She mentioned the same spot "up Timberlands" where there used to be a very good bathing spot, but today a house is build right at that spot. This was one of the only places that you could go if you lost your first-born child. You needed a really special place for that. You would get dropped off at this spot at the beginning of the day and you would wander up the mountain and your family would be back there to pick you up at the end. This spot is gone now, with this house that was built there. [03-12-01-FN:95]

Places for bathing are powerful and essential sites for gaining or having strength (*kw'am'kw'um' shqwaluwun*, to use the common Hul'qumi'num phrase) and assisting in the daily task of managing the significant challenges of an individual's life. More than

places to turn to in times of trouble, *kw'aythut* places are visited regularly in the early morning to maintain a respectful connection with one's spirit power and non-human helpers. Radically altering the landscape in these places brutally violates and negates the important relationship between Coast Salish people and their home, perpetuating in unintended but significant ways the powers of colonial history in the present-day world.

Secluded Forested Places

While bathing rites are a central, widely practised and important relationship with the land in contemporary Coast Salish culture, there are other means by which people engage spirit power relationships with the non-human world through interacting with particular places. Secluded areas of the forested, mountainous areas that form the landscape inland of the Island Hul'qumi'num villages on Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands have the potential to be cleansing, strength giving, and power conferring. The narratives below provide insight into Coast Salish senses of spirit power which may be found in these distinctive places. While the locations at which these experiences may occur are special, the experiences themselves are common among Coast Salish people. They relate to the powers that many people engage or acquire during life crisis events such as grieving, becoming a dancer or preparing to exercise one's hereditary ritual cleansing prerogatives. Physical engagement with these places is essential for the experience of this spirit power, and the important contributions it makes to a Coast Salish person's life. This power is always a potential, sometimes there, sometimes not and one needs to know the signs of having encountered such power when out on the land. People are taught specific times and configurations of landscape features to observe in order to be able to recognize

where such experiences may be had. Like the bathing pools, these places may lose their potential to confer power if their seclusion is altered.

Interested in exploring other ways or places that Coast Salish people experience such spiritual power, I asked Peter Seymour if any of the family 'teachings'[25] about ceremonial prerogatives such as the masked dance (Suttles 1987e:10), that some Coast Salish people are privileged to have, emphasize connections with particular places. Such teachings include certain words and actions that are needed for preparation and performance of specific ceremonial rites. Peter is a *sxwayxwuy* mask dancer and a respected Chemainus big house leader who trains new dancers and organizes the winter ceremonies. The *sxwayxwuy* mask (the main masked dance privilege performed in Coast Salish culture) is employed for cleansing in a ritual performance "used to 'wash' persons undergoing life crises, changes in status, or removal of some source of shame" (Suttles 1982:59; Dufresne 1996).

Peter responded to my question in his distinctive conversational narrative style, outlining how certain places are important to him in preparation for his work as a masked dancer:

> Yeah! Yeah! I guess there's one way to try and touch that. A person, for example, is gonna be a dancer. Alright, we purify. When we do what we do, that's another interpretation of what we do as mask dancers.
>
> I'll try to tell the story and you try and fix it, we'll try it that way. Okay. I'm a mask dancer. I've been privileged enough to mask dance more than a few times. And sometimes when you are asked to go bless a picture,

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[25] "Teachings" is the term frequently used in English speech as a gloss for *snuweyulh,* the root of which, */snuw'/*, connotes private knowledge or advice.

> cleanse a picture, that person's essence, that deceased person's essence is there. And because cedar knows what we all feel and think it will draw that sadness. But, it makes what we have heavy.
>
> So we have to come back to nature, we have to call it nature. Come back to the land, to the forest to get rid of that heavy and send it back. Send it somewhere.
>
> Because the thing that we are taught, everything that comes to an Indian person comes in day. And at day-break, you want to pray and you want to ask, you want to ask that Ultimate Boss of Indian people. Maybe that ain't and some will just say that is *Chichelh si'em* [highly respected one, God] of all the *hwulmuhw mustimuhw* [First Nations person], that head honcho of all the Indian people. And you want him to help you, you want him to give you something really good to have a good life.
>
> So you're not confused and you're gonna ask for it at the day-break 'cause everything that comes at that critical time – not critical – at that special time, that's when it can be had. It's gonna take more than that one asking though. But, that's when that happens. So when that happens it also blesses, this forest, of all of us. And that's the big spiritual essence to tie to that. [SP-i:1529-1553]

Peter answered my question with appropriate circumspection, given his position as a holder of important, private ritual knowledge and his own extensive life experiences with respect to these matters. He also framed it in terms he felt I might understand as an outsider, using Christian or Shaker words like "pray", "Ultimate Boss", "bless" and "cleanse", where other masked dancers have explicitly avoided such terms. He was not at liberty to talk about particular places or practices because I and the audience of this work are not appropriately privileged to know the particular details of an individual masked dancer's practise. His narrative does reveal that secluded places in the forest at daybreak provide appropriate places for his spiritual encounter, acting as a link between the sometimes troubling world of human life and the world of powerful non-human beings and the ancestors. In the context of serious social challenges such as suicide,

alcoholism and poverty that face Coast Salish communities, these places play a very important social role; they aid in the life-giving power of a masked dancers to lift up and honour people in the community. Through the masked dancers, these places remain important social and cultural figures in the Coast Salish world.

Secluded forested places are also powerful for people who encounter their guardian spirit there. Angus Smith, one of the oldest gentlemen I have worked with – highly fluent and respected by other elders as being knowledgeable – discussed one of these places on a creek that flows off Hill 60 towards the Chemainus River and another near Hill 60 at Hillcrest. He described the power of this place in the context of a story of his own experience of trying to explain to a government official how spirit power was emplaced in the area. Cowichan Tribes had called on his assistance in attempting to protect this area from a garbage dump that local governments were hoping to install.

> We start talking about that [area around the mountain at Hill 60]. I was talking, myself. I was just trying to tell him [referring to the government official] all the history, stories about that place. Our elders said "You want to know what to do, you just take him right up there and show him."
>
> So we went up to this creek. I took him up there and I showed him the place where they used to take these people. Like a widow or a widower or even a new dancer. And they say a new dancer when they lost their song – they're all right for a while and they're dancing all of a sudden they lost their song, they just forget about it – they take them up there.
>
> And I was talking like that, you know, but what's the use of telling them all of this you know. Might as well just take them right up there and *show them.*
>
> So we went up there. I took him right up to this place. Little falls there. I took him right up there and I showed him. He was jumping around taking pictures.

And I told him, I said "Look at all that. Look at all that moss and everything that's growing on that rock. When I was a kid my father brought me up there and showed me this place and he told me 'When the old people used to come up here they used to take all these sticks and just scrape all that moss right out. Just keep it clean and there's supposed to be a flat rock just like this table here, where the old people used to bring this.'"

Some of them people are like my niece, you know. She likes to make a hat or something for the new dancers. They make it up there, they don't make it down here. They could make it up there.

When the new dancers are having problems with their song, like [there are] two powers you know. They have one power they're following now, and all of a sudden the other power takes over. And they begin to get mixed up so they take them up there. Four days they stay up there and pretty soon this other power would come stronger.

And the people that make these masks and things – like that uniform they wear – they're not the ones to tell the new dancer what to use. The dancer himself is the one that's gonna tell them how it should be made, what it looks like, what he dreamt, what they're supposed to wear. And they make it right there. That's why you used to see these dancers were so powerful. And not one of these dancers would have the same song as the other one there. No, it was always a different song, his own.

There's supposed to be a flat rock there, some place not to far from that creek. That creek runs all the way through, like you're going through Hillcrest, where the Hillcrest mill used to be. Follow that creek and go right down into Chemainus River. We walked through there when old Hillcrest was still up.

One time I followed the old man, he showed me the place. And he says that there's another one down here at Chemainus River, where to take the young people. Anything that you want to do will become really powerful in your mind, like you know. Gives you the power to go ahead with what you want to do, right? If you want to be a hunter, a fisherman or anything. Make any kind of throwing poles [for spear salmon fishing] or anything like that, and you just put that in your mind and you're going to do it. And nothing will ever stop you, you'll be working day and night. It just gives you that power.

And that's the whirlpool. It's just turning like that all the time, the main river out there. And it's just kind of a little bay, like just about this room here [we were sitting in a ~200 square foot room]. And they put you in

> there. That's how the people used to be. Everything *xe'xe'* [forbidden, taboo]. Sacred.
>
> And that's what we're trying to save today. And that's the thing I would like to always talk to. If you know anything, bring it out. Bring it out don't be afraid to bring it out, what you know. [16-01-01-EMM:237-317]

In this story, Angus describes powerful places in an area deep in the forested mountainous region of the mid–Chemainus River. Beyond their spirit encounter role, these locations with distinctive geographic features such as a waterfall, a particularly flat rock, or a whirlpool, have the potential to cleanse a person during periods of grief, and to sort out the spirit songs of a new dancer. While the official planning the garbage dump jumped around taking photos, Angus tried to describe a broad sense of how spiritual powers could be experienced by people at such places. The discussion, when in the context of the strong political objection to the project expressed by one local First Nation (Cowichan Tribes), had a significant impact on government decision-making, and the dump was never constructed in this location.

Drawing on examples from Angus' narrative, the potential for these places to help people may become clearer by further unpacking Coast Salish understandings of spirit power and the manner in which it may be encountered. Spirit power is encountered as a force during momentous life experiences and is implicated in peoples' emotions, thoughts and sense of spirit. Spirit power may affect a person's soul or life force. In times of grieving, spirit power may take a person's soul away to be with that of their loved one, being cleansed in a powerful place helps ensure that one's soul is not lost.

An encounter with spirit power is expressed by a spirit song. A *seyowun* dancer may go to a place with some special quality – the air is cold and crisp, there are certain kinds of plants there or a certain configuration of rock – and work out relationships with their *seyowun* power. As Angus said, a lost song can be found, or mixed up songs can be sorted out by strengthening one's relationship with their guardian spirit. These places are critical to help people work out their songs. Formerly, almost all dancers had their spirit songs come to them through experiences at powerful places, encountering the songs in dreams or visions. Today, Angus and other older people lament that younger dancers have less opportunity to engage in such vision questing, and often have their songs and spirit mixed up with those of others.

Spirit power may also imbue the material culture of spirit dancers, masked dancers or others. Angus's story is very helpful in describing how this is understood in a Coast Salish perspective. A person who has expertise in making such ritual material culture as a *sxwayxwuy* mask or a new dancer's hat or uniform, may not simply make these items in their home. They draw strength from journeying to the place where the person who is to receive the object encountered their power, or alternately where they themselves received their power to make such things. The object being created is then also associated with spirit power encountered in and coming from these places.

Such places stand out as important and, for Angus and other elders, they are clearly worth making strong public statements to preserve for future generations. In arguing to protect these secluded forested areas, Angus also gently argues that the younger people need to

learn about them and use them. The moss covering the flat rock implies that it has not been visited in a while. Angus makes a reference to old dancers always having their own song, a sidelong chiding that current practices in the big house, though deeply rooted in tradition, are changing. These changes are occurring more frequently now due to the rapid loss of the *Hul'q'umi'num'* language. To retain their importance these places must be protected and used.

Knowledge, as Ingold has discussed, comes from the discovery of the world that one's predecessors point out to you (2000b:146). Knowledge of the power of spiritual places, such as the one that Angus talks about in this narrative, is derived from a physical visit to an area, where learning to see ancestral forms is taught by a mentor. Noticing pools in rivers, small waterfalls, particular configurations of rock, can lead a person to understand and respect the potential spiritual power of a place. Angus shared this discovery of the paths of his ancestors with the government officials who were planning a garbage dump at a place which had demonstrated spiritual potency. The government officials listening to this story, or myself hearing it recounted, or indeed the reader of this text will not acquire the same senses and power from this place. Such power is imparted through the dream experience that may occur at such a place to a person seeking a spirit encounter. From this experience one may gain "a heightened perceptual awareness that reveals the world of one's waking life in a new or enriched light" (Ingold 2000b:141). *Experience*, not just knowledge, is critical to understanding place and relationships between humans and non-humans in the Coast Salish world.

Stl'eluqum Places

Spirit power can be also encountered and potentially acquired in meetings with *stl'eluqum*, creatures which inhabit the Coast Salish world. *Stl'eluqum* are particularly powerful, and if met with proper guidance and respect, may help one by becoming powerful shamanic helpers (Duff 1952a:98-99). Encounters with *stl'eluqum* can also be dangerous; people can die, become sick, unconscious, lose their soul, be stricken with fear and have a violently upset stomach (Duff 1952a:118). For those who have experienced their power, these beings are intimidating forces in the Coast Salish landscape.

There are a number of types of *stl'eluqum* in Coast Salish oral tradition and experience. These include the two-headed power snake *sinulhquy'* (Duff 1952a:117-119; Hill-Tout 1904a:357-360; Jenness 1955:60; van Eijk 2001; Wells 1987:54-55, 84-85, 156-157); the 'lightning-snake' *ts'inqwa'* (Curtis 1913:170; Rozen 1985:133, 142, 181, 219, 250); the Thunderbird *sxwuxwa'us* (Rozen 1985:134-135, 137, 142, 232); a host of water-serpents often simply called *stl'eluqum*; the cannibal woman called *Qwam'utsun* in the Island dialect (Harris 1901:15-17; Rozen 1985:165-166, 170), or *th'owxiya* in upriver dialect (Duff 1952a:117; Thom *et al.* 1998); and the Sasquatch, called *th'am'uqw'us* in the Island dialect of Hul'qumi'num (Duff 1952a:117-119; Rozen 1985:165, 236; Suttles 1987d). While the above list may not represent the complete taxonomy of *stl'eluqum* in Coast Salish life, it provides a picture of those non-human beings which are encountered by people today.

Stl'eluqum are associated with the kinds of places described above, but may also be encountered while hunting, berry-picking, or along the shores while fishing. Some places are known homes of *stl'eluqum*, either from the mythic and legendary past or in the present day. A *stl'eluqum's* power may be encountered even it is not directly met in one of these places. Below are narratives of Simon Charlie, Peter Seymour, Willy Seymour, the late Dave Page, Jerome Crocker, Fred Modest and Ruby Peter discussing with me how *stl'eluqum* may be a source of spirit power in some cases, but a dangerous force in others. In all of these stories, the *stl'eluqum* are associated with the land itself, and an experience with one is tied directly to the kind of place encountered. These beings, and their place in the land, are an important facet of Coast Salish ontology and experience of the land.

Encountering Shamanic Power at Stl'eluqum Places

On two occasions Simon Charlie told of his encounter with the *stl'eluqum* which became his spirit helper (or at least one of them) when he was a young man. The two narratives focus on different aspects of the encounter. The first frames how Simon followed the instructions of a powerful Indian Doctor in questing for a spirit helper. The second emphasizes the location of his encounter. Each time Simon told the story of his encounter with the *stl'eluqum*, he emphasized the difficulty of the experience and how important the experience has been for his success as a carver and an artist.

When Simon started to talk about his encounter, I was surprised as I had been told by younger people that it is not proper or indeed is dangerous to openly reveal the source of

one's power. Doing so could be interpreted by the spirit as boasting or otherwise being disrespectful and could risk the power diminishing or becoming 'spirit sick' if the spirit chooses to leave (Amoss 1978:52). Simon does indicate that encounters with spirit power are not supposed to be discussed, but excuses himself because he is old. Being a man in his late 80s, he was comfortable talking about his encounter; it seems to be appropriate for the senior generation to teach others about their experiences in these matters, the relationship with the spirit having been well established over a long life. On a number of occasions, Simon discussed with me how he wanted to share what he knew about the traditions and practices of the Coast Salish people. However, in the spirit of respect and circumspection, I have edited out of Simon's narratives certain very personal details which seem from a Coast Salish perspective more appropriately kept private.

I recall these stories here to demonstrate another important way in which the land may be experienced by Coast Salish people who receive and practice the training of their ancestors. My central point is that certain places become powerful centres for developing influential, life-long relationships with the non-human world. I have heard of such relationships with *stl'eluqum* developing only from being on the land and believe that from a Coast Salish view *stl'eluqum* places are absolutely integral to the experience of *stl'eluqum* themselves.

The first time Simon talked about his experience, he discussed the spirit quest of his mentor who received power from *sxwuxwa'us*, the Thunderbird. Following his mentor's instructions of what to do in certain secluded areas away from his village, Simon had a

nightmare-like experience, encountering a *stl'eluqum* in the form of a giant snake. The experience left him shaken and cautious about teaching his own children about how to have such an encounter.

> The different people, groups, go to different places. And my ancestor from Koksilah village, he went and made friends with Thunderbird up on that Mountain up there.
>
> There's a little hole up there, and he wanted to make friends with Thunderbird. So he kept going. Bathing. And every year he'd get closer. Fourth year he made it. He'd get blown away at a certain area, he'd get blown away from it. But the fourth year he got there and he went in, and he blacked out, and he woke up near the Koksilah River.
>
> So he crawled down and he was behind a log when somebody was coming down with a load of wood. So he hollered. And the guy thought he heard something, so he looked back and all he could see was a hand. They backed the canoe ashore and went to him and *Shyaquthut* [the name of Simon's ancestor] asked them to bring him home. "I can't pay you now but when I have my potlatch I will be on the platform and you holler at me and I'll pay you." So he did.
>
> So I went and done this bathing. I have my stepmother to thank. And her father was August Jack from Westholme and he was one of the last Indian doctors. When he got there I asked him. I asked from her father to tell me how to go about bathing. So he did. And he told me what to do, so I done it. It was a lot of fun in the beginning [laughs]. At two places, oh it was like a nightmare.
>
> I used to do it when I first got married, I used to go trapping. I would go out at five o'clock in the morning and I'd get home at nine o'clock at night. Tiring.
>
> And then I got to one place there and looked at it, and I was interested. And he told me "If you see a place with no running water but, you see the gravel, it's just like if the water's moving. You be careful if you see that. Spit on a rock and throw it in. If you see, like when it's windy and the water, you'll see a little thing moving around." And I seen that and it went back but, I was still interested.
>
> The third day I went. You couldn't look away, you had to go and back away until you were out of sight. And before you go in, you get out anything that's around the area, rub it on yourself so you'll smell like the

> same place, you know. The third night I dreamt I woke up. I heard a big voice telling me I wasn't interested in this person. And a woman showed up, had long hair. But, whether I was interested or not she was going to come to me anyways and she come around that little pool. Just like a blink she turned into a great big snake about 35 feet long and it come in and went in my neck and I was trying to hold her back, you know. I was sweating and oh I couldn't sleep. [Laughs]
>
> So I didn't tell my young people, you know, my son. I didn't tell him 'cause of that. It was no good, they went and done it anyway. [CS-ii:522-557]

Simon introduces his experience talking about the encounter that his ancestor *Shyaquthut* from Koksilah had with the Thunderbird in a cave in a mountain. This ancestor sought out the Thunderbird but was thwarted for several years until he finally reached the cave, blacked out, and was picked up and brought home by travellers. The encounter foreshadows Simon's own encounter with another powerful *stl'eluqum* creature.

When Simon received training from the Indian Doctor August Jack, he learned that a certain kind of watery, gravelly place could be a likely place for a spirit encounter. Like his ancestor, Simon approached such a place three times before having an encounter. The experience was not something to take lightly, nor was it something that anybody would necessarily do, as a *stl'eluqum* is a strong power to encounter. Simon's story, like the previous story recounted by Angus Smith, underscores the point made by Ingold that cultural knowledge is gained by movement through the world, engaging the experiences of one's ancestors, and that the words, concepts and narratives take their meaning from such experiences (2000b:146).

> If... the source of cultural knowledge lies... in the world that they [one's predecessors] point out to you – if, that is, one learns by discovery while following in the *path* of an ancestor – then words, too, must gather their

> meanings from the contexts in which they are uttered. Moving together along a trail or encamped at a particular place, companions draw each other's attention, through speech and gesture, to salient features of their shared environment. Every word, spoken in context, condenses a history of past usage into a focus that illuminates some aspect of the world. Words, in this sense, are instruments of perception...

In the case of Simon's story, the parallel noticed between his own experience and the action of his ancestor was crucial for making sense of the encounter with the *stl'eluqum*. Knowledge of *stl'eluqum* experiences from the training by his ancestor, and physical presence in particular places on the land, provided the context for the vision to be encountered. This experience, and the narration of it, reflects how I have come to understand the notion of Coast Salish people dwelling in the land.

The second time Simon told his story, we were discussing the importance of *kw'aythut* places. He provided more details of his encounter with the *stl'eluqum* snake and the power it gave him to become a canoe maker and a carver, and by implication his success in these aspects of his life.

> There's a sacred place you could think of. Once you get into it, you can feel the different places. Then you can go in. When you first start you don't know what's in there. But once you get into it, and you know where to go.
>
> I used to do a lot of trapping when I bathe, here and there. I got there, and August Jack told me that if you find a place with still water, and you see the rocks, no green stuff in it, be careful. You spit on the rock and trow it in. If you see little things coming out, especially when it's windy, if you see little things moving – then it comes out and back – don't go in. Before you bathe, you rub yourself with anything around the area, then you smell like them. [Laughs].
>
> So I done that, and then I backed away, then I went there. That night I dreamt about it. [Simon describes in detail his encounter with the *stl'eluqum*]. Then I woke up. Oh! What is it? [Laughs.] So I got that,

you're not supposed to tell. But I 'm old enough. I can tell.

> Yeah, that's where if you have a big snake for a helper then you can carve anything, fancy carvings. If you have the garter snake, it will be plain. That's the other one, if you have that for a helper you can be a canoe builder, carver. [Laughs].[CS-iii:965-1021]

Simon evokes a very intense sense of place in this story of his experience with the *stl'eluqum*, describing how a person can 'feel' sacred places once they are properly prepared and they know where to go. Another appropriate place might be, according to his mentor August Jack, a still body of water, without algae, where 'little things' emerge from the rocks if the water is spit in, especially when it is windy. Such a place is much rarer than a place typically used to *kw'aythut*. The description of a still but clear pool evokes a mythic inversion, where the world is opposite to what is commonly experienced. To enter into such a place and have a dream encounter with a *stl'eluqum*, one must become a part of the place, transforming the scent body itself with plants found nearby. For Simon, this transformation gave him the unique gifts of the master carver that he still retains.

Ontologies of Stl'eluqum Places

From the perspective of someone who has not had such experiences, an encounter with a *stl'eluqum* appears to be of a significantly different phenomenal order from other everyday occurrences. From a Coast Salish perspective, these experiences are phenomenally real. They tie together, through the on-going manifestation of the experience of a spirit power, the non-human spirit encountered and the place in which the encounter was had. Community members who understand and negotiate two ontological

orders (that of mainstream Canadian society and that of their Coast Salish ancestors) have discussed and debated how to come to terms with these differing understandings and experiences of the world. Understanding the dream-like experiences of a spirit encounter requires a knowledge that is often specific to families. Knowledge of the *Hul'q'umi'num'* language, and in particular semantically loaded terms, is also helpful for people to enter into a discussion of these concepts, even if their operating grammar is English. Certain terms, like *stl'eluqum*, are more clearly understood in the context of concrete Coast Salish experiences than an English gloss such as 'monster' or 'sea serpent'. Engagement in these local discursive practices sets out a framework for coming to terms with Coast Salish ontologies of spirit power.

Peter Seymour brought these concepts to life one day when he told a short story about one of the early ancestors of the Chemainus people having acquired spirit power from a *stl'eluqum*. As Peter discusses, such power is hard to comprehend from a non-Native, non-Hul'qumi'num worldview. The sense of the Coast Salish ontological order can be lost in translation,

> That was one of the very first men that become a dancer. Had the power of flight and he was a red paint dancer. And the thing that was lost [in the telling of stories about him] unless you are really fluent, or have a person that understands the language good, or you have an elder, my mothers' age, whatever that can help us translate. Be it *hwultun*, *hwuqluqlh*, be it *sqw'uhw* [all translated as names for spirit powers] all of those powers can fly.
>
> And then we can touch on *stl'eluqum*. *Stl'eluqum* is really something fierce. You can't even comprehend or call it a boogie-man or whatever. It has so many different [reasons] for why it's fierce. And maybe it can fly, maybe it can just lunge. That has that. There's all of these different meanings of names. White, as a man.

> And then we talk about the *qullhanumutsun* [Killer whale] and the different water powers from the sea.
>
> Powers from the sky, right off the bat. Those are powers that our people knew a while back. Just certain families would teach it and I guess it was the way of planting the seed. You know there's that interpretation.
>
> By what I know now, and I'll say this in a joking way, what I know now and I knew it was that way for Indian people, I want to be leprechaun. He got that pot of gold. I want to be rich like white man all the time, no I'm just playing around, playing around. [Laughs] Talk about "lucky charms" [everyone laughing]! [PS-i:866-888]

In this legend of one of the first dancers who had the power to fly through the air, Peter evokes the possibility of real flight, enabled by the powers this ancestor had obtained. The three terms he gives for such flight call forth for Peter the more nuanced sense of the phenomenal experience of such flight. The terms do not translate smoothly into English. There are other senses of power and ability in them. Few families hold the details of acquiring or experiencing these powers; each family has its own interpretation of what taking flight might mean, in a dream experience, or in the collective experience of witnessing the expression of such power in the bighouse in a lunge, which embodies the sense of flight. Questioning the truth of such experiences is not the goal of a Coast Salish discourse; rather it is situating the possibility of such experiences in family-based ancestral orders. Such knowledge, planted like a seed in Peter's metaphor, perpetuates Coast Salish ontologies through the generations.

Through his mastery of word play at the end of this story, Peter attempts his own translation, equating the acquisition of spirit power with the Irish figure of the leprechaun. The power of the non-native people that Peter jokes about, is the power to be

perpetually rich. This stands in contrast to the common experience of Coast Salish people, who may have powers to make canoes, become successful hunters or respected bighouse leaders in their communities, but these seldom, as I described in chapter 2, result in the kind of wealth that is more prevalent in mainstream Canadian society.

My own experiences and understanding of these Coast Salish ontological orders was once put to the test by a young spirit dancer, the son of a respected bighouse leader. Standing together one summer day, in the quiet hall of a winter ceremonial house, he told me about a collective encounter that hundreds of people had with powerful spirit snakes at a Coast Salish winter dance the previous winter. The spirit snakes entered the bighouse and circulated around it, afflicting several people until an old woman, who recognized them, was able through her knowledge of ritual words and the properties of certain plants hanging in the bighouse, to direct them out. The young spirit dancer turned to me and asked the wide-eyed anthropologist, poignantly, "Do you believe any of this?" I paused for a moment, not wanting to be dishonest in anyway in my answer, and replied that it did not matter whether I believed it or not, but I certainly had never experienced such a thing. I have since met many people who have indeed been directly affected by such encounters, with all the physical, mental and emotional consequences that such events have on one's life.[26]

[26] For a psychoanalytic, rather than phenomenological perspective on such Coast Salish experiences see Jilek-Aall *et al.* (2001).

Legends of Encounters at Stl'eluqum Places

There are strong parallels between personal narratives of experiences, exchanges with *stl'eluqum*, and Coast Salish oral traditions which recount similar ancestral encounters. These personal experiences are set within a cultural discourse of the elderly, revealing the source of their powers and a canon of legends in which ancestors encounter these beings in places where they may be engaged today. These stories highlight the particular strength that may be received from a successful meeting with a *stl'eluqum*, the fear that such an experience may bring, and the personal transformation that ensues. They also often highlight the particular places or kinds of places where such encounters may be expected, teaching people what to watch for in the land, or particular places where such beings may be emplaced. Two examples of oral traditions are presented below that deal with *stl'eluqum* encounters, highlighting the centrality of dwelled in, embodied and experienced places in the acquisition of spirit power.

In the first story, Willie Seymour told me about a *stl'eluqum* that an old woman in the Cowichan area encountered; as in Simon's encounter described earlier, she received artistic abilities. The story occurred at the old village site at the Stone Church, near the present-day Comiaken settlement on the Cowichan Indian Reserve, suggesting it is set in antiquity, as the village has long been abandoned. The elder climbs to Mt Tzouhalem from her home in her village, following a pattern typical of Coast Salish spiritual life. The early morning journey – a daily trip for those so dedicated – brings people out of the active social realm of humans into a setting where individual relationships with non-humans may be pursued.

There's one more story I can share with you. It happened in Cowichan. It would be in the *Qw'umi'iqun* [Comiaken], *Tl'exul'tun* area [Stone Church area]. Below Stone Church there was a community *Tl'exul'tun*. Today it's known as Comiaken.

But there lived an old, old lady. She lived there all her life. Had no family, so she lived alone a little shack and each day she would travel all the way up to Mount Tzouhalem and bathe. There was a sacred site up there where she would go and bathe every day, religiously, winter, summer. And she did it remembering that she was told that if you sacrifice hard enough and long enough, gifts will come your way.

So she would go up there and bathe, there was times she would get so frustrated that she wasn't feeling that she was accomplishing nothing. There was nothing coming her direction. She wouldn't just give up, her determination was stronger. Her will. Because she would find herself again another day, and head back up the mountain to bathe. You know it would be dark when she headed up. Anyway she would go up there and bathe and get home and carry on and do what she needed to do. She had to do her own fishing, gathering food to survive.

So anyways, after years and years of this, one day she went up the mountain and she felt real different even when she left home, left her little shack. She began to climb the mountain and of course there was not just one trail, in them days there was many trails.

So she went up on this one trail and she walked along, you know, she felt a real strange sense of difference. Almost excitement inside, like butterflies, so she was going up the mountain and of course she always carried a few tools with her. Something, you know, she might need if she had to camp over night, or whatever.

So she was going along and she gets up to the bathing hole, not paying much attention she got undressed and she looked into the water and there was this *stl'eluqum.* And *stl'eluqum* is hard to interpret but from what I gather it was a serpent-like creature, in the water facing her. And she got afraid she started to get dressed, she was going to run away and then she says, "You know this might be what I've been looking for all my life. This is maybe the gift … or maybe my faith"

So anyway she got undressed, she meditated, prayed to the creator, *tth'hwimuthamsh ni o tse' nu soexun* [I plead that this will be my medicine] it's going to be my medicine, that will be my medicine. She went into the water, she made it into the water and she tackled the serpent. She wrestled with it and then she went blank, she don't remember nothing.

It was already several hours later when she woke up on the bank of this pond. She felt the strangeness, she was even stronger so she got up and she got dressed and she started knowing that it was getting on in the day, she start rushing down. Her vision changed, she went so far and she knew that she had to dig the roots of this cedar tree, where there was this thick moss and you could get to the roots much easier, it's much easier to pull out. The ones in the rocks are too tight it will drain. So she learned this from the process, a gift given to her.

So she went there with her digging stick and she was digging around and she finds the main cord that will run the longest and she starts pulling them up. She got what she needed for that day, she pulled them all up, put it into her little pack as she was going down. She'd go a little further and a cedar tree there, she knew that she had to take the bark and the thin bark is on the north side.

So she'd take it and wrap it, at a certain time of the year, I guess. So she took the bark and she peeled it as far as it will run and it'll break and it goes a long way up if you got clear. She run and then she would pull it, coil it all up and put it into her pack. And she started running down, running down, she was running. Husky woman for all the work she has done. She got to the bottom. There was swamps. And all the *stth'e'qun* [Swamp reeds, bull-rushes] in there, the swamp and the reeds. So there's male and female and she was able to tell the difference, which to take. The male. She said, "Oh yeah I'll put them in and gather them all up, make a big stack, tie them all together." And then she brought it home.

She got home and rested, the next day she was up real early in the morning before daybreak. And she began to work. Work on the bark. Before long she made a basket. The basket was water proof. A gift that she had received. And before long, communities began to hear of the woman who had this gift. Baskets were really light, durable, little, carry water. And she became one of the most renowned and acknowledged women in Cowichan Valley for that gift she worked for and earned.

So it's even like that today. You know you need to sacrifice something. If you're going to get anywhere in life, one needs to sacrifice. This woman sacrificed many years and she received her recognition, she received her gift and in the end she became an accepted part of the community. Became invited to, not saying that she was rejected but shé was invited as a special person to different gatherings.

So they could thank her for this great gift that she could, she could give that to the people. And that was her gift back to the people, she sacrifices, the story of the basket lady. [SW-i:442-530]

The stories told by Simon, Peter and Willie share the Coast Salish need to access secluded, forested wilderness areas to encounter a *stl'eluqum* and obtain a strong power. This power not only helps the individual, but allows that individual to return the rewards of the use of that power to the community.

The figure of the solitary old woman relentlessly pursing an encounter with a guardian spirit emphasizes that these relationships are not necessarily dependent on kin connections or other relationships with counterparts in the human world – a situation that is almost unique in these very tightly knit, kin based communities. Her figure of aged solitude and independence stands in contrast to the stories told by Peter and Simon, where younger people are mentored in their spirit encounters. This woman knew the general aspects of the practice, but had to discover the encounter on her own terms, judging when to face and accept the gifts that were presented in a frightening circumstance. Like the other stories, however, this woman became unconscious. She awoke with a sense of the vision, in this case it enabled her to see which cedar roots to dig up, which bark to peel and which reeds to pick, out of which she wove the type of waterproof basket for which she became renowned. The unconscious, dreaming state is a central element of the phenomenal experience of the receipt of power from an encounter with a *stl'eluqum* or other guardian spirit. It is in this world of dreams where spirit and person are enjoined.

In his second story, Willie brings up again the themes of an outcast, this time a terminally ill young man, who left the community, encountered a *stl'eluqum*, and received gifts of

shamanic knowledge and power, returning to the community a transformed individual. This story emphasizes the importance of developing a relationship of exchange between humans and non-humans, outlining codes of proper behaviour and shamanic worlds of possibility.

> But you know like, it was towards the end of that era [the era of *Xeel's*] I guess where one had to be quite pure to, to do a lot of the things, like medicine people, healing people. People that did healing went through a lot of disciplines and years and years of practice, just like a doctor today, you know you go out to study, go to study to be a doctor and much longer to be a specialist. So it was for our medicine people, the *shne'um*, and modern terminology say, shaman but in our terminology *shne'um*.
>
> So another story that I recall the old people telling about is this young man and young man was haemorrhaging and he was spitting real bad. His family was so concerned they went and hired all kinds of doctors, Indian doctors, *shne'um* to work on their son, grandson. None of them could find the solution to it, none of them.
>
> So after several months, maybe years he just got so frail, he gave up. He gave up trying to find a solution or a healing for himself and he just got up one day and he just left, left his community. As he walked up the mountain he began to meditate and pray, cry to the Creator, *Xeel's*, asking *Xeel's*, give me a sign, give me something so I know whether I'm going to live or die.
>
> And he was lamenting, lamenting and chanting songs as he was and he walked quite a ways into the mountain. You know that was before any contact. As he walked, he began to feel a sense of fear, he was wondering what it was, he stopped and looked around, you know it could be a wolf, it could be a cougar but he walked and all of a sudden he saw this snake, large snake, like a serpent in front of him, started dancing around on its haunch, sort of thing. Going like that [gesturing], head going back and forth, head going back and forth.
>
> He got really afraid of it, he was ready to start running. Then he remembered his own meditation, his own prayers to *Xeel's* to give him a sign. So he says, "maybe this is my sign, maybe this is my sign."
>
> And so he sat down and he crossed his legs and he sat down and this snake came towards him real slowly, just dancing around like, real slowly. You know maybe ten, twelve feet away and kept coming and coming and he'd

be getting really afraid, you know he's starting to sweat, you know he's thinking I guess this is a sign I'm going to die. But the snake come right to his mouth, had its mouth open and dancing in front of him like this, right around his face. And he was wondering what he'd do. And he'd cough and spit beside him you know and that snake would go like that [gesturing quickly], you know. Try to catch it.

Then he realizes what it was doing. So he took material from his outfit he was wearing, I don't know if it was buckskin or what it was ah, or cedar he took a material from there he tied it around that snake's neck, he tied it around it, as a gift and the next time he coughed, he spit in that snake's mouth and that snake went down and settled right down.

And he sat there and observed the snake and, you know, this is just what I recall from the old people. Ah, when they used to gather to the bay and anyway, the snake started to roll over, go belly up, you know, when they die and he felt even more saddened, you know that, that it's a sign he's going to die.

And he sat there for a while and he's wondering what am I going to do, you know, what do I do? Do I just sit here? Pretty soon that snake started quivering, started to come up like that, starts moving along real slowly... Try to put it up, put it's head up like that, look towards that man. He understood, I got to follow the snake.

So he followed the snake, went quite a ways there and went to this plant, like a shrub, started gnawing on the bark. He observed it and he stood there the whole night and, like there was a big swelling on that snake's neck after, apparently. And the next morning the swelling was gone. And the snake would move to another plant of the same type. Starting gnawing on the bark. He was getting excited hey, just so the snake would come up like that, just kind of danced in front of him for a while and took off.

So he looked for this plant and he took the whole plant, roots and all. He took some of these plants and he went back down the mountain. He got down there and he told the medicine people and the elders, they came together when they saw him coming, he's all of a sudden... he's got a spring in his walk hey? But he's still sick, he's still spitting blood. He explained to them what had taken place and one of the elders already knew, one of the medicine people already knew. He says, "I will prepare that for you."

So he took it and he prepared it and this is part of the way our people discovered medicines. They would follow the animal, during rutting season animals, deer would get hurt, you follow the wounded one and they

> will always go to a plant and chew, chew on the bark or chew on the leaves. But often times they got better and that took years to study. That serpent was at Quesnel Lake [SW-ii:106-180].

In this story, a family is burdened with hiring Indian doctors to cure their dying son. When their efforts prove unsuccessful, the young man leaves his community for a secluded area away from the village and attempts to end his life. During the journey to a place one normally goes for spirit questing, his singing, solitude and weakened state set him up for an encounter with a spirit being. The young man first experiences intense fear, then accepts the encounter, exchanging gifts with the *stl'eluqum*, including clothing (a parallel to the exchange in the story of Abandoned Boy who encountered the Sun) and spit. In return he is taught esoteric shamanic knowledge about plant use to heal the very sick.

Exchanges are fundamental in the development of a relationship of reciprocity with spirit beings who, in return, provide gifts of power, knowledge or, in certain legends, ritual privileges. This aspect has a parallel thematic content with some of the *sxwayxwuy* origin stories (Codere 1948; Duff 1952a:124), where sick and suicidal individuals avert death through a chance encounter with powerful spirit beings who, in the exchange of spit or other unlikely human gifts, return the sick to the living with potent cleansing powers and hereditary privileges. The act of spitting is an important part of shamanic curing; illnesses are sucked out and spit away (Duff 1952a:99, 113; Lane 1953:55, 65). People take great care not to spit in places where it may be recovered by an ill-intending shaman, as these bodily fluids may be used to inflict harm (Barnett 1955:213, 227, 232). New dancers are also under similar taboos (Barnett 1955:283), and pubescent girls'

spittle is said to have potential power to spoil the food supply, control hair growth or heal sores (Amoss 1978:57). By spitting into the *stl'eluqum*, the young man's sickness is transferred. The use of his new found knowledge of medicinal plants completes his healing.

The story mirrors what is possible in the everyday lives of people today. People who choose to dwell (in the sense of the term discussed in Chapter 1) in secluded areas are likely to face the possibility of developing a relationship with spirit beings. Encounters are much less likely today at developed places such as Quesnel Lake, now surrounded by recreational cottages, a float plane service and the popular and busy 'Zeyder Zee' lakeside campsite. The private solitude of this water body has been disrupted, and is seldom now frequented for these reasons by Chemainus people. *Stl'eluqum* places do hold power, however, even in the face of such development. As I illustrate with three narratives in the next section, *stl'eluqum* and the places they inhabit always have the potential to be dangerous, and encounters may have serious physical or moral consequences for those who do not undertake engaging *stl'eluqum* in the kinds of relationships demanded in shamanic power quests.

Stl'eluqum Places are Dangerous

The power of *stl'eluqum* places are so strong that they can reach across ontological and cultural divides and may be experienced by anyone dwelling in the Coast Salish world. In this section I argue that Coast Salish people come to understand the lifeworlds of others also dwelling in their places on Coast Salish terms. To illustrate this, I provide

two personal narratives which tell of non-Native people who suffer the harsh fate of encounters with *stl'eluqum* when their actions clearly violate the norms of caution, respect and reciprocity required when dwelling in a *stl'eluqum* landscape. The late Dave Page and Peter Seymour described encounters in which non-Native people were directly affected by inadvertently disturbing the place inhabited by *stl'eluqum.*

Dave Page discussed the power of the *stl'eluqum* in the context of effects on railroad workers during the construction of the E & N railway along the banks of Shawnigan Lake, an important large water body that lies in the southern part of Island Hul'qumi'num territory. His grandparents told him about people being lost during the repairs of the railway.

> The grandparents were telling about railroad when they fixed the railroad going down. Lots of people use to go there in the evenings. They go for a walk and disappear, they never come back. Even whitemen, Chinamens, all different peoples that work there. Disappeared, you don't come back and nobody knows what happened. They went and looked, you know, and can't find them.
>
> Just on this side [north] of the lake from there. They'd go for a walk, it was just a wagon trail and everybody tried going through there and that's how we used to go to Victoria, use buggies and wagons, you know. And I built that. When they got to the other end of that lake there and people disappear again. And one guy there he turned around and walked back. He seen a woman, real nice woman calling him, "come on, come on". He left and went back.
>
> He was telling his story about it, and he saw the people went to see. He called, she got there and that was a big snake that turns into a nice woman, hey. And they take these and they have a tunnel underneath there when they're blasting that end in. And they blast out a big hole there with all kinds of bones under there. Yeah.
>
> The Indians use to call that *hwsha'nus*. [place name for area around Shawnigan lake]. The white people can't say our [language] so they call it

Shawnigan, white people. Yep.

BT: Is that snake a *stl'eluqum*?

DP: Yes. It turns into a women and then takes the men away. Ate them up or whatever they do. Yeah. At the other end, south end of the lake there. Solid rock there where they are blasting there.

Even Cowichan Lake they got something in there, too. In the '60s or something like that, these people left to come down to work there. And they got to these rough rocks and they seen this real shiny stuff and they picked it up and it come off on them like a fish with a big... size of a quarter. It rubs on the rocks and fell down.

So this guy, he got a line, thick line and put a hook and he tied on meat and he threw it. He was quite close to the water there, so he tied it up on his porch, that line. When he was asleep that thing come along and took his line, took the porch. Yeah.

So he went and told the warden that. And the warden went to take a look and he showed him that it was gone. It's not bothering nobody. That is all I know about anything. Have to leave it alone, whatever it is. Yep. That's in that lake there. Cowichan Lake. White fellow trying to catch it in and loses his porch. [PD-iii:291-341]

The dangers of encountering a *stl'eluqum* without proper guidance and its reach, which apply across cultures, are evident in this narrative. The *stl'eluqum* exercises its power when the place it dwells in is being defiled, when taboos of caution, circumspection, and respect are being broken. From blasting rock to recreational fishing, *stl'eluqum* responds to inappropriate human behaviour with catastrophic consequences. One challenge put forward by this story is, how can the phenomenal experience of non-Native people being so devastatingly impacted by the *stl'eluqum* be understood? Clearly, the European and Chinese settlers who worked on the railroad would not have had the linguistic or ontological framework to understand the disappearances of railway workers as the work of the *stl'eluqum* known by Coast Salish people to live in Shawnigan Lake, nor would the

sleeping non-Native fisherman who loses his porch when the *stl'eluqum* in Lake Cowichan rips it off with his fishing line. Yet these experiences are earnestly and definitively explained by Dave as being the work of *stl'eluqum*. I return again to Ingold's ideas about the interaction of language and experience in gaining cultural knowledge about the world. When experiences are vicarious, but they are understood to have happened in the ways and places of the ancestors, they are thought of in the terms of those ancestral lives. In this story, the railway workers experience the *stl'eluqum* when going off into secluded forest areas and the fisherman encounter it while he is asleep in an area near a waterbody. Like the *stl'eluqum* encounterd in the narratives above, seclusion and dreaming are appropriate circumstances to come into contact with *stl'eluqum*. Quite the opposite of spirit quest behaviour, these people are engaged in breaking rules of circumspection and respect, blasting away rock for a railway, or lazily sleeping while engaged in the food quest. From the perspective of Coast Salish logic and experience, the disastrous events which ensued are neatly explained as *stl'eluqum* encounters. These non-Native interlopers have walked the paths of mythic ancestors who have broken similar taboos and faced similar fates.

Peter Seymour provided another example of how non-Native experiences in certain places can be understood in terms of Coast Salish ontologies. Peter was reviewing an archival photo of the old longhouse sites on the spit at Kulleet Bay when he described his childhood teachings to be highly circumspect in this known *stl'eluqum* place. He recalled a non-Native person recently operating heavy equipment in the area and being struck by the power of that *stl'eluqum*.

> Yeah and see what had happened. This water, before they put this bridge here, the people would come into this part. It would be sheltered from the wind and stuff and before the horse and buggy days even, that was wide open. And when the tide would come it would fill this up [the little lagoon at Kulleet Bay]. And that's when they would come in on high tide, go out in high tide, that sort of thing.
>
> And on this side, interesting story, we have a true kind of scary story. A big rock here, right about here in the water. Great big. Little bit bigger than this office [an 8'x10' room]. They're just infested with snakes. It was big balls [of snakes], they would be mating.
>
> Okay and we weren't allowed to play in there, we weren't allowed be out at such and such time. And we used to get in slabs [of wood, as toy canoes], 'cause it wasn't deep so we'd be paddling around trying to imitate those guys in that picture behind you [canoe racers] and stuff like that. And we'd get into trouble.
>
> [Recently] we were doing out-houses for the water sports. White guy comes down with a back hoe and he comes up with a twenty footer [*stl'eluqum*]. Now I'm really telling you the truth. He was so messed up he couldn't get back on the machine and it slithered and went back under the ground.
>
> And the kids this past winter, over here there's a kind of a shallow ice pond. They got us down there and this one was standing up like this, looking. And there they are [*stl'eluqum*] under the ice. There's kind of weird kind of things you don't want to see. [SP-I-138-151;187-196]

In Peter's story, his parents and elders scolded the young children when they were caught playing in the area near the village where the *stl'eluqum* lived. Only people with adequate training should encounter such a being. Casting aside old cautions in order to facilitate development, a heavy equipment operator was hired to re-shape this place to facilitate the modern convenience of outhouses for the well-attended annual canoe races at Kulleet Bay, the centre of which is staged near the location of this *stl'eluqum* place. The operator has a direct encounter, but is naturally unprepared and is shocked by the encounter. By the testimony of curious kids exploring the place, the *stl'eluqum* still

inhabits the area, in spite of all the development and human activity.

In these two stories Coast Salish people are engaging the lifeworlds of the non-Native people who co-dwell in these places, on Coast Salish ontological terms. Non-native people's experience is framed and understood through Coast Salish cultural knowledge and structures of understanding. The deaths of the railway workers in the first story and the derangement of the equipment operator in the second are fully understood in terms of the places where these experiences occurred, places where *stl'eluqum* powers have continued to challenge, and potentially enrich, the lives of Coast Salish people for generations. The *stl'eluqum* at Kulleet Bay and throughout the Coast Salish world still exist, often disturbed but not destroyed. The potential for people to encounter these powerful beings in these places remains. The relationships established in these locations – either of partnership and respect, or of fear and destruction – both have consequences that are well understood in a Coast Salish discourse.

Petroglyphs as Powerful Rocks Set in Powerful Places

My last examples of spirit power being emplaced returns to the powerful Coast Salish figure of large boulders or rocks. Large rocks, as I described in chapter 3, may be powerful beings, capable of social action like many other non-human figures. Distinctly connected to place, they are often immovable and prominent features of a local landscape. In come cases, they are (to use Povinelli's evocative words again) "the congealed labour of mythic action" (Povinelli 1993:137), human ancestors or one of the animal-people of Coast Salish myth, transformed to stone by *Xeel's*. In other cases, these

stones are beings that have the residual spirit power of others such as human shamans or *stl'eluqum* who have directly encountered these stones in some way. In personal oral narratives and cultural oral traditions, large boulders are frequently described in association with powerful beings such as Sasquatch or giants. A good example is found in the now powerful boulders which in coast Salish legend were thrown from Point Roberts to the east Coast of Vancouver Island by *Smaqw'uts* the giant when he attempted to kill a *stl'eluqum* (Curtis 1913:170; Rozen 1985:132-133; Thom 2004b:61-63). Some of these rocks were inscribed in ancient times with imagery known by archaeologists as 'petroglyphs', often thought to represent spiritual expressions of shamans and other spirit questing people long past (Bell 1982). In all cases, these large and distinctive stones found throughout the Coast Salish landscape have the potential to be powerful places for spirit encounters, the stones acting in the manner of a powerful person. This potential for personhood, guides Coast Salish people's relationship with the places these large rocks are found.

Below are three examples of personal narratives of encounters with powerful rocks in the landscape. All three of these rocks, unlike those discussed in the previous chapter, were transformed by people, having ancient artistic expressions inscribed on them. These carved rocks, similar to many others found throughout the Coast Salish world (over thirty petroglyph or pictograph sites are documented in the records of the BC Archaeology Branch in Hul'qumi'num traditional territory to date), bear not only the transformative markings of ancestors, but in each case something of the power and intentionality of those long past people as well. These rocks are like smaller versions of the massive

boulders transformed by *Xeel's* in the myth time.

In the first narrative Peter Seymour describes carved boulders which when respectfully maintained, prevent red tide. The second example, told to me by archaeologist Eric McLay, concerns an ancient petroglyph which recently caused a small boat's engine to fail when its removal from its original location was attempted. Arvid Charlie provides the last narrative, which was recorded at a public meeting of elected regional government representatives. In this story, Arvid contrasts Euro-centric views of petroglyphs as curiosities with Coast Salish views of them as powerful figures deserving deference and respect. These three narratives, along with the recurring imagery of boulders in the narratives given earlier in this chapter and the previous chapter, reinforce an understanding of particular places in the landscape as holding power which may be encountered by Coast Salish people.

There are a number of petroglyphs in and around the Chemainus village at Kulleet Bay (see Bell 1982 for detailed descriptions). Several of the Chemainus members I have spoken with have encountered these rocks in one way or another, frequently in the context of having seen them in their youth, but not as adults. These personal narratives express a deep concern about what may happen in the world where these powerful rocks are no longer easily found. One such narrative was told by Peter Seymour, who described the link between the one of these rocks disappearing and the recent prevalence of paralytic shellfish poisoning in Kulleet Bay.

There is a big rock [pointing to a map somewhere between Kulleet Bay

> and two-thirds of the way to *Hwkwumlehwuthun* (Coffin Point area)]. It has a... it's either a carving of a fish on the end of this big bolder. The boulder is about so big [gesturing his arm width]. But, then I've heard controversy that it was a sea wolf. And it would face the day break.
>
> And there was one there, and there was another one at Deer Point. I've never been able to find that one that was at Deer Point. But those would protect the bed, the whole of Kulleet Bay, stopping red tide [the common description for the algae bloom that causes paralytic shellfish poisoning] and different things like that. So there was an abundance of, of clams, oysters that sort of thing.
>
> But, then one of our elders that is gone now said that rock must have turned, we get red tide all the time now. And so we went to look and that rock is turned. And you paddle on a single high tide you could see that, you can see that it's like blinds like that you can see but, then when you get to the rock it fades. [SP-i:237-249]

Concerns over a lack of locally available traditional foods are common in Island Hul'qumi'num communities. People often cite poor government management, declining environment, or onerous government regulations as the primary contributors to these problems (Fediuk and Thom 2003). This narrative is a recognition of the power of rocks to have major effects on the environment. The rock described is powerful in the way it protected a main food source of the Chemainus people at Kulleet Bay. The suspected change in the position of the rocks has severely dampened their protective effect on the local community; harmful contaminants and toxic algae blooms now poison the local food supply much more frequently . The beings in these places, in this case a carved rock, need the kind of continued maintenance and respect that relations with other people require in order to maintain their beneficial reciprocity with the people with whom they live. That the rock was flipped over and abandoned suggests that such problems may be contributed to by people's own neglect of their important places.

My second story was told to me by archaeologist Eric McLay (see also McLay 1999b; 2003), who has spent the last decade working with Island Hul'qumi'num people in the Gulf Islands. The figure of the petroglyph in this story also required that people respected its desire to be fixed in its ancestral place. Like *Q'iseq*'s bathing basin rock, its power was experienced with its refusal to be moved from its original location. The events of this story happened in the late 1990s on the north end of Valdes Island. An elderly non-Native woman was in possession of a petroglyph that had been at Wakes Cove since time immemorial. The woman knew the rock had some value and phoned a local First Nation – the neighbouring Snuneymuxw Band, to come and pick it up. Two young men came out to the north end of Valdes Island on a small motor boat, the normal means of getting to this island as there is no ferry service and thus the island has remained relatively untouched by the extensive recreational development that characterizes other Gulf Islands. When they docked their boat at the small pier the woman had on her property, she came out and delivered the petroglyph. They got out into Gabriola Pass, where a strong rip-tide current moves through four times a day, and their engine quit. They tried repeatedly to get the engine started, but it would not. The rock did not want to go, they later explained. They took their oars and rowed back through these difficult waters to the pier, dropped the rock in the water near the shore, tied up and got their engine working again and promptly left for home.

Rocks are anchored to their original places. They are experienced as fixed in place, immutable since the time their form and spirit power became fixed in stone. Their potential for powerful force in the world suggests to those attentive to their wisdom a

modern moral lesson of leaving the features of the land intact, unchanged. They are powerful non-humans which have a very real and material influence on the world, not only in myth-time, but today.

From the viewpoint of some Hul'qumi'num people, non-Native people need to be aware of the power of rocks and other non-humans like *stl'eluqum*. In a meeting between the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group Chiefs and the elected representatives of the Islands Trust, Arvid Charlie, an elected Cowichan Tribes councillor and Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group elder gave a cautionary lecture about another powerful rock on Saltspring Island.

> I've been told "You guys got no sacred areas, it's not written down anywhere."
>
> We were trying to tell them we have sacred areas, sacred places.
>
> "There's nothing written down in your history, nobody from the First people that got here to write."
>
> The reason why it's not written down is because it's too sacred for us to mention to anybody. Many of those places still exist and are still very sacred to us, out there in those islands [the Gulf Islands].
>
> Not too many years ago somebody had a great find out there from one of the Harbours on Salt Spring. Turned a big rock over, Indian carvings on the other side.
>
> That rock was so sacred that we couldn't let any of the others set their eyes on it. So elders of the day turned it over, it was hiding there for many years.
>
> Not too long ago somebody thought they had a great find. To us it was desecrated... [01-06-18-ITM:576-588]

In this short excerpt from a long speech Arvid made to non-Native elected officials from the Gulf Islands, he tries to teach them that one needs to be circumspect and cautious in

dealing with powerful things. The curiosity and novelty that a settler might enjoy when finding a petroglyph is in contrast to the respect and deference a Coast Salish person has for the potential power that may reside in such an ancestral object. Members of the Snuneymuxw First Nation felt so strongly about the images on the rocks on Gabriola Island that the Band had them registered as a trademark, in order to stop the sale of commercial items, such as T-shirts, jewellery and postcards (Thom 2003). Such measures are important Coast Salish attempts to have the power of these places recognized by mainstream Canadian society.

Summary: Spirit Power Rests in Places

The narratives presented in this chapter affirm the importance of the rootedness of spirit power in place in the contemporary experience of Coast Salish people. These narratives also suggest that the spirit power acquired through encounters in the land are not harnessed to the same degree and potency as they have been in the past. Simon Charlie mentioned that his mentor was one of the last Indian doctors. I understand that there are few Coast Salish people who have acquired such shamanic power since before the second Word War and few now practice it. There are, as Suttles (1990:467) reviews, many *other* classes of spiritually enabled people, such as healers, seers, and undertakers all of which (unlike shamans) are still prevalent in Coast Salish communities today. As the narratives shared in this chapter discuss, much of the loss of opportunity for acquiring strong shamanic power is rooted in the physical transformation of Coast Salish places to garbage pits, logging sites, and subdivisions, all of which make having encounters with guardian spirits very difficult.

Today, few Coast Salish people are full-time harvesters of traditional resources (Fediuk and Thom 2003). Those who do harvest, engage in traditional economies of sharing, redistribution and wealth generation (of the kind described in Suttles 1960), and clearly benefit from their encounters and relationships with the spirits who are emplaced in the land. It is not only active resource harvesters who seek out these relationships. Other economically and socially successful Coast Salish people engage relationships with the non-human world, which contribute to their success. There also is a new world emerging that does not require people to have these kinds of encounters with the land to be successful. This is the non-Native world of office work and schools and other jobs. For some, there is at times an expressed feeling of disconnection with the power of place. The stories I have presented here tell of a view still held by a great many people in the community who continue to engage and experience relationships with the spirit world that are firmly rooted in oral tradition. Thousands of people engage the winter dance and other spiritual matters, as well as practice aspects of the locally developed Coast Salish economic life such as hunting or clam digging. Their view is one which holds that place is essential for relations between humans and non-humans, and for society as a whole.

My central conclusion concerning these narratives about spirit power being emplaced is that the land, and in particular certain kinds of distinctive places within the Coast Salish world are central if not essential to Coast Salish understandings of the nature of being. Experiencing place in these ways is central in situating, shaping and maintaining Coast Salish ontology. It would be difficult, nay impossible to practise ritual bathing, to acquire spirit powers, to encounter *stl'eluqum* or to have respectful, direct relationships

with non-humans such as rocks or transformed ancestors in the form of animals and trees without directly being on the land. It is this being, this dwelling in place that shapes and is shaped by Coast Salish ontology and worldview that is fundamental for personal beliefs and social institutions. Spirit power is emplaced in Coast Salish dwelling in place.

Chapter 5
Indian Names and Place Names

Introduction

In this chapter I develop the idea that names for people and places, and the stories that become associated with them, powerfully connect Coast Salish people to the land, both in terms of personal identity, and in contexts of asserting claims to ownership and control of it. In Coast Salish onomastic practice, both hereditary personal titles (called "Indian names" in everyday Coast Salish speech) and *Hul'q'umi'num'* language place names are important linguistic devices for evoking and negotiating these attachments to place. These proper names are called on to engage social discourses outside the culturally *in situ* talk of landscape, myth and spirit to a culturally *ex situ* talk of identity and property.

Anthony Cohen has argued that the ability of culture to be wielded by the culture-bearers as a social tactic is a critical part of understanding culture as "the creature and product of people's own agency; therefore [one must] recognize its malleability and efficacy in the foundation, management and preservation of identity" (1989:201). In the use of onomastica in this way by Hul'qumi'num people, the everyday semantic domains of hereditary titles and toponomy become linguistic tactics to assert personal or kin-group rights to land and engage the state in land claims. It is the richness of the underlying meanings and social systems that are engendered by hereditary titles and place names – the culturally implicit knowledge of land use, personal history, charter myth, and deep history that makes these names such powerful linguistic devices in social contexts.

Indian Names

'Indian names' is an English term commonly used by Coast Salish people to refer to the hereditary names that are carried by individuals within a property-owning family descent group.[27] In Coast Salish society, there are several different types of names held by an individual during their life. Kennedy (2000:237) has acknowledged a tripartite division of Coast Salish personal names: hereditary names, nick names and pet names. Traditionally, everyone was given what we might call a nickname as a child, and some people receive pet names as terms of endearment. Honoured hereditary names – which I will henceforth call Indian names, following local convention – are generally bestowed on an individual later in life (Barnett 1955:133). Today, not everyone carries a traditional Coast Salish name of any of the three types as Christian names are now in universal usage. Some people have blended Coast Salish identity with Christian naming conventions and have adopted Indian names as their legal surname. This practice is idiosyncratic, however, and as I discuss below, the customary protocols surrounding Indian names are generally still followed.

As a rule, only one living person holds a hereditary name at a time within a local residence group area. Historically exceptions were occasionally made to this rule (Collins 1966:426), while today it is more common for people of multiple generations or people from nearby descent groups to hold the same or very similar forms of a hereditary name (Kennedy 2000:265). People may have different Indian names at different points

[27] Jenness (1935b:52) and others have glossed *hwunutsaluwum* as 'House' in the sense of European nobility, a concept I take up in further detail in chapter 7.

in their lives, and may have different Indian names granted from their association with kin living in different residence groups. In all these scenarios, place is very important in this scheme of personal identity. Kennedy has shown, for example, how the son of Squamish elder Louis Miranda desired to have a name from his father's people, who were from Squamish, after having been given one from his mother's people, who were Cowichan (Kennedy 2000:261). His association with the place of his father's family was important to his very sense of personal identity.

Suttles has observed that because of this practice of regional and multi-linguistic use Indian names "pose a multi-linguistic, perhaps pan-Salish problem in [linguistic] analysis and historical reconstruction" (Suttles 2004:318-9). In an analysis of an extensive genealogical database, however, Kennedy has shown that Indian names held in a community largely correspond with the marriage network of that community (Kennedy 2000:274).

Indian names are a central cultural figure in the political dimensions of kin-centred social relations. They are bound up with property, both in the names themselves and in the rights associated with them. Though one may not buy or sell Indian names, they are the property of the bilateral descent group which has the exclusive right to bestow them upon kindred. It is a serious offence to take a name from a descent group to which a person does not belong, because of the important connections between Indian names and prerogatives of property and ritual that are associated with these names. If there came to be a conflict over the right to hold these prestigious titles, the older generation would be

called on to "affirm the owner's right to the name" (Collins 1966:429), and a speaker hired to explain family prerogatives in or associated with the name, distributing wealth to the offended people (Barnett 1955:138-139; Suttles 1987g:201; Jenness 1935b:56; Haeberlin and Gunther 1930:46)

Bearing an Indian name holds prestige for the bearer, and frequently is accompanied by the privileges accorded to past bearers of the name (Barnett 1955:134). Through the telling of stories associated with Indian names, and recalling the details of one's genealogical information that establish the connection to these Indian names, people are able to assert and negotiate the rights and privileges that are associated with these names. Jenness argued that Indian names provide use rights to ancestral territories and resource sites where families descended from these names generally lived from *time immemorial* (Jenness 1935b:55). This practice, as seen in the example below, continues today with contemporary forms of property including Certificates of Possession on Indian Reserves. In this example,[28] I demonstrate how a hereditary title has been bestowed on an individual to help resolve a dispute over land ownership.

A close friend of mine, whose mother and grandmother were both from Snuneymuxw and both married into Cowichan, was in the possession, through his mother, of a Certificate of Possession (CP) to about 10 acres of land on the Cowichan Indian reserve.

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[28] This example is based on my on-going participant observation in the Island Hul'qumi'num community. To respect the confidentiality of the individuals, I have left anonymous the identities of the persons involved.

Land ownership and membership are tightly bound up in the post-Bill C35 world of Cowichan Tribes, with one of their membership code's requirements being that an adult applying for Cowichan membership must, among other things, demonstrate "that he has a residential lot available", (Cowichan Tribes 1992) normally achieved through the ownership of a CP. My friend's father was his mother's second husband, a non-Native who raised his family for some time out of the community. After living off-reserve, my friend returned to the community as an adult, and was granted a CP to the land his mother had, following the tradition of reckoning bilateral kinship. His neighbours, the descendants of his mother's first husband's father, disputed his claims to his CP and challenged his legitimacy as a member of the community. His adult contributions to the community are well recognized by other Cowichan members who felt that his claim to the land was legitimate. To respond in part to this agitation, his family, led by his grandmother's brother (a prominent Cowichan elder), along with other respected individuals in the Cowichan community, resolved to bestow on him an Indian name. They announced that he would receive the male form of his grandmother's Indian name, which had also been carried by the same grandmother's brother early in his life. This Indian name was an implicit recognition of the legitimacy of his connection to the land, through his maternal ancestors. Though situations of half-siblings and their descendants are a difficult problem in Coast Salish heredity, an Indian name became a partial solution, offering an additional mythic and kin-based framework for claiming legitimate connections to land that neither residence nor possession of a Certificate of Possession alone could provide.

The pervasive practice of village exogamy reveals a complex reality. Though descent group members often choose to live in the same or nearby local group or village areas, in practice multiple bearers of an Indian name live throughout the Coast Salish world. Through their extended kin ties, demonstrated through these names, people may be able to claim rights to land and resources in areas beyond strictly those that may be afforded to them by the fact of their local residence. Indeed June Collins has argued if the bearer of the name resides in a different village than that ancestor, holding the name "was sufficient to establish rights for his descendant to use the resources of the village" of the honoured ancestor (Collins 1966:430). In the case of my friend, the name granted to him was carried by a prominent Cowichan elder (his grandmother's brother), and a member of Snuneymuxw (his grandmother), suggesting that he would have legitimate claims in both communities, though he had chosen, through his life circumstances, to activate the Cowichan connection.

As people do not always live in the same places as the ancestors who bore their hereditary titles, Indian names reinforce powerful social bonds of kin and descent that transcend the confines of local group affiliation, reinforcing ties to people in villages across the Coast Salish world who also trace descent from the same ancestral title holders. People identify distant relatives in far away places through recognizing Indian names that are held by them or in their family (Bierwert 1986:517), connecting kin groups to these places in ways that transcend individual choices of residence group. However, the *stories* of prominent ancestors who lived in certain locations while they carried ancestral titles do become fixed in place. These stories associated with Indian

names evoke histories and personal connections to the places where the ancestors dwelled.

Indian names accumulate stories of the lives of the ancestors who bore them, and are held exclusively by these kin groups for centuries (Jenness 1935b:55). The telling of the sometimes mythic, sometimes legendary histories associated with Indian names is an important ethnoliterary genre in Coast Salish oral narratives.[29] For the highly regarded names carried in mythic times, the stories describe events, places and experiences of the First Ancestors like those described in chapter 3. Many stories associated with names are of a more legendary nature, pointing out the important achievements or moral standing of ancestors who held that name. Regardless of the linkage to mythical or legendary times, the stories associated with Indian names weave a complex history of associations between people, places, rights and privileges. In the act of recollection of these stories people emphasize the ties that the bearers of names have to others in the Coast Salish social network. The stories set out associations with places that the ancestors have encountered, and suggest some of the ritual prerogatives or other rights which ancestral name bearers may have possessed that the newly anointed person may be able to claim.

The stories associated with Indian names are publicly 'brought out' when the person is being "given to the name" (Amoss 1978:17) at a naming ceremony. Although the

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[29] Kennedy (2000:256) gives the Squamish word "*xə́nxən*" (as she writes it) for the telling of stories associated with Indian names. I was unable to elicit a cognate term in Island *Hul'q'umi'num'*.

specific practices for a naming ceremony vary between families, generally, when the guests are assembled, and any ritual performance such as a *sxwayxwuy* mask dance is complete, the family spokesperson who is giving the name announces the name and calls on the older generation present to witness the giving. The people in attendance are given gifts to mark their witnessing of the event. People receiving these names carefully learn the associated stories and are expected to live up to the standing of their ancestors, never shaming a good name. The care with which stories are learned and the public witnessing of them during naming events are important, not only for the sense of personal and community identity which they impart (Ryan 1973), but for their association of people with the places and lives of their forebearers.

Indian names, as Bierwert has argued for the Stó:lō, are "extensions and expressions of individuals, particularly the individual's relationship with what he or she 'belongs to'. What he belongs to is not the same as a corporate solidarity [as in northern Northwest Coast cultures], but is part of the spiritual world" (1986:512). This 'spiritual world' is the emplaced world of relationships between humans and non-human persons, spirit and power, ancestry and hereditary rights and privileges. An Indian name's story points out the lives of ancestors and the places of significance, which become significant in the lives of the carriers. As with learning the signs of what to look for in a spirit quest, learning the important associations of a Indian name through its stories provides insights into the wisdom, powers and indeed sense of personhood offered by the descent group through which it is passed down.

The following narrative presents a rather full discussion of the story associated with an Indian name. This story illustrates many of the points I have made above, and particularly the strong linkage between Indian names and place. The entire story was narrated to me during the first time that Willie Seymour and I sat down, with a tape recorder on, in the context of a discussion about the importance of place in Coast Salish culture. Willy began my instruction in this area with a story that revealed his connection to one of the important landmarks mentioned in a story connected with an Indian name. Starting the conversation broadly, he was asked if there were any important cultural landmarks he could think of that he would like to talk about. He responded:

> Actually several areas come to mind. Maybe some of them are outside Hul'qumi'num territory. But my connection to it [the land] is my family. My extended family.
>
> There's a story that goes with my late dad's name. My late father's name was *S'xwulten.* And he [told it] to me before he died of cancer. And he said to me "If no one could remember this story, then they should not be entitled to the name."
>
> And he told me the story of a village called *Sqwul'sut.* This goes way back prior to contact. *Sqwul'sut,* we know it as Bazan Bay near Sidney. It's my father's ancestry, Michael David is his English name.
>
> The community was a thriving community[30] as all other coastal communities were. But there was neighbours that were in the area that were in conflict all the time. Back and forth I guess.
>
> And there was a day that they were attacked. They were attacked and the community was wiped out. During the attack his grandmother had rolled him in a *swuqw'a'lh* blanket [Salish-style woven mountain-goat blanket],

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[30] *Sqwul'sut* (meaning 'bailing'), is not a contemporary or historic village site, though it is the location of several archaeological sites (DdRu 4, 31, 46, 73, 79, and 111 are all in the area of Bazan Bay), and a site which Keddie reports several human seated figure bowls and a large snake bowls (usually interpreted as being associated with shamanic and healing practices) have been found (Keddie 2003a:169).

the young man, and rolled him underneath the seat area [referring to the benches around the perimeter of the bighouse] and left him there. And the attackers proceeded and slaughtered, killed everybody but left the grandmother and the daughter, the mother. Examples, if you will, to stay there to tell the story of the authority figure that came and destroyed our community.

What they didn't know was that grandmother had hid her grandson. So the following day they were in mourning of the great loss to the community. And she brought out her grandson. And he came out and he was just a little boy. Maybe not so little because he was being prepared for his adulthood training. He had got the basics of adulthood training and had began the discussion with the different elders.

Anyway for the next few days he helped his grandmother and mother put away their family. After a couple of days he had spent some time for introspection. "What am I going to do with this, now as an individual," being young and not being able to really do a whole lot for his mother. So he remembered his vision quest that his grandfathers and his granduncles [in the] community always reminded him of. So he prepared himself and he got a few items to take with him, tools for survival.

He told his mother and grandmother, "I'm leaving you, I will be going up to the mountain, sacred mountain and I will be gone for whatever it takes for me to go through the discipline and the training to gain the spiritual strength I need." So as he left he, of course he's sad and he's lamenting as he walks. He's asking the Great Spirit for some sort of sign to show that he's doing the right thing.

As he travels along, he goes through the trails, going through the bush, up the mountains. He heard this real strong wind coming. Actually it was a Thunderbird. He would hear the crack and it was [the Thunderbird]. He's heard of the story, but never personally witnessed it himself before. So when this came it frightened him, but he knew he was going to travel and work to being a man.

So he continued walking. That Thunderbird came by him and when it looked in different directions lightning would come. The lightening come from the Thunderbirds eyes and it struck a cedar tree in front of him and the bark peeled, peeled way up and so he contemplated. What does that mean? *Stem yuhw 'a' lu, stem yuhw 'a' lu* [I wonder what it is, I wonder what it is], he's talking to himself. So he goes and takes this cedar bark and he peels it and the breaks it off and rolls it up and takes it with him.

And he's walking along there and he gets so far and he finds a place where

he could shelter and bathe. So he does that and he used that cedar bark and bathes with it each morning. And he begins to get comfortable with his environment, really remembering the medicines that he should eat, the medicines that he should gather. And at first all you could get was vegetable food, leaves, etcetera. But he carried on and he tried to be optimistic, you know that he had a goal to reach. And that goal was to one day return and be fully responsible and take care of his mother and grandmother.

So he'd been there for some time and then he had discovered much of the area, knowing where all the trees were, rocks were. And he realized that there was a greater area above him, that he had not gone to look. So he got up early the next day and he began to travel further up the mountain. As he travelled along he sensed real, you know he sensed fear. He sensed that he was becoming afraid. He said he could feel the hair standing on the back of his neck. But, he kept going and remembering that also he was asking for signs. For signs. Give him a sign for what he was doing.

And in front of him, a ways in front of him, a wolf came out from behind a tree. And of course when you're alone and you're that young, you know you have that fear. And he just began to proceed and then he stopped and he was thinking, 'Well maybe this is my day to die.' And then he says, 'Well I'll try and go this way', turned and went one way, went another way and then another wolf popped up. He tried to go the other way and the next thing you know there's half a dozen wolves surrounding him. So he had no place to go, even behind him there was a wolf.

So he sat down, he sat there for some time. Maybe many hours because he started out early in the day. He sat there and the wolves gradually just relaxed and they were sitting there but they never lost sight of him. You know, he knew they were watching him. Every time he would move they would stand. So, you know, he knew that he couldn't outrun them. He tried to find areas where he could climb, climb a tree or climb a bluff. There was none that was safe for him to run. So he sat there and waited his fate.

Some time later another wolf came out of the bush, it was much larger than these other ones. And began to approach him but yet very cautiously. *S'xwulten* was sitting there he was watching this wolf come up and it was getting huger and huger as he sat there. *S'xwulten* was thinking, 'Creator if it's my day to go, let it be now. *Tth'wimutham'sh* [I plead that you help me], please help me. You know, if this is my fate let it be now'.

And instead of that, the wolf stopped, sat, then turned and walked away. They actually done that a few times and if you realize it, that it was a call.

So he got up and he started running with the wolves. First they were walking and then all the pack started coming together and they were walking along and he was walking alongside of this wolf, it was huge. Soon they started to run and he was running of course being a young man, he was healthy. He ran for quite a long ways and he stood with the pack but they were jumping around and playing. Running around and he felt so free and so much a part of that pack.

Finally they reached way further, where he figures no man has walked. And they got to the area. They all kind of stopped and they were kind of investigating around them and made sure nobody was following them, make sure nobody was there. And they went. It wasn't until they were very close to the opening that he realized there was a cave. So the wolf entered and he followed and in came all the other wolves. And he got in and there was a cave, very large. And of course coming out of the light, he needed time to adjust. He couldn't see for some time.

He could hear shuffling going on inside and pretty soon he noticed a little glow in the corner. And there was a human sitting there. And pretty soon this old person spoke out. *'I' tseep 'o' ts shun'tsu?* [Have you got a catch?] He was shocked, "They're speaking our language. That person is speaking my language." And then behind the lonely moan, *a-a si'lu 'o' huy 'ul' kwthu sqe'uq tst tsshun 'tsu ni' 'u kw'i tsetso' 'i mi yu tsakwum yuouy'a' uqwt yu hwukw'ustus* [Only our sister caught a seal she's dragging it she's behind us, dragging the seal up]. "Old grandfather, only our sister caught a seal sunning itself on the beach. She was dragging it, she's on her way up. She's got a seal, she's coming right behind."

Finally he began to focus and there was several little glowing lights in there, I guess they could be seal oil lamps or whatever. Some sort of light. And when he turned around and he looked and that large wolf, that was ahead of him, that sort of leader. It was standing there, real husky man. It had taken off his garment and he become human. And all the wolves that were following were all sitting there, had taken off their garments and they became human.

So historically the stories tell us that animals had the ability to transform.

So they sat there and they shared with him many stories and that he was welcome to stay with them as long as he wanted, so he did. He became a total part of that family. He'd go and hunt with them. He'd catch game with them and this went on for several years. Continuing his own quest bathing each morning, meditating, running and physical endurance was all important to him. Everything to make him a complete human being.

And then one day when he returned, he was out on his own and he returned, an old man that was sitting in the corner approached him and gave him this club. A large club. And he says, "This is yours. It is now your weapon. It is now your gift. It is now your strength and your courage." And then they sat down. And they had a circle where they talked to him and said, "We can't stay here much longer, we have to move or we will deplete the resources. But when we move, you will be privileged to come with us. You have a mother and a grandmother that need your attention."

It was something that he totally forgot but, they reminded him of it. And then he began to think about his mother and grandmother, which drove him to work harder upon himself. So he would go out and he would endure many different things physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually. Meditate and pray.

And then one day he took a walk down, well not a walk but he ran. He ran for several hours to get to where his mother and grandmother were. And he got there and he could see the smoke, running out of that smoke hole. He crawled up the back and he crawled to the top and looked down, really saddened that his mother and grandmother had aged. But he didn't let them know that he was there. He still had unfinished business.

But, the brothers and sisters had raised him. So he ran back up, remembering also that he had his tool, and not realizing the powers he had earned and gained through out all of this. All this, our people call *kw'akw'i'u thut.* A sacrifice of oneself, cleansing oneself, purifying oneself, strengthening oneself, *Kw'akw'i'u thut* means all those terms, put together.

And when he returned, the cavern was empty. They had left, they had moved on. And he was real sad. So he stood there for a few days and just stood alone and continued to meditate and draw on the energies that were left behind by the *stqeeye'* [Wolves]. So he grabbed his club and a few things that he had gathered, animal hides, deer hides and what not, and tools. And he began to head back down. In the area where he first camped he left his stuff there, including his club and he went down again and climbed up very cautious not knowing the situation. He looked down and seen his grandmother and mother carrying on with their business.

And he jumped through that smoke hole. They were real happy. They knew who he was. Now he's a real big husky man. They knew who he was. *S'xwulten* now has become a man.

So he says, "You know mom, grandmamma tomorrow when the sun is at

it's highest I want you to take these sticks and I want you to sing celebration songs, celebration songs as loud as you can. Both sit one way and face out to where you would be heard a long distance." So they did and he went back up for his final meditation and he took his club and he went down just as the sun got its highest he could hear his mother and grandmother singing and chanting.

Sure enough, their enemy became curious . They say 'Hey what's them old people doing?', you know, 'What do they have to celebrate about?' So they all jumped in their big war canoes and began a race. Wanted to be the first ones to be there. And some of them even say, "Well we should have killed him to begin with and we'll kill him now."

So *S'xwulten* was there and he was waiting and the canoes were coming. Of course there was two, three ahead. And the one canoe hit the beach and *S'xwulten* come running down. Remembering the story at the beginning of the Thunderbird, he gathers the power he earned, that was the power he earned. So he took that club and he stuck the bow of the big canoe. It shattered into thousands of pieces. The warriors, that was coming in the water, he slaughtered them. The next canoe that come, same thing. The third canoe that was coming was able to stop on time. And he slaughtered them, the first few canoes like nothing. He has so much power and it came from that Thunderbird. His power was in that club that the wolf people gave him and the spirit he put into it. So it sort of combined, the spirit, because wolves are family-oriented and he's defending his family.

And so anyways, the canoes that were left out offshore, they turned and they raced back. They got to the beach and they ran into the house and called a circle. They called their people together, they'd put the drum down. All the men come together and one old man spoke up right away, "You guys remember I had said to not attack and I also said that you've done wrong. Now you're going to pay the consequence. This community is a whole. We will not have the power to defeat that man, he has become a *shne'um* [Indian Doctor], become an Indian doctor much powerful than you or I. Look at the number of years he has been gone. Whatever he has, you and I could not be or envision. The only way we are going to survive ourselves, is to make amends with him. Make amends and we need to bring him [things], when he gets..."

So they began that circle of discussions and people began to say, "Well I got this and I got that." And they began to load them into the canoes. And ah, there was ten young woman that was ready for marriage that gone through the rights of passage. They were put into the canoe and brought across.

So when they got out there they stood cautiously away off shore and he spoke to them and he says, "That's *S'xwulten.* I'm the one that you missed and I'm here to defend my mother and my grandmother."

And the old man that originally had spoken to say that they done wrong. He spoke first, he says, "I apologize for the actions of my young men, I had asked them not to but they acted. And I apologize on their behalf, I'm apologizing on behalf of my people. And we don't dwell on it or wish you harm. And whatever we could do to make amends, that's what we are here for. We have these many canoes with much food and resources that will be yours. It's yours. You will be taken care of. You also have these woman that will be yours as well, they'll become your wives." *S'xwulten* sat there and listened and it was a long ceremony of exchange. And when he finally got up to speak, he says, "I want that woman and I want that woman. I want this woman to look after my mother and grandmother and that woman will become my wife."

So there was an agreement and they came ashore. And all the ladies that were left, all those ladies came in they began to prepare the food for a big ceremony. They put out the *swuqw'a'lh* [mountain-goat blankets] they had brought along. Sat the two old ladies down on their blankets, with *S'xweltun* and the bride he chose on his left side. So he sat there and he had these songs and dances and preparation of food and they shared a meal.

And *S'xweltun* lived many years and he only had one son, his one son. And then when he died and he was probably the last one to live named *S'xweltun.* 'Cause when he died his son moved to *Hwsuyqum* [the area of the present-day Tseycum Indian Reserve], Pat Bay. There he grew up in *Hwsuyq'um* and he had two daughters. And that's as far as I can take that story. Yeah but that's the story of my dad's name, a name that I'd be privileged to one day, but I have not taken the initiative to take, to use that name. [SW-i:22-211]

The story of Willie's father's Indian name weaves together the notion that Indian names connect people to place. His telling of the story highlights the tie between property in names and associations with places. The central concern of his narrative takes up the notion that stories teach insights of the ancestors about place and from this, one may come to understand one's own experiences of spirit powers encountered in the land.

In the context Willie provides at the beginning and end of the narrative, he alludes to the connections between names, property and place. The narrative, as Willie put it, is the story both of his late father's name *S'xwulten* and of the village of *Sqwul'sut*. The two are inextricably linked through the actions of the legendary *S'xwulten* at *Sqwul'sut*. The story of his ancestor's encounters with spirit powers at this place, and the knowledge and leadership he exhibited in taking care of his community, were considered essential by Willie's father for anyone to be given the name. Such knowledge links the named individual with the places described in the story, regardless of what residence or village group they are associated with. Thus, Willie's initial comments, in response to my question about stories for important places, are significant. While he and his father are members and residents of the Chemainus First Nation community, his sense of identity and belonging, through his father's name, is to the Saanich community, crossing both linguistic and territorial boundaries. Such a strong sense of identity, between Indian names and places, emphasizes the nuanced possibilities for connections to land; such connections transcend boundaries of ownership and territory and are intimately tied to the deep kin connections people have through ancient, hereditary Indian names to place.

While the social act of telling this story may be seen in the context of the links between property, Indian names and place, the story itself is concerned with matters more central to Coast Salish ontology. The narrative schema of *S'xwulten*'s story concerns the life of a child who loses much of his extended family to a violent raid by northern neighbours. He is raised by wise women who carefully teach him what to look for in order to successfully encounter a guardian spirit and to be successful in the community. He

leaves his remaining family to seek out a spirit encounter. He encounters the Thunderbird and Wolves, both of whom share with him their war powers: the Thunderbird through his encounter with strong wind and the gift of a club; the Wolves through their transformation to human form and his transformation, through training and hunting with them, to a wolf-person, and his encounter of their 'energies left behind' in the place that they dwelled. In addition to these powers, he spends years living and encountering the forested mountains away from the village, purifying and strengthening himself – *kw'akw'i'uthut* – discovering and learning about the medicinal plants, trees and rocks that his elders had taught him about. He returns to his village with great power, entering his house through the smoke-hole as a spirit would, rather than the door as would a person, and with the help once again of his grandmother, he defeats his village's enemies. Peace is made when he is given great wealth of food, canoes, resources and ten wives, and the access to resources they would bring, as reparation. Through this story, and the wealth that ensued, the name *S'xwulten* came to be legendary, one highly upheld and regarded. In avenging the family, *S'xweltun* sets an example of high moral standing by not going too far in his revenge, accepting the reconciliation offered to him. Like the wolves who shared with him a guardian spirit, *S'xweltun* understands the importance of family and place in being successful in the kin-oriented world.

Summary: Indian Names and Place

I have argued that Indian names, and associated oral traditions, provide Coast Salish people with a particularly intimate and personal connection to the places, properties, powers and knowledge of their ancestors. The relative permanence of Indian names

within descent groups and the tradition of stories carefully taught with Indian names reinforces, through generations, connections to particular places engaged by named ancestors. The nature of these connections to place may be personal, such as the spirit encounters that the stories behind the names suggest are possible, or they may relate to appropriate socio-economic relationships with kin who have ties to the same names living in other areas of the Coast Salish world. Thus, Indian names link people to particular, local places, and they simultaneously form part of the larger web of the Coast Salish world.

Place Names: Thinking with the Land; Claiming Land with Names

In this section, I examine another important aspect of onomastic practice in Coast Salish culture: place names. I argue that place names and their associated stories are sophisticated linguistic tools that bind people to place. Below I explore, through examples from my fieldwork with Island Hul'qumi'num people, ways that place names and their stories are used to articulate ideas of territories, particularly in the context of contemporary land claims. I argue that while they do reflect ideas of territory, they muddle notions of *exclusive territories* as conceived in western legal traditions, and indeed reveal part of the complex relationships of sharing that underlie the social and economic fabric of Coast Salish communities.

The canon of narratives that are associated with place names, much like those associated with Indian names, are powerful linguistic devices that bring certain storied senses of place into being. Narratives may take many forms. Jacobs (1934:228) and Cruikshank *et*

al. (1990) have documented Native life histories in which place is a central organizing feature, acting as a mnemonic device for complex histories. Basso has famously shown how place names are used by Western Apache to evoke myths which contain important moral teachings that are used to point people to "living right" (1996:70). These stories illustrate the connections between language, practice and culture, where people represent their physical world in a way that "consistently presupposes mutually held ideas of what [the landscape] actually is, why its constituent places are important, and how it may intrude on the practical affairs of its inhabitants" (Basso 1996:74). In Basso's vision, language does not simply shape the way people know the world, but more profoundly shapes how people relate to it and each other. Thus, when people use place names as linguistic shorthand for complex social metaphors, they have learned to *think* with the land. Basso envisions a central question of ethnography to be one of trying to understand what a particular landscape "can be called upon to 'say', and what, through the saying, it can be called upon to 'do'" (1996:75), in a sense, to try to interpret the cultural poetics of place.

One of the social actions that place names have been called on to 'do' in the context of the relationship between indigenous people and settler societies, is to define a territory, and to reinforce ties between people living in these territories and their ancestors. Poirier has argued this for the Atikamekw of north-central Québec. The importance of place names, she stresses, cannot be overemphasized, serving "to reveal not only a territory, but also the generations and events that have shaped Atikamekw history... [and] to continually renew cultural memory and the field of individual experiences" (2001:108).

In the context of my work with Island Hul'qumi'num communities, people also use place names as an index of their sense of connectedness to their traditional, ancestral territories. What these place names and their stories have been called on to 'do', in the sense that Basso argued above, is to legitimize their claims to the land. In using place names to argue a sense of territory and connectedness to ancestral lands, people are pointing to the deep semantic well that associates people and place through place names, drawing into political contexts the power these names hold to be meaningful and important to those who are making the claims.

To begin illustrating these ideas, in the context of Coast Salish narrative practices associated with place names, I turn to the stories evoked for explaining the place name for an area slated for clear cutting in the hope that the 'sacred' power associated with the named place would influence decisions about resource harvesting. Angus Smith told the story of the crying Mt Tuam, shortly after some unusual archaeological sites with shell midden deposits (DeRu 172 & 173) were located by local residents high up the slopes of the mountain. The local resident was a Saltspring Islander who was actively working to halt Texada Logging Company from clear-cutting portions of the mountain above her dwelling. She had hoped the archaeological site below could somehow save the forests above her land. After the field trip to the area, I went with Arvid Charlie to talk with Angus Smith about the history of this area on Saltspring Island. We brought 1:50,000 topographic maps of the area, sat down at a boardroom table and explained to Angus what we had seen. Angus responded by telling the story connected to a nearby place name.

> *Shqu'alus* [place name meaning 'tear drops'], there someplace. That is it right there [pointing to the east side of Mt Tuam on a map]. That is the place we call *Shqu'alus*. Another one is straight across here and that is suppose to be the eye. This is the left eye, this is the right eye there.
>
> That is the biggest creek. *Qulum' 'utl' ts'uween, nilh ts'uween tu'i* [Eye of Mt. Tuam, this one here is Mt. Tuam].
>
> *Nilh kwu'elh qulum 'utl' ts'uween* [It is the eye of Mt. Tuam].
>
> Yes, that's the eyes of Tuam. *Nilh pe'tthu no' shni's tthu smeent* [It's where the mountain is].
>
> See the mountain, that's Tuam. Looking at it from here [pointing to the water south of Saltspring Island], you can see that mountain, the whole mountain. That's Tuam. [SA-i:378-420]

I was puzzled by this discussion, partially because I did not fully follow at the time what he had explained in *Hul'q'umi'num'* (the above translations were made several months later), and partially because even after knowing exactly what he had said, I did not quite understand how a story of the eye of Mt. Tuam really related to these ancestral shell-midden sites. I had hoped for something more concrete, say an historic story about taking refuge on Mt. Tuam when the northern raiders came, or a more clearly associated legend. How was a story about a creek close to this site having a mythical association with the tears of Mt. Tuam related to the issue of the shell midden? Puzzled, I was happy to find the opportunity to talk with Angus about it again. He started to spell out to me the significance of this story.

> I remember this history about this [Mt. Tuam]. Camping, I heard it from the old people. I was asked about this one place in Saltspring. There is one creek on this side, on the west side and one on the east side. And they had names, the same names as this one here. The one on the west and the one on the east.
>
> And the reason why they have it was, that way it was supposed to be the eyes of the mountain. And it also has the power of the wind, east wind and

> west. The old people knew this when they're travelling they would go up to this one and they would splash water. That's how it's got a name. Splash water. See they'd come around a point like that and they'd just wait there, right along it. And they would do it [the splashing] and away they'd go. And the same way on this side.
>
> The reason why they ask about this history about that place is because there's logging that's [bothering] the people up there. People up there need a little bit of help. Want to know the history. That's why I learned a lot about our history, not just this one place, you know. [TA-MR-SA-i:416-429]

Angus had told a complex story about the power of place. The anthropomorphized Mt. Tuam's crying eyes hold the power of the wind to change the weather and help people in their travels. The place is sacred to those who know the ritual to perform there, in this case, splashing water on either side of the mountain. The story, as Angus has explained it, also has the power to help people who are concerned with the logging. His hope is that the significance of the place name will help protect the place itself from the operations of the timber company. The spiritual power associated with the place name establishes a moral imperative that such places should not be mis-treated. Andie Palmer has similarly recognized the workings of place names among the Shuswap of the interior of British Columbia, where stories attached to places "with their systematic recounting of significant places ... establish charters of moral force in their claims to knowledge and use of the land" (Palmer 1994:170). This establishment of the charters of moral force is an important aspect of much of the discourse around place names in Hul'qumi'num and other First Nations communities.

Place names have been similarly used by Coast Salish and other Vancouver Island First Nations in arguing against development projects. Rather than stories of individual

places, these First Nations have asked consultants to prepare maps showing inventories of names, providing a brief synopsis of their significance. Using place names in this context, Simonsen (1995) provided Sencoten names for places in the Saanich Inlet of Vancouver Island as part of an impact assessment statement for a proposed development project. In several political meetings I have attended in Coast Salish communities since 1993, the Saanich place names maps have been brought out and referred to as showing the significance of their ancestral connections to places in their territory. In 2004, for instance, I viewed the Saanich place names map being provided as part of the evidence in an environmental assessment of a massive pipeline project planned to go through the centre of their named territory. This tradition of using place names to establish a significant, moral presence in the landscape has been longstanding in Coast Salish communities. Twenty-five years ago, both Rozen (1979) and Parsons (1981) recorded Downriver *Hun'q'umi'n'um'* and Squamish place names in the Vancouver area as a component of the 'heritage planning' for the city's urban development.

On the west coast of Vancouver Island, place names (alongside discussions of indigenous animal and plant names) were a key component of the Aboriginal contributions to the Scientific Panel's report on the sustainability of forest practices in Clayoquot Sound. The Nuu-chah-nulth provided extensive documentation of their place names to demonstrate the importance of places and resources that were at risk of being completely transformed by the proposed clear-cut logging (Scientific Panel for Sustainable Forest Practices in Clayoquot Sound 1995). In the case of Glacier Bay National Park, Thornton (1997b) has shown how the Tlingits have used inventories of place names to intervene in proposed

wilderness designations and other attempts to circumscribe land rights. In each of these projects discussed above, place names were one of a number of elements like archaeological sites, sacred sites or traditional use sites, each of which First Nations leaders argued deserved protection from radical transformations of the land. Maybe like Basso's Apache friend (1984), First Nations leaders have started to shoot place names like arrows in their discourse, hoping that the power of place names will hold up in the face of rapid urbanization and resource development.

Place names are not only wielded by Aboriginal people to argue for the recognition and respect of the locales that they name. Entire lexicons of place names have been assembled to demonstrate the attachment to and occupation of territories by cultural or linguistic groups. Many scholars, including myself, report having the communities they work with ask them to make some kind of equivalent of 'Indian maps' of the world around them (Basso 1996:8-9; Brody 1988; Sterritt *et al.* 1998; Nelson 1994:16). This had led to projects of varying degrees of theoretical sophistication, geographical coverage, and political explicitness.

One assumption of these studies is that, particularly in indigenous contexts, place names are ancient. This point is frequently commented on when the meaning of a place name cannot be determined by either folk or historical etymology. This has been taken to suggest that place names are persistent, often surviving major changes in the language spoken in the region. Both Thornton (1995:214) and de Laguna (1972:58) have demonstrated that for Amerindian languages in southeast Alaska, old place names have

persisted through a series of major changes in the language (and language family) spoken in one area. This observation of the stability of place names over time has inspired the hypothesis that place names may be indicative of the length of time of occupation of a people by the persistence of older names and rates of linguistic change (Harrington 1916:94). At the same time, Kroeber (1916) suggested that place names are an important indicator for distinguishing centres and peripheries of culture areas, with the names being ancient markers in the languages of the original inhabitants of the core areas and the place names of a core group diffusing out to the peripheries of their culture area. Kroeber's culture core concept runs into trouble when place names are envisaged as stable, while the languages spoken in the area change, with the possibility of multiple names being applied to the same spot in different languages.

Thornton (1997b:223) has observed, in Tlingit place names, that there are certain places which have several different, highly descriptive names in the same language, but recorded at different times (or spoken of in different historical contexts). He suggests that these changes in highly descriptive place names can point to changes in geomorphology. In Cruikshank's southern Yukon studies, the geological features named have significantly changed from the time that they were given highly descriptive names (which describe the prior geomorphological state), demonstrating both the antiquity and stability of the names (Cruikshank 1981). As I discuss further below, the relative antiquity and stability are key both to establishing legitimacy of territorial claims, and from indigenous perspectives of significant connections to ancestral places.

To illustrate the idea that place names, stories, and ancestors are bound up with assertions of territorial rights, I will provide a narrative by Robert Guerin given in a discussion with me about land use and occupancy of the Penelakut people. The narrative consists of a series of place names and brief descriptions of how each place has been 'built-up' by the activities of the ancestors who went there, outlining through place names a view of Penelakut territory. Here, the place names provide an index for elaborating on the ancestral source of the present-day Penelakut fishing right. The narrative follows my very general question to Bob about places important to the Penelakut people.

> Well let's take *Sun'nuw* okay, do you know where that is? Montague Harbour. I have a hard time just talking about [it]. This is Montague Harbour here, hey. When I was a young man I used to dig clams, hey. And, I didn't go there, but the people that I was with, they went and dug. That was the last of the butter clams[31], hey?
>
> But what is *Sun'nuw*? *Sun'nuw* in our language means it's protected, it's surrounded, hey. And that's exactly what it is. You couldn't find it if you didn't have a map, hey. You'd never find Montague Harbour[32]. But, if you walk that beach you'll see that it's built from our people. They take their clams and then they pour it out so that you got these peninsulas that are built – trails if you want to use that word today, hey – to their clam beaches. That's what *Sun'nuw* is, hey. They built that for their purpose to make it suitable for what was there, which is clams and fish and all those resources.
>
> If you take *Pun'e'luxutth'* [Hul'qumi'num term for Penelakut], which I know a lot more about, what does *Pun'e'luxutth'* mean? It's means 'a log buried'. And if you were to dig in Kuper you'd find that it's all caving-in

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[31] Bob is referring here to the fact that the Department of Fisheries and Oceans have largely closed butter clam harvesting in Hul'qumi'num territory because of health concerns over toxins which accumulate in this species (*Saxidomus giganteus*).

[32] Montague Harbour is a horse-shoe shaped, west facing bay, protected by a chain of small islands to the west, making it difficult to detect from the perspective of passers-by. An extensive archaeological report on the shell-midden at this site was published by Donald Mitchell (1971), and has become a key reference in the culture history of the Coast Salish people.

today because the logs have rotted.[33] But those people built that place with the ash, the materials, and they built it out so they could have enough room to build their long houses. And so they could build it like a fort, hey.

And the same with *hwlumelhtsu* they said when they shot it [referring to the British Navy who shelled the village in 1863, cf. Arnett 1999], the logs were so thick that they couldn't shoot through it, hey. To me that's what it means. They fixed it for themselves hey.

And if you take *Hwlitsum* [place name for Canoe Pass area].[34] *Hwlitsum* is Canoe Pass [a small channel at the mouth of the Fraser River], hey, the village of *T'eet'qe'* [name for people from Shingle Point on Valdes Island]. What was it? It was in the flood plain. It was in the flood plain. There's a fishing village there [at Canoe Pass] okay. It was there for sturgeon and all the different foods of the river that they brought home. But, it wasn't suitable to them, hey. So they brought in their clam shells and they mixed it with. So that's what them middens are. They're villages, hey. They're built on purpose and that's their villages, that's their places hey.

And the place is called *Sheshum'qum* [place name given by Guerin (1996) for a site in the Canoe Pass area], you know the water that goes in hey. And what does that mean? It means 'the shallows', 'the channels in the shallows'. Those people built those channels for, you know for the fish to come to the river [lower Fraser River] and *shum'untun* and that's the trap.

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[33] Bob is referring here to the mythological story of the origin of the term *Pun'e'luxutth'* which gives as an origin place of the First Ancestors of the Penelakut people two logs buried in the sand at Penelakut Spit (Rozen 1985:102)

[34] Ths is the name given by Guerin (1996) and Alphonse (1997) for the Canoe Pass area. Rozen gives "*xwlhíts'em*", meaning place for cutting cat tails for this area (1985:248). The phonetic difference between the terms is, I suspect, due to a more careful transcription of the voiceless alveolar lateral fricative, which is not found in English, by Rozen from his two Cowichan informants Abel D. Joe, Abraham Joe (from Somena), and Arnold Guerin, Bob's father, from Musqueam.

Canoe Pass figures prominently in current political debates, as the Wilson family who currently live in the Canoe Pass area, who have historic kin ties to Penelakut, and who are status Indians not currently registered to an Indian Band, have adopted the place name *Hwlitsum* as a moniker of their collective identity. For several years they have sought to be declared an Indian Band and in 2004 have entered into talks with the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group to become full members. The Wilson family are thought by many Island Hul'qumi'num leaders and elders to reinforce Penelakut ties to the Canoe Pass area on the Fraser River, legitimizing their claims to fishing rights there.

> That's the bag net that was used to catch eulachon, sockeye and things. They built a channel and they put it there and waited for the tide to come back. And so when I say that we had all the tools, those are the same tools they're using all over the world today, the tools of our people. But that's what it means to me.
>
> If you go to Porlier Pass, you'll find two types of rocks there... Those two types of rocks are a flat rock that people used to walk under the water to go and harvest hey. So that's one kind of rock.... And then the other one is an anchor. Everybody said that we didn't have trolling nets, that's not true hey. If you go to Porlier you'll find the anchors. *Shum'untun* is the troll [net] hey. You'll find the remains of the equipment that was used to catch cod and other things as they were travelling because they worked in tides, hey. They're still there and divers are still finding today, hey.
>
> This is a fishing place out here on Saltspring. There's a guy. He's an amateur archeologist, hey, but ever-knowledgeable. And he came to visit me. He was tied up here at Walkers Hook [on the northeast side of Saltspring], hey. And what he said is, that whole side of the island is the remains of our fishing equipment that were buried. There are rock caches. They buried it out there. So what did they do? They fixed the place for a purpose. Yeah, we lived mostly on fish hey. [GR-i:744:803]

As a person who is knowledgeable about the history and traditions of his mother's family from Penelakut, Bob highlighted for me named places he has come to know are important to his people. His narrative moves through the landscape, linking fishing stories with place names. Bob tells this story in the context of his involvement in the Aboriginal fishery. He had worked as a fisheries manager at Musqueam, and was acutely aware of the issues relating to the struggle for the recognition of a commercial fishing right by the Coast Salish people in court challenges like *Van der Peet* case (reported in *R. v. Van der Peet* [1996] 4 C.N.L.R. 177).

In each of the seven places mentioned by Bob, he is careful to stress how the landscape is 'built-up' with the labours of the ancestors. Many of these places are 'built-up' with

what archaeologists refer to as shell middens. These large heaps of shell are often associated with Coast Salish domestic production stretching back into antiquity. Though sometimes glossed with the derogatory sense of a 'trash heap', Stein has noted that the term midden derives from a Danish word which refers to "material that accumulates around a dwelling" (Stein 2000:10). In this sense the term 'midden' is quite appropriate. Some have argued that middens have been deliberately re-deposited in order to provide a symbolically appropriate sense of domestic space (Blukis-Onat 1985) or revisited as appropriate locations for the interment of the deceased (Brown 2003:154). Guerin uses these brief stories associated with place names to show how important Penelakut places have long been dwelled in, that they are not the empty nature-space of western thought (as critically discussed by Ingold (1996)), that "our people were always here" and that their presence has defined the very topographic shape of the land in these places, evidence of the ancestors having dwelled therein. Thus, Guerin's narrative demonstrates how, as Harkin has argued for the Heiltsuk and Nuu-chah-nulth, "the landscape is the central means of connecting with the past" as it semiotically links people to the past through the "naming and narratives that inscribe meanings in the landscape" (Harkin 2000:64).

In diverse geographic contexts, place name itineraries similarly become part of the political landscape. For instance, Takaki has shown how Kalinga place names, for broadly defined geographic regions in the Philippines, have become important in making social claims associated with territorial rights and local sovereign status (Takaki 1983:58-60). The relationship between name and place becomes a powerful rhetorical tool in

local political discourses about territorial rights (Takaki 1983:68). Takaki has called this projecting "a political blueprint on physical space" (1983:73). Tuan has summarized a similar processes in hunter-gatherer contexts and has referred to this process as casting "a linguistic net over the world", turning the objects of the land into definite social and cultural presences (1991:686). While Guerin's narrative of place names indeed projects a Penelakut political blueprint over the land, I would argue that these ancestral orders are pre-existing in the land. Rather than casting a linguistic net over an otherwise empty natural space, Guerin has drawn on relationships with his ancestors to express a relationship that does not make a nature-culture dichotomy. The land, for Guerin, and the activities of Penelakut people within it, have coexisted since the beginning of time.

While Bob Guerin's narrative was given in the context of a personal discussion about important places, there have also been more systematic, political efforts to document and display entire Aboriginal place names inventories in the political sphere of contesting visions (and control) of the land. Drummond (1997) has suggested that the re-assertion of Inuit names in Nunavik puts into question the legitimacy of colonial relationships to the land. She argues that, as a system, Inuit place names represent aspects of territorial control (Drummond 1997:31). Blomley (1994:225) makes a similar point, in a Coast Salish context, with his example of the Saanich re-mapping of southeast Vancouver Island with Sencoten names for the land. Comprehensive place name inventories were similarly used to demonstrate the extensive length of occupancy of land for the Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en in the *Delgamuukw* trial, and again in their dispute with the Nisga'a in having settled their title claims (Sterritt *et al.* 1998:12-13). In the late 1970's, the

Musqueam have similarly demarked their territory with ancient names on their 'Musqueam Declaration', a map used to outline their territory in the Federal Government's comprehensive land claim process. Nearly every Coast Salish First Nation's political organization with which I have worked or had contact has spent considerable time and resources in compiling such place names inventories.

Like others such as Thornton and Martin (1999) and Jett (2001), I have been involved in an on-going place names inventory project that is intended to provide an overview of the traditional territory of the Hul'qumi'num people in the context of asserting Aboriginal title and resolving land claims. A description of this project, its sources, and the difficulties encountered in working through the details of place names inventories, illustrates the strengths of place names for such uses, and the problems of territorial assertions in areas of overlapping claims.

At the start of this project, I gathered together published and unpublished sources to complete the inventory.[35] The excellent MA thesis by David Rozen (1985) provides the groundwork for all such studies in this area. The Chemainus First Nation had commissioned Robert Guerin, the son of the Musqueam elder and linguist Arnold Guerin, to collect place names from a Chemainus elders' committee and from historical documents in the late 1990s as a part of preparing for court action (*Chemainus First*

[35] Place names information reviewed for this database came from Alphonse (1997), Bouchard and Kennedy (1996; 1991; 1995), Bouchard (1992), Elliott (1990), Gertz (1997), Guerin (1996), McDonald (1992), Parsons (1981), Rozen (1985; 1979) and Suttles (1996; 1955; 1951).

Nation v. BC Assets and Lands [1999] B.C.J. No. 682). At about the same time, Cowichan Tribes commissioned Caroline Alphonse, daughter of former Cowichan Chiefs Dennis and Philomena Alphonse, to do a place names inventory which largely built on the excellent work of David Rozen (1985), with additional information from the Cowichan elders' group as a part of the preparations for treaty talks. Both of these projects provided lists of place names with an English gloss of the name's meaning, and a very brief reference to any mythological or historic significance the name might have; the locations were given a general point-of-reference on small-scale (1:100,000 and 1:250,000) maps. To this initial inventory were added place names and stories that were shared in interviews and focus group sessions between the staff of the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group and fluent knowledgeable community members, frequently the elders. Out of this, the project has currently documented over 650 *Hul'q'umi'num* place names in the Coast Salish world.

To organize these place names and the stories and meanings associated with them, I designed a database in MS Access 2000 and a simple GIS system in ArcView 3.2a. The database provided fields for references, multiple names for individual places, map locations and the full narratives associated with the named places. The GIS system located each place name with a polygon for the entire topographic region the name referred to on detailed 1:20,000 digital maps. I then worked with a young Cowichan community member, Edna Thomas, to enter the information from the documentary sources into the GIS and database systems. By entering these stories into the database and connecting them to the names and mapped places, we have been able to build a rich

interactive computerized system for indexing and exploring the meanings and ideas about land that the elders had shared with us and previous generations of researchers.

Our work was regarded by many of the Hul'qumi'num leadership as an important opportunity. This place names information was the kind of material they felt would lend legitimacy to land claims at the treaty table and possibly contribute to a strong Aboriginal rights and title case in some future court action. In December 2003, all the member First Nations of the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group filed writs[36] claiming Aboriginal title to their territories, citing as part of the *prima facie* evidence the fact of the extensively named landscape. While these writs lie in abeyance pending the outcome of treaty negotiation, the leadership has decided to hold the place names inventory material in confidence; thus, I have not provided an extensive treatment of the detailed material in this study. Instead, I have found it instructive to discuss some of the important challenges of this work.

The first challenge was that there were many inconsistencies in the published data. Different orthographies and variable ability of local people to distinguish the unique sounds of the *Hul'q'umi'num'* language were the first major difficulties. It was difficult at times to determine whether real phonetic differences in names were being documented, or if the transcriptions were simply imprecise. To ensure that we did not compound

[36] The Chiefs filed these writs at this time in order to preserve their right to sue against the statute of limitations, which some lawyers had argued would expire seven years from the date of the Supreme Court of Canada's reasons for judgement of the December 11th, 1997 *Delgamuukw* decision which clarified the existence, nature and extent of Aboriginal title in British Columbia. The two writs, one submitted by Cowichan Tribes and the other by the collective of the other five member First Nations of the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group, argue that Aboriginal title exists throughout their core traditional territory.

errors, we spent considerable time making sure that we had a record of the name in the original writing system (for which we had to develop special fonts so that the characters could be recorded on the computers) and then converted each one to the practical Island *Hul'q'umi'num'* orthography which does not require any special diacritics. This provided names in a format which could be easily mapped, but with a rich set of meta-data that could be viewed to understand more fully the source of the name.

Other significant problems came to light when the maps were presented to community members for review. It frequently bothered younger people I worked with that there were not names for large features on the maps, such as whole islands or lakes (cf. Waterman 1922), while older people were bothered when the younger generation suggested making something up, such as *Quw'uts'un Xotse*, a term that simply replaces the words in the English toponym "Cowichan Lake" with *Hul'q'umi'num'* terms. *Hul'q'umi'num'* language terms are not only a challenge in map-making, but provide an indication of the scale at which people perceive the land. Coast Salish place names make sense on a local level (1:5,000 to 1:20,000), but for territory maps displayed on a regional scale (typically 1:100,000 for Island Hul'qumi'num territory), the resolution is too coarse to fully convey senses of identity with and ownership of significant places.

The local-scale sensibility of place names has been observed by other scholars, who have suggested that the occurrence of many, locally focussed place names in a lexicon may have evolutionary implications. Working with Salishan language in Puget Sound, Waterman proposed that the number of place names per unit area provides some

indication of the intimacy of understanding of place of the society doing the naming (1922:178). This, to Waterman, revealed something about the evolution of societies, where 'primitive' societies named a great many local features, but did not give names to large features like mountains, large rivers, or even mountain ranges. This is in contrast to 'modern' societies which take an interest in these large area features, but have a dearth of names for local places (1922:182). Waterman's observations are interesting in that they do reveal a pattern of local place-naming for Northwest Coast societies (at the very least), but his generalizations about modern American (state-level) naming practices were highly generalized and are not borne out by the evidence (Thornton 1997b). The implications of this model for cultural evolution are clearly in the now-outmoded fashion of the early 20th century.

A recent work with cultural evolutionary implications is Hunn's examination of the density and distribution of place names as an indicator of historic demography in hunter-gatherer societies (Hunn 1994; 1996). Hunn poses a hypothesis that 500 names is the approximate maximum for an individual member of a society. The correlation observed was that as the population density of the community increases, there is a "corresponding contraction of the territory with which a given individual is intimately familiar" (Hunn 1994:84). The implications of this, Hunn argues, are that 500 semantically rich items in a particular semantic domain is the approximate cognitive maximum individuals may hold, given the constraints of memory (Hunn 1994:84; 1996:20). While I have not tested Hunn's hypothesis against the inventory data collected, my own data is generally supportive, as no individual interviewed by myself or the previous generation of

researchers had a knowledge of more than 500 names, and indeed although there are currently just over 650 place names in the database with several of the names in peripheral areas appearing to be *Hul'q'umi'num'* pronunciations of place names from neighbouring languages or dialects.

These studies are suggestive of the utility and limitation of place names inventory data as expressions of territorial control. They highlight the way such inventories re-frame a dwelled-in, local sense of place to symbolically 'blanket' the land with a First Nations presence. It is the fact of the existence, antiquity and location of the place names themselves, and not their nuanced, local meanings upon which assertions of territorial control are based. This re-framing of the discourse of place from local and experienced to territorial and cartographic suggests that First Nations people are engaging western constructs of nature/culture in order to facilitate communication of their political assertions (Drummond 2001; Müller-Wille 2001). While indeed I believe that place names are a useful and legitimate tool in this political discourse of Aboriginal rights and title, such crossing of discursive divides brings problems. Cruikshank (1998:20) has discussed this in the context of the use of place names in land claims negotiations in the Yukon, saying that named places may be

> transformed from sites of significance to authorized boundary markers demarcating neighbouring groups. Imperceptibly, named places that were formerly an assertion of multilingualism and mobility, of exchange and travel can come to divide and separate people who were formerly connected.

As I discuss below, the issue of overlapping claims suggests that such a transformation may not be easily made without reciprocal, local political consequences.

This inconsistency of view was clearly highlighted during our review of the place names information with the community elders who were working with us on the project. These older people were very concerned that we had 'got the names right' and requested that they have the opportunity to review each place name, its meaning and stories of significance to ensure that the collected material represented the land as they knew it. They were concerned that in compiling such information, compromises may have been made in how names were placed or in the meanings attributed to them. They were deeply concerned that the government would challenge the legitimacy of their place names and stories, and wanted the opportunity to ensure that they were represented exactly as their ancestors had told them. Roy Edwards was one of the people with these concerns. He is a respected elder in the Hul'qumi'num community, and an eloquent speaker. He emphasized the importance of our getting place names right.

> Be careful in naming a place. Be sure it is on the correct spot. *Shwulmuthw nu' tuhimet.* Don't panic. Do things proper. Court cases are different from what we discuss. Make sure the words you are using are what we are talking about. [22-05-01-EMM:201-210]

To Roy, the relaxed, friendly discussions of place names in interviews and committees were different from the adversarial experience of presenting evidence in court cases, where Coast Salish culture itself would literally be on trial, as had been his own prior experience in the courtroom, and as described by anthropologists such as Culhane (1998) and Ridington (1990) for First Nations people in other communities in British Columbia. Roy's advice was to be careful in mapping place names and to try to capture as local a sense for each name as possible so that, when challenged in an adversarial environment, the names and stories would demonstrate clearly the continuing engagement

Hul'qumi'num have with their ancestral lands.

Hul'qumi'num elders are not the only people who have expressed caution in the use of place names for demonstrating indigenous territorial claims. In the last two decades linguists, working on land claims in Australia, have critically discussed how place names have been brought up by both Aboriginal people and Commissioners in land claims hearings, arguing that much of the layered and textured meanings, which are connected through stories and personal experiences to the place names spoken by Aborigines, have gone unrecognized by the Commissioners (Nash 1984; Kesteven 1984). For these linguists, providing ample description of the semantic content of place names becomes an important empirical as well as political task. They also argue that linguists must take into account the historical change evident in old phonological and morphological forms of place names. Doing so provides a more accurate picture of changes in the language of place names and, by extension, changes in the patterns of how now-contesting groups of Aborigines have used and occupied the land (Nash 1984:41; Kesteven 1984:53-54).

Such questions have also been addressed in North American Aboriginal contexts. Early place name studies like Harrington's (1916:94) suggested that place names should be used to infer social group boundaries in Native North American communities, when information on boundaries could not explicitly be elicited from Native informants. This kind of work leaves unquestioned the meaning of 'boundaries' and could easily be naively equated with indigenous systems of land tenure. More recent work by James Kari (1989:141), a linguist who works on northern Athabascan languages, has paid closer

attention to historical detail, suggesting that since place names tend to be very stable over time, changes in language boundaries in the ancient past could be detected through observing surviving names or ancient linguistic forms in names which are derived from older languages which presumably occupied the territory previously.

Such careful linguistic attention has been applied in a Coast Salish context. Galloway and Richardson (1983) compared place names of four different but adjacent Salishan languages and, through these names, attested to the territorial boundaries for each. In this case, the communities in question have had clearly historically documented movements that caused both a retreat from their named places and an expansion into other areas. Their study suggests that territorial boundaries need to be understood in a specific historic context.

Galloway has presented similar place names data for a land claim being advanced by the Squamish Band against the Musqueam and Burrard Bands for a highly valuable part of Vancouver (Galloway, personal communication, 1997; *Squamish Indian Band v. Canada*). Galloway's place names data were challenged by contradictory place names evidence from Suttles (1996), who made a counter-argument on behalf of the Musqueam. In some instances, the 'original' language (Squamish or Downriver *Hun'q'umi'num'*) of the place name could not be determined. The place names data from these sources are clearly inconclusive as they were not supported by a broader view of the stories that might have connected the communities to the places.

A cursory examination of the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group place names database reveals many of the same patterns. Some place names have been documented in different languages or dialects found in the same areas. Specifically, there are Island *Hul'q'umi'num'* and Saanich names clustered together in the eastern-most southern Gulf Islands, and Island *Hul'q'umi'num'* and Downriver *Hun'q'umi'num'* names clustered together in the lower Fraser River area. These, as I will show in chapter 9, are currently areas of overlap of political land claims. They reflect connections to and, in some cases, ownership of certain places while revealing at the same time general areas of sharing and peaceful coexistence.

Place names inventories, if not treated with the careful attention to the local senses of place expressed in associated stories, and the subtleties of linguistic form and expression, risk presenting a static view of relationships to land. 'Traditional territories', plotted with solid lines on maps, are envisioned as being almost unchanging. The boundaries drawn become highly insufficient when they are brought into a political frame. The casting of a linguistic net (to borrow Tuan's (1991) phrase) does not simply create territorial ownership or control. Places far outside the regular locations of use can be named, and the same place can have multiple names in different languages. Seasonal use by one group in the heavily named area of another complicates hard boundaries being drawn from place name distributions. Careful ethnographic study must be done before names can be correlated with systems of tenure or 'ownership'. Given cultural change over time and the relatively long-term persistence of place names, these 'territory-level' perspectives can make complex historical processes seem static or unproblematic.

The details of indigenous knowledge related to place names are critical to document in a time of increasing cultural and linguistic homogenization. However, given that they generally fail to shift the balance of power, we must attempt to bring forward a different level of indigenous knowledge. While documenting the intricate details of these knowledge systems has the advantages noted, it is a process which can freeze the fluid, essentialize the complex and reify the perspectives of a privileged few. I argue that we must seek to understand the philosophical underpinnings of these knowledge systems in order to better our chances of shifting the power imbalances. I argue that to get at these underpinnings, we must try to examine rigorously the significance of 'place'. How people think with places then becomes an important theoretical and ethnographic problem for anthropologists to grapple with. Once we begin to understand these senses of place in the terms of indigenous people themselves, we start moving away from the imposition of the dominant ideologies which create and perpetuate those power imbalances.

Language Loss

I conclude my examples with a discussion of the unfortunate reality of language loss that exists in Coast Salish communities, and the attendant separation of people from the lives and experiences of their ancestors. It is well known that all but a few Canadian Aboriginal languages are highly endangered, and there is a continuing and urgent need for revitalization (Norris 1998; Hinton 2001; Fee 2003). The *Hul'q'umi'num'* language on Vancouver Island is no different, with fewer than 100 fully fluent speakers recently identified by linguists out of over seven thousand five hundred community members

from Qualicum to Malahat, though a great many more (23%) reported to Statistics Canada in the 1991 Aboriginal Peoples Survey as having partial fluency.

Though the topic of Island *Hul'q'umi'num'* place names has fortunately had some careful examination by scholars, clearly not all of the places which have names have been recorded. As a small contribution to this literature, I have put together a table of place names that I was told about which have not, to my knowledge, been published in the past. In each case, the elder was concerned that the name had not been published, and requested that I make sure it was properly recorded and made available. In honouring that request, I provide Table 5.1 below. In every case except *Shqu'alus*, which I have discussed above, the person sharing with me information for the name gave very little detail other than what appears here.

Table 5.1. Previously undocumented Island *Hul'q'umi'num'* place names

Xutl'nutstun	mouth of bush creek	Angus Smith, Cowichan
Wuxus 'Tree frog'	where Henry Elliott used to live and I think it's all white people there now – Coffin Point area	Marjorie Louie, Chemainus
shqw'hi'wun 'coming through the hole'	Fishing area near on Holland Creek near mouth	Roy Edwards, Chemainus/Penelakut
shqu'alus 'tears'	creeks on east and west side of Mt Tuam that had the power of the wind.	Angus Smith, Cowichan
'uhe'nuqun' -qun 'front part'	south side of Mt. Prevost	Ruby Peters, Cowichan

Two of the place names in Table 5.1 have alternate names that have been given in the past for the same general location. David Rozen recorded from Alfred Louie and Michael David (both Chemainus First Nation members and the fathers of two of the

people with whom I worked, Percy Louie and Willie Seymour, respectively) *qwi'qwumluhw* 'little root' as being the name for the Bush Creek and Ivy Green Park area (1985:91). Alexis Louie, Alfred Louie and Michael David all agreed that *Xwaaqw'um* 'place having cow parsnip' was the name for Holland Creek and its mouth, being a place where cow parsnip could be gathered (Rozen 1985:92). It is likely that all the names are ancient names in the general areas identified, and that the names refer to different specific locations in that general area.

As I have argued elsewhere, the relationship between language and place are importantly implicated in the ways that people come to make sense of the world (Thom 2000). Ingold has framed this idea in more phenomenological terms, arguing that "language celebrates an embodied knowledge of the world that is already shared thanks to people's mutual involvement in the tasks of habitation." (Ingold 2000b:147). From this perspective, efforts of language revitalization are destined to become exercises in archiving culture if not deeply engaged in embodied experience in the land.

> It is not, then, language *per se* that ensures the continuity of tradition. Rather, it is the tradition of living in the land that ensures the continuity of language. Conversely, to remove a community of speakers from the land is to cut the language adrift from its generative source of meaning, leaving it as the vestige of a form of life that has long since been overtaken by its representation as an *object* of memory (Ingold 2000b:147).

Inventories of place names, associated narratives and their meanings are frequently set in terms of larger political processes where, in order to subvert the dominant powers of the state, these places are represented in part as objects of memory (see also Weiner 2001). But the intended outcome is to ensure that the places thus being objectified will continue

to exist in forms that would have been familiar to the ancestors, in ways that will continue to generate Coast Salish ways of knowing, speaking and dwelling in the world.

Summary: The Coast Salish Symbolic Landscape

In the last three chapters I have laid out my learning of how Coast Salish people come to be connected to place. These links between a people and their places are central to the way that Coast Salish make sense of their world. Such an understanding of place is not uncommon among indigenous cultures. Referring to Australian Aborigines, Michael Jackson has theorized the importance of "forging links between personal, social, and natural worlds" (1989:154) in narratives which present these links as spatially defined, immediate, and temporally concentrated.

> Contriving to make the present continuous with the ancestral past, like making the individual appear to be continuous with the cosmos, brings the wider world within a person's grasp *in the here and now* [emphasis in original]... Moreover, working with a *common* fund of accessible images... and making personal, social, and natural domains coextensive, a seamless, unified whole, places self and world on the same scale. Not only does this make the universe coherent and comprehensible; it enables people to act upon themselves in the conviction that such action will have repercussions in social and even extrasocial realms. Conversely, this view enables people to manipulate external objects and words – as in divinatory, healing, and cursing rites – in the conviction that such actions will have repercussions on themselves or on others. (Jackson 1989:155)

For Coast Salish people, these stories reveal the tangible, visceral realities which emerge from acting on their senses of place. In this way, the patterns of culture and language that formulate these discourses of place shape how people see and experience the places they live in and encounter. It is to issues related to this very important issue of Coast Salish people's relationship to the land vis-a-vis mainstream settlers and the Canadian

state to which I will now turn. This issue is overwhelmingly the dominant topic of conversation in discussing senses of place with Coast Salish people.

Chapter 6
Local Histories of Land Alienation and Coast Salish Resistance

Stories of Another Kind of Transformation

In this chapter I explore the power relations involved in the colonial processes of land alienation as seen and understood through narratives by Cowichan elders Abraham C. Joe, Fred Modeste and Angus Smith who have shared their perspectives on how these processes have been experienced and resisted. Through these narratives, I have come to understand their vision of the various facets of power drawn upon in the alienation of Hul'qumi'num people's lands by European settlers. This power has attempted to largely erase the Island Hul'qumi'num presence on the land through the renaming of its geographic features and the widespread pollution of their food resources. Histories of acts of military and institutional violence, more recent acts of personal violence, and legislative forces of cultural assimilation are all factors cited in Island Hul'qumi'num discourses about attempts to alienate them from the land. Histories of protest and dissent by Hul'qumi'num people are also important in the local discourse that connects history, power and place. They shape the current political efforts being made at coming to a negotiated settlement of historically produced social inequalities.

This approach to ethnohistory rests in the idea that local historical discourses, in particular discourses whose form is commonly expressed as oral narratives, provide an understanding of how people see themselves and how they make meaningful past events in the context of their present day experiences (Cruikshank 1994). I have chosen the stories presented here because of the plain associations they make between history,

power and place. I have also had the benefit of local insight into the significance of these histories, through the personal messages given to me in the context of their repeated tellings. Careful selection of historical narratives from among the many that could be told helps me navigate the difficult epistemological waters of ethnohistory, where it is difficult to grasp meaning across temporal, spatial and cultural horizons (Morantz 2001; Cruikshank 1994:403). This discussion is not intended to be a comprehensive history of dispossession of Coast Salish people. I will leave writing history to the historians, a topic already well covered for the Island Hul'qumi'num people.[37] Rather, I wish to present in the voices of a number of Island Hul'qumi'num speakers, a set of narratives which they felt was important to explain to someone trying to learn about the importance of the land.

These are dark stories. They are steeped in the bitterness of having lived the consequences of these colonial actions. They tell of violence, deceit, and injustice. Like a *Xeel's* transformation tale in reverse, these stories often tell of how the world was once right, and then was turned all awry. It is in the spirit of the poetic structure of the *Xeel's* stories that I place this discussion here in the centre of this study, framing the moment of this transformation between a discussion of cosmology and the discourse of land tenure and land claims.

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[37] Chris Arnett (1999), Graham Brazier (2002), Robert Cail (1974), Cole Harris (2002), Doug Harris (2001), Richard Mackie (1984), Dan Marshall (1999), George Shankel (1945), Bruce Stadfeld (1999) and Paul Tennant (1990) have all provided prominent histories of these events in the Island Hul'qumi'num communities.

Histories of Alienation from the Land

'My name is a very good name'

Abraham C. Joe is an elder from the Cowichan community who has had a life long involvement in politics and community activism. In 1966, his political efforts brought an unprecedented Department of Indian Affairs funded housing project to the Cowichan Band. He was one of the founders, along with Abel Joe and Joe Elliott, of an important intertribal land claims committee which rallied strong political sentiment among the Coast Salish of southeast Vancouver Island in response to the 1976 comprehensive claims policy of the federal government. Abraham explained to me one day how he came to resent non-Native people for their historic and ongoing actions of alienating lands and resources from local First Nations, and their betrayal of the trust and friendship of First Nations people who lived in those areas.

> My name, it's a very good name. Hear this, my Indian name is on the map, very beautiful, over there in Saanich, Butchart Gardens. All the Butchart Gardens Indian Reserve [Tsartlip] has got that name. My Indian name, *Xwutthinthut*. Big story to that, might make you laugh.
>
> He was from the Malahat tribe, another big-time rich man with ten wives. It's recorded. I have it in my possession. He was a top leader of the Malahat tribe. Chief, spokesman for funerals, weddings, big house. He's recognized. That's the name I have today.
>
> I'm trying not to be like him, I don't want to have that. Ten wives. Where were you [pointing to BT] last night!? [everyone laughs]
>
> Why is it over there? Why is it over there in Butchart Gardens? Well just like everybody else, if you got a wife and all the young bucks is looking at your wife, it's natural. It's a natural thing. You're going to get jealous if a younger fellow is looking at that wife there. Too many wives, and a lot of young bucks looking at that young woman. Another young buck looking at that woman.
>
> "[I'm] going to move out of here." So he moved to the Malahat tribes

across there. That's natural. It's all Indian Reserve. He formed his own town right there. That's why.

When the white man came along, rubbed off that [place name]. He put his name on there, Butchart. Just like every city in this world, you take Ottawa today. Ottawa is a Indian name. The city of Vancouver, I get so mad when I think of Vancouver. They moved Squamish. Squamish is up north [now]. That's the name of all of Vancouver. The white man came along and said my name is Mr. Vancouver, London, England. I'm going to christen this Vancouver. They did that to every city. Did that to Ladysmith, they did that to Victoria. They did that to my little town Duncan. Another Englishman, his name was William Duncan. And the Indians call it *So'mena* . The whole valley, *So'mena* stretch long way. White man came along and they took the Somenos [the common English rendition of *So'mena*] and rubbed it away. I christen this Duncan. Same as Ladysmith. Same as Nanaimo. Same as Vancouver. Same all the way up east. Every city was taken, rubbed off the Indian name, put their name on there. That frustrates me every time I go to any city.

In the city of Duncan, you drive through the city of Duncan, all I can do is look at the corner posts and you see Duncan Street. First settlers, recognized at every corner. You got a name up there, Kenneth Street. You don't see no Indian names. If you want to see Indian names, you go up Lake Cowichan. You go to Lake Cowichan, you drive in there and you're going to see Comiaken Street. Where I come from, Quamichan, Quamichan Avenue. All the area got Indian names on there. That's the only place. Every city, Victoria, Ladysmith, Vancouver.

They didn't make you sign that paper you gave me [referring to a consent form for the interview]. They didn't do that. They did it [changed the names]. They didn't make no Indian sign no paper, they just did it. That frustrates me every where I go. So much to talk about why.

I look out here one day I seen fifteen Indians digging clams over here [pointing to Ladysmith Harbour]. You know, in the newspaper -- I get the newspaper every day -- and this place is contaminated. Polluted so badly. Where is it coming from? It's coming from the city, it comes from the white man. They're flushing all their crap into the ocean, and that's killing off seafood, not only clams, oysters, everything is being polluted. They found a whale dead on Saltspring Island, it was pollution that did that. Can't say Indians did it. No, the white man did it. They don't like it when I talk about white man too much.

When I was a young man, I guess I come pretty close to my Indian name. As a logger, I told you before, a 22 year old man up on his logging. [After]

a number of years, I met this nice looking woman. The most beautiful Indian woman you ever seen. And I married that woman.

While I was logging up in the woods my very superior officer, boss like you [BT was supervising staff at the treaty office during that time], was going around with a cute little Indian girl down here. The man that he told is very much alive, old man Dave Page up there. His wife died. He told Dave. He's alive, a couple of years older than me. His sister is married up there. He said I was going with a nice looking Indian girl.

"[She lived in the] Koksilah area, you know, that logging road going down there, on the right. She's suppose to have a man there." Little did he [the boss] know I was his crew.

She worked in a old man's home, she walked to work and walked home. Certain times she'd come in late at night and my mother already told me "[the] woman is working overtime".

"I don't believe she's working overtime."

"Better take the car and go check."

Finally I did go one evening. Boss's home, [then the] old peoples home. "She left four hours ago." My mother was right. Too many overtimes, she wasn't working, she was out with the white man, my boss.

That was the day I said "From today on every white man better be on the lookout. No white man going to cross my path. I'm his crew! We worked together everyday!"

I read that book called *The Wounded Knee*. Read that book over and over about the Wounded Knee, what they did to the Indian people. From that time my mind got warped. I become to hate white man. Up until today I tell that to everybody. "Watch out, don't ever cross my path. In the first place I'm a white man hater." Today, today there wouldn't have been a treaty group today if it wasn't for the white man.

For every city, I just told you, for every city today they were giving land away. Back in 1840, 1850, they were giving land away. Indian land. Ugly old James Douglas [the governor of the colony of Vancouver Island]. He was selling land for a dollar an acre, 50 cents, two bits an acre.

Why is the white man next-door to us in Cowichan? Why? We have a subdivision over here, and a white man trailer court over here. It's all

Indian Reserve. I traced that down. It came from our people that sold that land to the white man. It's right across from the 'Subdivision'.[38]

I used to go down to archives all the time, if I wanted information I got in the archives. I went to Vancouver when I was chairman of the Land Claims Committee. Vancouver and Burnaby. Went to the University. I went all over. Victoria, Nanaimo, Malaspina College. The paper I have in my home is just as much as what you got here [a lot of paper in the treaty office]. I get that from the archives. So when I go to a meeting, as I speak, I'm speaking the truth because I have documents to prove my word. I can name the years, 1820, '22, '30, '40. Giving land away.

They read the news one day and they found a whale dead just outside of Cowichan Bay, polluted. Certainly didn't come from the Cowichan, the reservation. Every city, all the flushing of your toilets going to the bay and that's killing all. Why would that whale die. Come from your city, everything.

I wish today was a big meeting. I would have got up today and I would have told them that today is the day. I always use my name, Abraham C. Joe. I want to tell the world that I'm going to put up a big demonstration.

I did it before. I did it in 1966. I was in the newspaper headlining, everyday I was headlining. You want to see good news, look at the Times Colonist. Up there you see the picture of Abraham C. Joe. There was a Minister of Indian Affairs, all kind of ministers, front page. And in the middle of that page was Abraham C. Joe. I'm going to put up a big demonstration.

All the highways. Right here, this highway is trespassing on the Indian Reservation [referring to the land on Chemainus IR 13 which was expropriated by the provincial government in the late 1990s for the expansion of a highway]. They trespass when they leave Victoria. They trespass when they took over that airport in Patricia Bay, the whole airport belonged to the Indian people *Hwsuyq'um* [Tseycum First Nation].

They moved the Indian people. That's called *Mutoliye'* [Hul'qumi'num place name for Victoria] not Victoria. Some old English Queen, they christened that town Victoria, that's called *Mutoliye'*. They kicked all the Indians out of there, then they told them "we're going to move you. We're

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[38] The 'Subdivision' Abraham mentions (commonly called 'the Sub' by Cowichan members today) is an area along Boy's Road on Cowichan IR 1 where in 1966, Abraham as a band councillor, was able to secure several million dollars to construct new houses.

going to move you further back here in due time."

> Now that word is a white man's language. "In due time we'll find you better land. Indians, they gave them blankets, give you free medicine. Even the little kids candy." So they moved the whole city of Victoria to Oak Bay. Halfway to Saanich is the *Mutoliye'*. They moved what is called Songhees today, they moved them over there. In due time they were going to give land to those [people]. They didn't. The biggest lie coming from a white man again.
>
> Every city was moved away. Vancouver was called Squamish. They moved the same word they told Victoria, we're going to move you further up there, in due time we'll give you land. That didn't happen. Today it still isn't happened. It's called Squamish today. And the whole of Vancouver came from a Limey, Englishman. Name it all. It's in here that I studied so much about. That Christopher Columbus, one of the biggest liars that ever existed. He said that he found this country. He never found nothing. When he come to this country he found a lot of Indian people. Indian villages all over. They don't talk about that. No, "I Christopher Columbus, I found it." Every since he was here I was chair man of land claims, I did a lot of research. I tell you I got more experience in my home, come from the archives. You hear me speak now, I'm speaking what I got from your archives, dated.

There are several important themes that need to be discussed from this long story which Abraham told me almost without interruption. Abraham starts by talking about the origins of his Indian name. It was originally held by a man who lived in the Tsartlip village (directly adjacent to the famous tourist site, the Butchart Gardens) and then moved the short distance across the Saanich Inlet to Malahat, where he was the 'top leader'. His telling of this story evokes the importance of his Indian name as discussed in chapter 5, to both the Tsartlip and Malahat communities, while he himself is from Comiaken at Cowichan.

Abraham moves from discussing his ancestral connections to these communities to describing how the names for them have been wiped off the map. In his story Abraham

articulates notions discussed by anthropologists and cultural geographers about the manipulation of colonial power through the renaming of the Aboriginal landscape. From these perspectives, places names are seen as reflecting how a people relate to their local place within a society; the process of naming and re-naming is indicative of the power relations at these places between societies. In the case of European place names in indigenous communities, the relationships of power have largely been seen as colonial.

Tuan (1991:687) has argued that power games are involved in the linguistic processes of creating named places, and suggested that explorers, pioneers and the colonial state exhibited their power over place when re-naming their new 'acquisitions'. Brealey (1995) has presented a useful example of the dynamic of this power game in his investigation of the colonial processes of re-naming the landscape in British Columbia. Here, 19th and 20th century European cartographers effectively erased the presence of indigenous peoples and their relationship to the land from the view of the colonizers (see Morphy 1993 for an Australian parallel). The indigenous names which remain (though bastardized by anglicization) project the colonial vision of the colonized. Northern Athabaskan speakers have frequently commented that English place names for their territory are insidious and a "part of some larger plot to eradicate their history and claims to the land" (Kari 1989:134).

Laforet recognizes that Amerindian (in her case Nlaka'pamux [Thompson Interior Salish]) place names co-exist with European ones in a relationship of "silent competition". For her, "both exist in usage and memory, but, although virtually all

European place names can be found in published maps and guides, many Nlaka'pamux place names are known only by the Nlaka'pamux" (Laforet and York 1998:216). In historic perspective, she sees this as part of the process of settlers having seen 'wilderness' where Nlaka'pamux people saw "winter villages, fishing stations, summer camping areas, mountains, berry-gathering areas, resting places along trails" (Laforet and York 1998:35). Over time, these places have been largely alienated by the competing vision of the land.

Nelson (1994) has artfully considered how the European incursion of place names in western North America has little to do with the land itself. He suggests that toponyms that reflect the nexus of humanity – like those of the Native peoples he has worked with, or those given by the trappers, lumberjacks and fishermen who live in the land – express many important connections "between humanity and the earth", teaching the "newcomers to this continent...to inhabit its myriad places" (Nelson 1994:20). Respecting these names, he suggests, may be an important part of the process of changing European newcomers' relations to the land.

Although, as Abraham points out, the majority of official place names in the Coast Salish landscape are connected to European histories and descriptions of the land, Rozen (1985 284-5) has listed 18 English place names within Hul'qumi'num traditional territory that have been derived from the *Hul'q'umi'num'* language. Half of these ($n = 9$) are attributed to being anglicizations of the *Hul'q'umi'num'* place name for the particular locale in question. All but one other are names of local residence groups or villages

which have been given to one or more geographic features in the area. In the last case, Mt Tzouhalem was named in English after the prominent Cowichan warrior *Ts'uw'xilum* (Rozen 1985:139), but this name differs still from the *Hul'q'umi'num'* name for the mountain. Out of the hundreds of gazetted English names in the region, this is a relatively small number, but it does suggest that the relationship is not entirely one of total erasure by the non-Native settlers; some imply either a practical utilization of a few native-language names, or a kind of nostalgic respect for the language and culture of the local Coast Salish people.

Abraham's talk highlights other issues of power disparity and the consequences of settler practices for local places. From Abraham's experiences, non-Native people are damaging the places that First Nations people use for food. It has been the widespread experience in recent years that most intertidal shellfish harvesting areas in the waters near Island Hul'qumi'num communities are closed due to various kinds of pollution. Abraham raises the example of the Town of Ladysmith, which is allowed to pump into the harbour sewage undergoes only primary treatment. Failing septic fields as well as agricultural and industrial wastes also are known locally to contribute to the poor water quality, and shellfish contamination is widespread, with all harvesting requiring expensive depuration in order to ensure the products are edible. The harvested shellfish turn to commodities when they undergo the costly clean-up, and rarely are found back on the tables of local Hul'qumi'num people.

The dead whale that Abraham refers to figured prominently in the media when it washed

up, in front of a popular pub in Ganges Harbour on Saltspring island, in the spring of 2000. Waterbourne industrial pollutants pumped into coastal waters were thought to have a major impact on the health of large sea mammals such as whales. Abraham returns to the image of the dead whale, this time in Cowichan Bay, killed by the pollution that is poisoning other marine life in what was once one of the most productive marine areas in the region. The intertidal beaches have long been closed to clam digging, and crab catching is permanently banned because of various non-point sources of pollution from industrial, urban and agricultural land uses in the Cowichan Valley. Abraham's perspectives on environmental degradation reveal his analysis that the social and economic practices of the settlers have a diffuse but powerful transformative effect on the land and resources and consequently the experience of place by Coast Salish people.

Abraham moves from the abstract problem of non-Native people creating a colonial topography and serious environmental problems to his very personal experience of having been betrayed by his non-Native logging boss. The power Abraham experienced was direct and personal. Such power was rooted in the social and economic inequality that has persisted between Island Hul'qumi'num people and European settlers. This pivotal moment in Abraham's life (a story he has told to me many times), along with his reading of the massacre at Wounded Knee (Brown 1970), has galvanized and directed his energies, against the problems of injustice and inequity that are systemic between non-Native and First Nations communities and that have been played out on the land for much of his adult life.

Next, Abraham talks about social inequalities between those who have purchased alienated Hul'qumi'num lands from government and the First Nations people who are left holding a secure interest only in their Indian Reserves. The spatial layout of these communities manifests these inequalities. Driving down Boy's Road today, the 'Subdivision' appears impoverished compared to the surrounding non-Native neighbourhood. Along the north side of Boy's Road is a long, tall wooden fence, which I have heard called 'the wall of shame', visually separating the 'Subdivision' from a network of primarily non-Native streets, houses and trailer courts. The perceived shame is the social division by such a wall. The disparity in wealth so vividly manifest at this place stems, for Abraham, from alienation of Indian lands without any kind of compensation.

In the final part of Abraham's talk, he refers to 'putting up' a big demonstration, a term used in the context of First Nations intertribal political actions, such as the ones that he had been involved with in the past. He expresses his concern about the recent and continued alienation of First Nations lands, in this instance the reduction of Indian Reserves to make way for public works such as highways and airports. He discusses the historic relocation of the Songhees First Nation away from their original village site near the Parliament buildings in Victoria, which was done in order to make way for urban expansion (Keddie 2003b). Relocation of First Nations' communities, Abraham rightfully observed, has occurred repeatedly in other urban centres throughout British Columbia (Thom and Cameron 1996; Harris 2002), showing again the kind of power that is at play in the transformation of relationships to the places dwelt in by First Nations'

people.

Abraham's long talk provides insight to the history of the alienation of lands from Coast Salish people, drawing on the ancient histories associated with Indian names, place names, personal life history and experiences, and the creation of an on-going colonial landscape of social inequality. It is, I believe, an important narrative in the local discourse of how Coast Salish people make sense of their position of relative alienation from the land and resources. Abraham has drawn our attention to two kinds of power, the subtle symbolic forces of the state and the diffuse power of the juggernaut of rapid urban expansion. The use, by the settlers, of both of these kinds of power has facilitated a shift in the practical control and power that the Hul'qumi'num people have over their ancestral places.

Gunboats, Residential Schools and $455 billion Compensation

In this section I explore the historical narratives that Abraham C. Joe, Fred Modeste and Angus Smith have shared about physical violence, the creation of Indian Reserves, enfranchisement, residential schools, and other social, legislative and institutional practices. Their narratives reveal the direct and forceful use of power by the state to facilitate the colonization of southeast Vancouver Island.

The first story is a continuation of the narrative that Abraham C. Joe provided earlier about the renaming of place and urban development. Abraham went on to describe government use of gunboats and the institutional power of residential schools to facilitate

the taking of Hul'qumi'num land.

> It was the government that came along to this country and he told his whole crew "Take a pot shot. Lamalchi Bay." Took a pot shot at Kuper Island Indian Reserve, took a pot shot at *Leey'qsun* tribes [Lyackson]. Big. Took pot shots, killing the people. Many people died. Old people. Old women. Little newborn babies were slaughtered by the white man from these ships.
>
> And then the government says "How come you're asking for so much money?"
>
> I told the government right here one day "I'm going to sue the government, I'm asking you for $455 billions of dollars."
>
> "Oh, that's the whole world's money."
>
> "Well that's how much money I want."
>
> "Why?"
>
> "You forgot that it's your people that destroyed our villages. You shot at us, pot shots with those big guns, destroyed all the big houses. Indians had to go hide in the mountains from you people. And you ask me how come I ask for so much!"
>
> "Not only that. Recently, back 60, 70 years, you people formed these residential schools. You put all the Indian people in it. I'm one of them, was sent to Kuper Island school and you can't even speak Indian [at the school]. They ever hear you speaking Indian, slap the hell out of your face. 'Get in that corner and kneel down and you're not going to have no dinner. Nothing. You're punished.'"
>
> "That was just a minor detail. Ever caught a little boy, little boy over there. That father took that little boy, took him to his room, sexual assaulted the little boy."
>
> "And you ask me how much? Why am I asking for $455 billions of dollars? Because you destroyed those little boys! There's a big bunch of graveyards, got headstones on there. Those were the little boys that were sexually assaulted by the priest and the brothers and the sisters of Kuper Island school. The sisters were doing that to little boys."
>
> "And you ask me why I ask you for that much money? I say to you, government Man, it would be up to you to take down all the graveyards all

> over. And I want the government to put a brand new headstone to every school child who was in Kuper Island school that you killed. I want headstones provided by you as the government people. And you ask me why. I'm telling you why. That's just a minor. There's so much, so much, so much." [JA-i:382-415]

Abraham's passionate speech first focuses attention on physical elements of colonial power involved in the dispossession of Hul'qumi'num people. For Abraham, whose views are quite typical in Island Hul'qumi'num communities, the government is liable for the losses suffered by the Hul'qumi'num people, whether the destruction of villages as at Lamalchi Bay or the damaged lives of generations of students who attended residential schools. Abraham's narrative is well supported by the western historical tradition. Chris Arnett has told the story of the British gun boats taking the village on Kuper Island in his book *Terror of the Coast* (1999) and Qwul'sih'yah'maht (Robina) Thomas has written a history of Coast Salish people in the Kuper Island residential school (2000). These histories parallel Abraham's oral account referencing the same sort of transformative power wielded by the state in seizing Island Hul'qumi'num land.

Another Cowichan elder, Fred Modeste, has also spoken to me of residential schools as a tactic used by the state, highlighting also the impact of liquor on the decision-making of his ancestors with respect to the alienation of land.

> When I was younger I used to follow all that [we were just talking about Coast Salish ways of bathing and bighouse traditions], but when they sent me to the residential school I said, "No way." Yeah I wouldn't follow the Indian tradition, that was the white man's purpose to put us in there to make us quit all that and it worked.
>
> I went to only grade five. They made sure I didn't become educated. Schooling was only an hour and a half. The rest of the time I was working, and they made me work. They put it in there for a purpose too.

> They brainwashed us so bad, so we won't fight for our rights and it's working.
>
> Our people won't fight for their rights. This land is ours. The white man just stumbled, like Bill Wilson [an outspoken BC First Nations leader] said, they stumbled ashore. Where all those ships landed, they mistreated Indians.
>
> I speak to all the people that are Chiefs, they're descendants of Chiefs they won't fight for what is there. Most of them are moving away from their lands, they move into cities and think it's a better life. But it isn't.
>
> Another thing I want to tell you. Before they let any of the white man in [as settlers], there used to be schooner that used to come in the Cowichan Bay. And they used to dump barrels and barrels of liquor in Cowichan, it was a rotten liquor. They made sure our grandfathers became alcoholics. [...] It affected our lives [...] The white man really knew what they were doing. It affects us 200 years after. [...] It affects the brain.
>
> But, I belong to the longhouse now [another name for the bighouse, the Coast Salish winter ceremonial]. The longhouse was our hospital, our courthouse. People got married. When they died they went there. That was our government. That's why the federal government, provincial government closed it down. I should know because I was affected by that. But I've gone back to the longhouse. [MA-ii:412-443; 398-403]

Fred's critique here of the government is at the same time a lament for his own community and some of their leaders. Like Abraham, Fred perceives residential schools as central to the alienation of land from Hul'qumi'num people. Fred frames the experiences of social and cultural assimilation via residential schools as the 'brainwashing' of First Nations people. First Nation children were made into workers and morally discouraged from participating in the economies and social lives of their parents and grandparents. Fred also implicates colonial agents in the 'liquoring' of the older generations of leaders and community members, provoking behaviours which are passive and largely ineffective in defending their lands from settlement. Wrestling dignity from this history, Fred inverts the stereotype of the 'drunken Indian' in invoking

the image of drunken Europeans 'stumbling' off their boats when they finally landed to colonize the Cowichan Valley. He then points to the state's role in the attempted dismantling of the potlach, one of the most important social and economic institutions of the Coast Salish people, through the anti-potlatch laws that shut down bighouses and forced many Coast Salish social and ritual practices underground (Cole and Chaikin 1990).

Striking in Fred's lament for his people are his comments that people believe moving to cities leads to a better life. In his assessment, there is not a significant improvement in the quality of life of people who live in cities away from their ancestral Coast Salish communities. Fred implies in his statements that the kinds of social problems which are known to commonly afflict the urban First Nations diaspora are a poor alternative to the kin- and place-centred lifestyles of those who have stayed home. This statement suggests something of the social division in Island Hul'qumi'num communities between those who continue to actively engage experiences in the land, and those who are largely removed from the tactile, everyday participation in Coast Salish traditions of dwelling in ancestral places. Fred sees a need for the current leadership to take a more active, visible role in regaining control over traditional lands and providing people with an opportunity to live in their home communities and participate in the local, grounded cultural experiences which are intimately bound up with place. His critique puts his view of activities of the current generation of First Nations' leaders in contrast with those of his ancestors, who were very publically visible in the struggle against the alienation of Coast Salish lands.

Food and place are intimately bound in Coast Salish culture, through the kinds of relationships that may be had with spirits (as discussed in Chapter 4) and the actual practice of food acquisition (as discussed in Chapter 7). The sharing of food is a critical element in kin relations and in the social ties that bind people across the Coast Salish world. In the following story, Angus Smith describes how a former community at Cowichan was displaced by the government's act of distributing rotten canned food to community members.

> By the Silver Bridge [spanning the Cowichan River on the TransCanada Highway]. On the other side [south side]. *Ni' stutes 'u kwthu stat'lo' Syiy'qw* [English translation: close to the creek at *Syiy'qw*]. People used to live all along that creek. That's where Adam Jimmy's family used to live. And they kept moving, moving, moving. Then they moved on this side.
>
> And the reason why they were moving was, when the government was trying to do away with the Indians, they shipped canned meat from the mainland that was all poisoned and started feeding the Indians here to kill them off.
>
> Indians found out they were doing that, so they went to work and loaded it up on a wagon and took it up to where the Elliots' live up there. And they dumped it there and used an axe on these cans, just opened every one of them. They went back there two days later and they found crows, everything, birds were just dead all over the place. That's why people moved out of here. [AD-PR-SA-i:951-963]

Angus's story is almost mythic in its inversion of the important Coast Salish theme of sharing wild food with relatives. In contrast to reinforcing social ties to people and place, as sharing food normally does, in this case, the rotten food permanently contaminated the ancestral residential *Syiy'qw* area. Elders of an earlier generation, namely Abraham Joe from So'mena and Abel Joe, concurred that formerly "many people lived in this area" and that the name may mean 'burned-over place'. The site is on the "north bank of Cowichan River about one kilometre below the Silver Bridge", near the municipal

playground (Rozen 1985:178) and not on the Indian Reserve. Cowichan Tribes have actively pursued reconciliation of such historical abuses through specific land claims to former residential and other areas which, the oral histories of their elders recall, should be part of their Indian reserve land base. The image Angus evokes of non-Native people contaminating the food of the Coast Salish also resonates with Abraham's story at the beginning of this section, whether the food is from a can or harvested from the sea.

The insecurity of Coast Salish food sources is a major concern for Hul'qumi'num people. In 2001, the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group Chiefs commissioned a study that my wife Karen Fediuk and I conducted, documenting the quantity of traditional foods currently harvested and ideally sought for consumption in the home. Though the numeric results of the study are being kept confidential by the Chiefs,[39] they have permitted a discussion of the desire for traditional foods relative to availability, and a reporting on the reasons why Hul'qumi'num people feel they are unable to obtain the quantity of traditional foods they desire. Respondents were asked to articulate in their own words the reasons for these differences. As we reported fully elsewhere (Fediuk and Thom 2003), 31 percent of the respondents said that government has put up various barriers to traditional food harvesting. Twenty percent of the respondents said that environmental problems were a factor, with another 20 percent citing poverty as limiting their access. Privatization of the

[39] The numerical data for this harvest study and other related investigations have been held confidential by the Hul'qumi'num leadership through distrust of government officials who might take such numbers out of their local social and historical context, using them as a rationale for determining Hul'qumi'num fish and wildlife allocations in favour of the commercial and recreational industries.

land and natural resources was cited by 14 percent of the respondents, while 9 percent and 7 percent gave personal reasons and knowledge loss, respectively, as additional reasons. These numbers, based on a statistically significant, randomly sampled survey of Hul'qumi'num on and off Indian Reserve households, suggest that the issues being identified here in the stories told by Abraham, Fred and Angus are all significant factors in the communities' use of the land more broadly.

Land alienation continues today at a rapid rate around Island Hul'qumi'num communities, due in large part to accelerating urban sprawl up the east coast of Vancouver Island. Hul'qumi'num concerns about this process are various. Residential encroachment, in the area closest to the coast and on most of the Gulf Islands other than Valdes, Kuper and the north end of Galiano Islands, has "covered up" the land with houses and made hunting near the communities all but impossible. Riprap placed on the Cowichan River has increased the water flow at 'Riverbottom' and other places, destroying spawning places so that today people, like the late Dennis Alphonse have said they are "lucky if they see six salmon in a run". Decreased flows from Quamichan Lake have created, as Ruby Peters has said, a slough that is "real mucky and stinks and everything" with no fish left in it. Cowichan Bay used to be full of crabs, flounders and clams, but now the waters are polluted and closed to harvesting. Spraying of pesticides and herbicides on the private forests has caused the deer to become sick and less suitable for consumption. Young Chemainus hunters have told me they will hunt only on the Gulf Islands because Vancouver Island deer get too wormy due to the use of industrial sprays. Most of the beaches are polluted and closed to harvesting in Hul'qumi'num

territory due to a wide variety of pollutant contaminant sources including: leaky septic systems, raw sewage outfalls, farm and urban run-off, and pulp and paper mill effluent. Beaches that are still open, other than those few that front Indian Reserves, have upland private owners who rarely allow access by land to these beaches. Boat transportation to these beaches is a luxury that few Hul'qumi'num harvesters currently feel they can afford (Fediuk and Thom 2003). As I discuss in the conclusion of this chapter, Hul'qumi'num people have put their hopes for resolving these issues in their participation in the BC Treaty process. In this process, the Hul'qumi'num people are negotiating for recognition of expanded governance authorities, equitable relationships between their communities and the local, provincial and federal governments, and a dramatically increased land and sea base under their exclusive control.

Histories of Hul'qumi'num Resistance to Land Alienation

The alienation of Hul'qumi'num land has not gone unresisted. Cowichan people were well organized early in the 20th century in their attempts to resist dispossession. In 1906, they hosted a conference widely attended by Coastal and Interior Salish leaders to discuss solutions to the land question. This conference resulted in a delegation of three leaders from different communities, including *Ts'ustseemulthw* from Cowichan, to England to argue (unsuccessfully) in front of the King (Hawthorn *et al.* 1958:54; Marshall 1999:149; Shankel 1945:193; Tennant 1990:85). In 1909, legal council for the Cowichan sent a petition to take their complaints about loss of lands to King Edward, requesting a declaration in favour of their continued possession and occupancy of their territory "including Cowichan Valley containing a large area", or for a reference to the Judicial

Committee of the Privy Council to have the matter resolved in court (Cowichan Chiefs 1909). These early efforts did not resolve the disputes over the continued alienation of the territory, but set the stage for further discussions.[40]

Fred Modeste's great grandfather was one of the Cowichan representatives who petitioned Ottawa in the early 20th century against the alienation of Cowichan lands. Fred told part of his story:

> My great grandfather [Modeste Sahilton, *Ts'ustseemulthw*] was invited to go to Ottawa with all the rest of the Chiefs. And they left Vancouver. My grandfather never, didn't wear shoes yet, hey. And he couldn't speak English. And they made him stay on a boxcar. Their mattresses are straw mattresses, just. Not even a mattress and cattle cars.
>
> They reached Ottawa and they came to his turn to speak up and he couldn't speak English so he spoke Chinook. And the government, federal government wouldn't accept Chinook. They wouldn't listen to him.
>
> And he came back and he told my grandmother what happened and he was crying, literally crying because it was important for him to speak up over the lands, all the timber that they were taking.
>
> Because when the white man approached him they only came to get logs for their sail, for their ship and he told them "They could take some logs but don't take the land. The land is ours." That was his words.
>
> The federal government wouldn't accept Chinook. He couldn't find an interpreter there was no interpreter. [...]
>
> He was a kind man, I never seen him. He died in 1926 and I was born in 1928.
>
> They're all there for lands because Sir Douglas promised to pay for all these lands. And that was his purpose to go there. And when he got back

---

[40] For a lively account of these events drawing primarily on newspaper and archival accounts of the day see Marshall (1999:146-161).

> he says, "I guess we're not ready, I guess some day our young people are going to learn how to read and write and speak English, maybe they're the ones that's going to settle these lands."
>
> He couldn't speak English, he couldn't write. He couldn't read. And he went to England too. Yeah, my grandmother [Sarah Wesley, *Kwuskwesulwit*] didn't talk much about that part. And that's what my grandmother pounded in my head that you remember this, you remember that. [MA-ii:118-139, 380-394]

On May 27th, 1913, Fred's great grandfather *Ts'ustseemulthw* made a submission to the McKenna-McBride Royal Commission on Indian Affairs for the Province of BC, which was set up to investigate the "Indian Land Question". *Ts'ustseemulthw*'s words were recorded in the official record of the commission. Excellent pictures of *Ts'ustseemulthw*'s speech-making on this occasion were taken and have subsequently been published (Marshall 1999:159; Harris 2001:169).

> Charley Selpaymult (Qw'umi'iqun, Cowichan): I am very glad to see you gentlemen today, and I thank you for speaking very favourably towards us. I went to the King [Edward] a few years ago, to try and get some settlement from the King, and when I got there, the King gave me this photograph. His Majesty promised to do something for us, and said he would send somebody out to look into the matter. The King told me that I need not feel very sorry about these things, as, if there was anything that he [the King] could do anything for me, he would do it. His Majesty promised to give each male Indian on the reserves, 160 acres of land, as the land belonged to us Indians. I hope you will take what I say into consideration, and do what you can for us. [National Archives of Canada, DIA, RG 10, vol. 11024, file AH3, 'Evidence of the Royal Commission on Indian Affairs for the Province of British Columbia']

That same 160 acres per family head was argued by Acting Chemainus Chief Sherman Lewis and Chemainus Chief Joe Seymour. *Qwam'utsun* Chief Charlie Seehaillton argued that the land that his people had was too small, with himself having only "...3 ½ acres, and yet the white man says I have got too much". Penelakut Chief Edward Hulburtston argued that at Tsussie, he had a small amount of land to farm, but that "it

seems to me that I have no place that belongs to me, in which to be buried." He went on to request also that for Kuper Island "we want to have a reserve by the water one mile all round" in order to resolve conflicts with encroaching non-Native fishermen.

The empty results of their efforts, as Fred expresses, were clearly disappointing. The King's promises were not fulfilled by the Royal Commission or in any court. If said promise were to be fulfilled today, through a land claims agreement or court case, it would require 480,000 acres (194,250 hectares) of land to be allotted among the six Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group communities, a significant area measuring two-thirds the size of the entire traditional territory.

At the same time as these protests over lands, Cowichan and other Coast Salish people were actively engaged in fishing protests (Harris 2001; Dyck 2000). These efforts were significantly thwarted by amendments to the Indian Act which prohibited retaining legal council to argue the land question. Little was written about the local political activities of Island Hul'qumi'num people in intervening years, and individuals with whom I discussed these matters were largely silent on the period. Following, however, the important 1973 *Calder* decision of the Supreme Court, Hul'qumi'num people returned to actively organizing around their land claims. In 1975 Abraham C. Joe, Abel Joe and Joe Elliott formed the first Island Salish land claims committee, with Abraham as the chair. They were able to get the initial involvement of First Nations from Saanich to Nanaimo and the group had meetings over several years. Though they did not successfully launch a comprehensive claim, the organization planted the seeds for what was to become the

Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group.

On December 16, 1993, the then Cowichan Chief Philomena Alphonse submitted, on behalf of the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group, its Statement of Intent to the BCTC. The Statement of Intent to negotiate, the required formal first stage in the six part process, was initiated with a simple letter, accompanied by a map. The letter read as follows:

> ***Statement of Intent***
> *What is the First Nation Called?*
> Hul'qumi'num
>
> *Who are the Aboriginal people represented by the First Nation?*
> a) The Cowichan tribes (comprised of Qwam'utsun, So'mena, Clem-clemaluts, Comiaken, Khenipsen, Kilpahlas and Koksilah sub-bands) b) The Chemainus Band, c) The Lyackson Band, d) The Penelakut Band, e) the Halalt Band, F) the Malahat Band and g) the Lake Cowichan Band.
>
> *How many Aboriginal people are represented by the First Nation?*
> 5016
>
> *Are there other Aboriginal people represented by another/other First Nations within the traditional territory?*
> The First Nations comprised of the membership of the above Bands intend to resolve any overlapping claims that may arise among them and any claims of other First Nations among themselves, or among themselves and other First Nations.
>
> *What is the First Nation's traditional territory in BC?*
> The Cowichan and Chemainus Valleys of southern Vancouver Island. The territory runs from Dodds Narrows in the north, south to an including Goldstream Park, west to and including the surrounding area of Cowichan Lake, and east to Georgia Straits including the Gulf Islands, and fishing station on Orcas Island.
>
> *Are you authorized to submit this Statement of Intent to negotiate a treaty on behalf of your First Nation?*
> Yes.
>
> *Name of Contact Person*

Dennis Alphonse, Current Spokesperson for the Hul'qumi'num

Submitted by, Philomena Alphonse, Chief
12/16/93

Submission signed by:
Chief Philomena Alphonse, Cowichan Tribes Chief Rick Thomas, Lyackson Band Chief Joe Norris, Halalt Band Chief Cyril Livingstone, Lake Cowichan Band Chief Peter Seymour, Chemainus Band Chief Randy James, Penelakut Band Chief Malden Harry, Malahat Band

The Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group prepared for negotiations until June of 1996 and in December 1997, signed a completed 'framework' agreement in which a list of topics for comprehensive negotiations was agreed to by Canada, BC and the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group. Following a brief run at full agreement-in-principle negotiations in 1998, the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group stepped back from the table. In 2000, the organization underwent structural changes, appointing one Chief Negotiator to represent all six communities rather than the unwieldy former structure of a negotiator and assistant negotiator for each community.

It was at this point that I was hired at the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group to work first as their researcher, then as senior negotiations support at the table. Through the preparation of this study, I have been actively involved at the table with Robert Morales, the Chief Negotiator, discussing a full range of negotiation issues including land quantum and selection, self-government, fisheries, parks, land use planning, natural resource management, language revitalization, and fiscal relations. The stories shared by Hul'qumi'num people, about their relationships to the land and their experiences of alienation from it, have deeply informed the perspectives we have taken at the table and

the ultimate trajectory of the negotiations.

Understanding something of the Coast Salish view of the land has not, however, made easy the resolution of these complex issues. Deep cultural connections to this specific territory form the moral basis for the Hul'qumi'num claim, bolstered, as I will go on to discuss in the following chapters, by a very real and literal sense of title and tenure over the land. The government (as Abraham likes to say) comes with its own views and perspectives predicated on a very different foundation. Government seeks above all else legal certainty with respect to its future liabilities and obligations (Woolford 2002). The federal and provincial government policies are largely unconcerned with cultural issues, and, as I discuss further in chapter 8, when they do wade into cultural matters like ideas of 'territory' or 'boundaries', government representatives see things from a singular and unproblematic point-of-view.

Conclusions: Transformations of Place through History

My efforts in this chapter have not been to set out a definitive history of the alienation of land from Hul'qumi'num people, but rather to engage the discourse of the Hul'qumi'num people on how this history has shaped their current relationships with the land. Local discourses which seek to explain or create an understanding of the current state of engagement with the land are rooted in people's experience of colonial power in making land on Vancouver Island available for settlement by Europeans and others. In this discourse, people have clearly articulated the kinds of powers that have been used by the state to effect these transformations, and the strategies and tactics used by the

Hul'qumi'num people to resist them. This power has been transformative, as it has fundamentally changed the way that many Hul'qumi'num people engage and experience the land, from food harvesting to vision-questing, and has left many with a feeling of bitterness over the unresolved disputes.

The remainder of this study is devoted to the legally and politically situated understanding of Coast Salish senses of place in the context of on-going land claims. I will first lay out a model of an indigenous Coast Salish land tenure system, as described primarily in published ethnographies and corroborated or challenged by people I have spoken with. This land tenure system is then framed in a discussion of the idea of 'territory' in Coast Salish communities and on the Northwest Coast. Within this order of tenure and territoriality I will argue that there are shared areas and areas of joint and amicable title. This land tenure system must be understood to appreciate how Hul'qumi'num people perceive, and hope to resolve, the difficult issue of overlapping land claims with neighbouring communities.

Chapter 7
Coast Salish Land Tenure: Descent and Residence Group Properties

Property and Place

The structure of this study is an attempt to formulate a picture of the range of different kinds of relationships that form Coast Salish senses of place, including relationships of ancestor, myth, spirit, history, property and territory. In the first half of the study, I have presented accounts of how Coast Salish ontologies are reflected by and experienced through dwelling in the land. In this chapter and the following one, I present a model of the Coast Salish land tenure system, exploring the relationships between property, territory and the distinctive social structures and ontologies which are rooted in distinctive Coast Salish attachments to land. From Coast Salish perspectives such relationships are interlinked. Property relations are experienced through social configurations of kin and residence, which are in turn configured by myth, ancestor, spirit and history. As Povinelli has found in Aboriginal Australia, Coast Salish authority over land, based on the practice of hunting, gathering and travelling, "produce and were produced by the mythic landscape" (Povinelli 1993:166).

Property relationships become importantly implicated in the various phenomenally experienced encounters with place. The lands where people harvest resources, build their homes, visit, travel and otherwise dwell are frequently experienced in terms of the relationships of property people have to them. People are stewards or trespassers, hosts or visitors, knowledge bearers or outsiders with reference to any particular place. Through these different relationships to place, people experience power in different

ways. The power may be that of the ancestors presence in the land, from whom property rights in land are produced. It may be experienced as the social obligations of kin inclusion and sharing with kin the products of owned places. Power can also involve the physical exclusion of others to whom no connections of ancestry, kin or residence are recognized, from land which is owned in common but not open to outsiders. At the level of on-the-ground social rules and practices with respect to property, the power of place is activated and experienced, producing Coast Salish land tenure customary law.

It is against this background that I seek to better understand the foundations of Coast Salish traditional land tenure. Although there has been much discussion of different particular 'ethnographic facts' about Coast Salish land tenure there have been few attempts in the published literature to provide a comprehensive synthesis.[41] Neither my own fieldwork nor any other ethnography of Island Hul'qumi'num people provides sufficient detail to understand the precise, site-by-site, area-by-area workings of this land tenure system. I have had to cast my field of vision broadly, integrating ethnographies from northern, central and southern Coast Salish (cf. Suttles 1990), with an emphasis on central Coast Salish data where it was available. Although there are important ecological, linguistic, social and cultural differences even within these groups, there is a large degree of consistency in the form and practice of the traditional economies of which the land tenure system is an important part. Where there are inconsistencies (which I

[41] These matters have been attended to by Dorothy Kennedy in her recent doctoral dissertation (2000). While largely consistent with my own conclusions, her work provides a useful point of comparison through its detailed focus on kinship and social networks. This is the only other work I am aware of to deal comprehensively with Coast Salish land tenure.

discuss towards the end of the next section), they tend to be greatest between the southern Coast Salish and the other groups, thus my generalizations should at most be read as being broadly applicable to the Central Coast Salish, of which the Island Hul'qumi'num people are a significant population.

I begin this analysis of Coast Salish land tenure with a detailed discussion of the principles of social organization as the basis for property relations of the two primary property owning social units, the cognatic descent group and the residence group. This is followed by a discussion of the important underlying moral ethic of inclusion, sharing and recognition of kin, and the clear rules for exclusion of non-kin. These discussions of Coast Salish social organization and property relations are put into a regional context in a comparative discussion of land tenure on the Northwest Coast. I conclude my general description of the Coast Salish land tenure system with a critical analysis of the views of certain ethnographers who argued that land is not owned in Coast Salish culture. The next section is a close reading of the ethnographic record as to the particular kinds of resource sites held by descent groups and residence groups, and the practices of property relations documented by ethnographers for these kinds of places. I conclude the chapter with a discussion of contemporary expressions of these aspects of the Coast Salish land tenure system. In chapter 8, I continue this discussion of Coast Salish land tenure with an analysis of the concept of territory, examining the interplay of relations between kin and residence based social groups and the ethics of sharing and exclusion, and the expression of Coast Salish territory in contemporary political and legal struggles with the state.

Land and Relationships of Property in Coast Salish Social Organization

A recent paper by prominent ethnobotanists Nancy Turner and James Jones (2000:7) has described central Coast Salish land tenure as "loosely defined, non-exclusive communal land use with family ownership of some specific resource sites and harvesting equipment". Though I agree that there is a two-fold structure in the land tenure system of residence group commons areas and corporate descent group (family) owned sites, I disagree with the characterization of this use as loosely defined and non-exclusive. Below I discuss my understanding of Coast Salish social organization, followed by a presentation of evidence for a model of Coast Salish land tenure. In this model there are certain lands owned as property by descent groups whose members have exclusive rights to the areas and whose heads are the stewards of corporately held lands on behalf of the co-heirs. Other lands are held in common by the residence group, variously known in the literature as the local group, village or 'tribe'. I treat the concepts of corporate descent group property and common residence group property in this chapter separately from the ideas of 'territory' and 'boundaries', which I discuss in the next chapter. First, I come to terms with the notions of descent groups and residence groups, and put their relationship with land tenure into a broad, comparative perspective.

Hwunutsaluwum: *The Bilateral Cognatic Descent Group*

The cognatic descent group, for whom the Island *Hul'q'umi'num'* term was recognized by Robinson as *hwunutsaluwum* (1963:27)[42], holds property corporately amongst co-

[42] This term for descent group is similarly recognized by Kew (1970:68, 74), Jenness (1935b:52) and Suttles (1990:464). Tom Hukari (2003) has suggested that the word might be

heirs. The *hwunutsaluwum* is formed by bilateral kin tracing descent from a common ancestor. Roger Keesing has described cognatic descent groups as "all descendants of a founding ancestor, through any combination of male and female links" (1976:221). It is not a lineage group, moiety or clan, distinguishing Coast Salish social organization from the that of northern Northwest Coast peoples.

Recognition of ownership in a social group of *hwunutsaluwum* tends to be flexible. It emerges less from rigid social ordering and more from the actual practice of ordered kin relations. This form of social organization allows for affiliation with a broad range of people who may live in different areas throughout the Coast Salish world. To put this broad range of social possibilities into action, individual members of descent groups may

> use patterns of residential history, strategy, and choice to narrow any particular individual's corporate membership down to a single group, despite his or her eligibility and secondary interests in the other groups and territories from whose founders he or she can trace cognatic descent. (Keesing 1976:221).

Keesing draws on an example of cognatic descent groups among the Melanesian Kwaio of the Solomon Islands who, like Coast Salish people, have dozens of territories each formed by original ancestors. He notes that "a person obviously cannot live in, and have equally strong rights to, the many territories to which he is related by cognatic descent. Usually he has a strongest affiliation to only one territory and to a descent group based there" (1976:240). People choose to which descent group they belong, and in practice,

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analyzable as *hwu-nuts'a-l-uw-um*, with the root being *-nuts'a'-* means 'one', preceeded by *hwu-*, possibly indicating a state of change, and followed by the lexical suffixes *-(u)l* and *-uw* and possibly *-m*, though the grammatical meaning of the suffixes are not clear in this context.

generally affiliate with their father's descent group. Though affiliating with their father's descent group is general practice among the Kwaio, there is fluidity in the society, where some individuals "live in four or five territories or more in the course of their lives" depending on "the strategies of feasting and gardening and the circumstances of life history" (Keesing 1976:241). These principles hold true in Coast Salish society.

Personal choice and life circumstance affiliate others beyond the 'core' descent group of individuals with the *hwunutsaluwum*. Through practised affiliation, this group may include some in-laws, and sometimes even visitors who can claim membership through distant descent. Following principles of cognatic descent, there is often more than one ancestor through whom people can trace back their lineage. It is through activating one's social standing in the descent group that one has extensive opportunities to express potential property claims. In the past, feasting and potlatching were essential to validate any property claims. Today, social and ceremonial practices associated with the giving of Indian names or ritual privileges occupy this important social space.

Following principles of bilateral kinship and post-marital residence exogamy, Coast Salish people have an enormous flexibility in the social group that they associate with and live within. A brief narrative by Simon Charlie emphasizes the idea that an individual has the ability to choose their residence group association through the many lines of affiliation that can be claimed through recognition of belonging to common descent groups.

> This was the old way. My grandfather's uncle in Lummi met him

> somewhere in the States and they told him his house site is still there if he wanted to move there, he can move there. The same with Musqueam. The Points were closely related to my grandfather. Simon Point was my cousin. He was fishing in Fraser. And they met his uncle over there and they told him the house site was still open for him. So we didn't just belong to one area. It is the new thing that the Indian Affairs brainwashed our young people that we only come from one place. Any place where our family came from, it was open if we wanted to move there. It was opened.[18-07-01-EMM:1907-1913]

In societies organized by cognatic descent, there are important social factors which influence life choices for residence and land use, including strategies for resource harvesting, friendships, and family ties. Keesing finds it interesting to look at "the way ideas about descent and kinship are *used* – and at the same time, to perceive the role of ideologies about clans or the reincarnation of ancestors in reproducing a system of social relations across the generations" (1976:245). Indeed, this approach serves the case in the Coast Salish world too, as people have attachments and residences in many places, but generally draw hereditary privileges from their descent group and collective rights to land through their residence group.

In my experience, the old Hul'qumi'num term *hwunutsaluwum* which refers generally to the cognatic descent group is not in common usage today. However, the concept is very much an important organizing factor in contemporary Coast Salish social and political life. In his doctoral dissertation on the Musqueam, Michael Kew clearly articulated the contemporary expression of identity and association with this traditional family-group.

> Villagers today refer to large divisions of themselves which more or less conform to that of the bilateral kindred, the *hwunutsaluwum*. The boundaries of these units are not at all precise and to a large degree they are designated by current English surnames. For example, one hears such a unit referred to as 'the Millers' or the "Blanchets'. It might include

> several married siblings and their offspring and grandchildren plus other less directly linked, all resident in the village. The basis of these alignments is the consanguineal kind group and its immediate affines, and the closer the link the more likelihood that it will be meaningful. [...] Not all persons in the village are clearly members of such a 'family', although all have sufficiently close ties to be claimed as members or to align themselves with a large group. (Kew 1970:74)

Kew's description certainly holds true in Island Hul'qumi'num communities, where large families like the Harrises and the Alphonses are significant and influential in local social, political and ceremonial life.

I was unable to re-elicit this term *hwunutsaluwum* from Cowichan Island *Hul'q'umi'num'* speakers with whom I discussed the concept. In one conversation, Abner Thorne and Arvid Charlie gave a different term, *hwnutsalmuhw* (note the *-almuhw* suffix), meaning 'coming from one people', which is not found in the published ethnographies. This term, Arvid said, could be used in a number of ways. People in a family are *hwnutsalmuhw*. Related people sitting together in a big house are *hwnutsalmuhw*. He gave an example of a family who waits outside for all the members of family to arrive before going into the big house together to attend a dance. They are *hwnutsalmuhw*. Arvid, who is one of the 'speakers' in the Coast Salish big house tradition, says that when he goes into the big house, he feels *hwnutsalmuhw* with everyone who is there. He knows and is related to almost everyone. It is not clear to me why this term *hwunutsaluwum* given by Robinson, Jenness, Kew and others is no longer recognized among the native speakers with whom I have talked. It may be that I have not sufficiently canvassed fluent speakers or have not had the opportunity to hear the term in a wide enough variety of spontaneous spoken contexts. My strong suspicion is that language loss is at play, with subtle semantic

categories like this being simply glossed in English by an expansive usage of the term 'family'.

The institution of ownership of productive resource locations by descent groups is hypothesized to have developed over millennia.[43] Prominent Northwest Coast archaeologists such as R.G. Matson, Gary Coupland, Kenneth Ames and others have spent considerable academic energy modelling the long-term development of the distinctive Coast Salish pattern of affluent hunter-fisher-gathers with structural social inequalities (rank and class) based on a number of factors, one of which is that productive, predictable and controllable resource locations came to be owned in this way (Matson and Coupland 1995; Ames and Maschner 1999), challenging long-held assumptions that such social institutions only developed in the context of agricultural economies. The detailed reading of Coast Salish practices related to residence group property confirms the general model. Owned resource locations are indeed commonly geographically localized, highly productive, able to be enhanced by labour or technology, defensible, and often in areas at some considerable distance from the village.

Inheritance plays a key role in the land tenure system for transferring stewardship over particular owned places, and control of access rights to them, from one generation to the

[43] Archaeologists have used the terms "corporate group" and "household" to model archaeologically recognizable social units (Hayden and Cannon 1982; Ames 1995). The relationship of these units to the descent groups and residence groups described here is a difficult one to postulate, because in the concept of a corporate group or household as used by Northwest Coast archaeologists, kinship and residence are both important vectors of social power.

next. Barnett recorded that the eldest son usually inherited title to family hunting, fishing and resource gathering lands, but

> he had to share it with his coheirs unless they, through neglect, relinquished their rights in it. He was sometimes even expected to share hunting lands and certain articles of economic exploitation with village members outside his extended family. It was always understood that he had the right to supervise the use of property nominally owned by him (1955:250).

Though data on this point are not especially clear or comprehensive, it has been suggested that descent group-owned productive plant gathering areas are inherited through the mother's line (cf. Deur 2000:52). Suttles gives the Straits Salish term *chelungun* (*čilɛ'ŋɐn,* as he writes it) which he glosses as 'inherited privileges' to identify a Native category for family ownership of rights to "fishing locations, root beds and clam beds", among other things (1951:55). He also provides the Downriver Halkomelm term *swu'* as reflecting the general notion of 'property' (Suttles 2004:349).

Though the stewardship of these places may be inherited, the places themselves are held corporately by the residence group, and this ownership is inalienable. Boas recognized that descent groups, 'gens' in his terms, were land-owning collectives: "A careful study shows that nowhere the tribe as body politic owns a district, but that each gens has its proper hunting and fishing grounds" (1890:833). Boas (1890:833) went on to describe the Coast Salish principle that ownership of these locations is indivisible and indestructible: "[t]he right of a gens [property owning family group] to the place where it originated cannot be destroyed. It may be acquired by war or by other events territory originally belonging to foreign tribes, and leave its home to be taken up by others; the

right of fishing, hunting, and gathering berries in their old home is rigidly maintained." Collins observed that generally, lands were "inalienable" and rights to them were "acquired by inheritance or by marriage" (1974b: 80).

Common 'Tribal', 'Village' or 'Local Group' Property

In her doctoral dissertation, Sarah Robinson provides an important insight into the distinction between descent groups and residence groups using Hul'qumi'num terms from her Snuneymuxw informants. She says that "a distinction was made by ego between his residence group or 'band' (*nutsuwmuhw*) and his extended family (*hwunutsaluwum*), that group which held corporate rights to certain property" (Robinson 1963:27). The residence group[44], which has been defined in the literature as the 'village', 'local group' or in some cases loosely as 'tribe', holds certain areas of land collectively as commons property.

The common properties of these residence groups are similar to those held by the family groups in that they are largely places for procurement of productive resources, often close

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[44] Robinson (1963:27) gives *nutsuwmuhw* for 'residence group', which I construct as */nuts'a-/* 'one'; */-w-/* possibly from secondary lexical suffix */-uw/*, indicating the derivative or subgroup of something, in this case people; */-muhw/* lexical suffix for 'people'. This term should not be confused with *nuts'uwmuhw*, which linguists Tom Hukari (Hukari and Peter 1995:51) and Donna Gertz (1997:105) give as meaning 'different people, stranger, foreign' from */nuts'/* 'different, stranger', */-uw/* and */-muhw/* being lexical suffixes as above.

Other than Robinson's one reference, there is no unequivocal general term I have found for residence groups such as the village or 'local group', though these English terms are all terms used extensively in the ethnographic literature. However, residence groups are all named, with many of these names taking prominant forms in English. Examples are *Qwam'utsun*, *So'mena* , *Thuq'min* (winter villages) or Cowichan, Chemainus, and Chilliwack (local groups of several villages sharing a common area).

to or in the vicinity of the village or major seasonal camps of that community. An ethnographic account of common property ownership from the last quarter of the 19th-century was provided by Myron Eells who wrote that, for Puget Sound Salish, both land and water areas are community owned (1985:350). Indeed, as I illustrate below, types of resource areas that are owned by the residence groups include hunting territories, clam gathering areas, fishing grounds, camas and wapato plots, berry patches and certain weir sites.

Unlike the family properties which are only a small percentage of the total area occupied by a community, these resource sites are generally larger and make up most of (and prior to the massive depopulation of virgin soil diseases, likely all of) the remaining productive areas in the region occupied by the residence group. In 1877, Gibbs (1877:187) noted that even with warfare and depopulation through smallpox, these common lands were owned down to the last remnant of a tribe.

The stories of the First Ancestors provide a mythic link between the place ancestors have a special connection to and the residence groups in which people chose to live. The oral traditions of these First Ancestors are an important part of the ideological underpinnings of how both the residence and descent groups formed, and through the resource areas used and the skills and technologies these ancestors introduced, provided guidance for what properties each unit holds. In an early piece regarding government and laws on the Northwest Coast, Boas observed that "[t]he Coast Salish derive their claims to certain tracts of land in the same way [as the Kwakiutl] from the fact that the ancestor of each

gens came down to a certain place, or that he settled there after the great flood" (1890:833). As I have shown in chapters 3 and 5, there is also a connection of the residence group to place, through the stories of the First Ancestors and histories of other prominent Indian name holders who came before. Frequently, people tracing cognatic descent from an original ancestor will affiliate with the community (residence group) that the ancestor founded.

Coast Salish people generally recognize that marriage into a community brings with it the rights for the incoming spouse (and his or her children) to take part in the common ownership of community territories. A prominent Chemainus leader explained this principle with his own family, recalling that his wife originally came from Halalt, that her father was from Cowichan, but that she is "100 percent Chemainus" since their marriage. The marriage gives her rights to use the commons property of Chemainus. However, this does not give this individual or other Chemainus members collective rights in Halalt:

> I have come from a position of respect for a people, basically, and that respect has to be that they are a people and a Nation with their own core territory and a land. That's why I keep saying things like if a person married me, like my wife, she comes from Halalt. Just because my wife is from Halalt doesn't mean Chemainus owns Halalt, in terms of a core territory. I have it clear in my mind in terms of how I approach them [13.07.01.-EMM:758-762]

Rights to land come to the person who is marrying into a community, but rights originating in their home community have to be negotiated through relationships with in-laws. It should be noted that this system does not only work with women marrying in, but also men marrying into their wives' community. Roy Edwards from Lamalchi Bay

on Kuper Island married into his wife's community at Chemainus, and rights to that community extended to him through his wife Christine. Pete Seymour emphasized that he would have to 'butter up' his in-laws for access to their areas, but could access other areas (consanguineal) with less trouble. The subtleties of whom a right in the common ownership of residence group land might extend to among non-resident consanguineal or affinal kin is not clear, though I suspect that actual residence is the key. Thus a more restrictive set of rules applies to residence group land as compared to descent group land.

Joint Title to Residence Group Commons Lands

Certain productive resource areas are jointly owned by two or more residence groups. This commonly occurs in areas at some distance from permanent winter villages, where people have long-established amicable use and occupation of an area. Ritual knowledge and physical control over these areas are held by the residents of these communities, and the stewardship and management of these areas are sometimes limited to certain members. Barbara Lane recorded the novel solution that Penelakut and Lyackson hunters worked out for managing the jointly held sea lion hunting area in Porlier Pass. Firstly, only members of these two communities knew the "secret and inherited ritual songs necessary to bring the animal under control" (Lane 1953:76; see also Suttles 1951:110, 397). The Lyackson hunters camped on their "permanent lookout" on the south tip of Valdes Island, while the Penelakut hunters resided at theirs on the north end of Galiano Island. The following description of the hunt shows an underlying principle of respect towards another individual's ritual power and acknowledged rules for sharing jointly held resources, in the face of serious competition for an important resource:

> When the lookouts sighted a sea lion, they called to their camps and canoes were immediately dispatched. There were two men in each canoe, a 'captain' who steered and a spearman. As the canoes approached, the sea lion returned to the water and the chase began. If the first man who speared the animal were a *T'eet'qe'*[Lyackson] man, all the Penelakut canoes would have to abandon the chase and return home. If a Penelakut man struck it first, the *T'eet'qe'* were out of the running.
>
> As soon as the first man had placed his spear, he laid his paddle across the canoe in front of him, took a little stick-and beat on the paddle while he 'sang' (*si'win'*) to the sea lion to calm it and to make it surface again close to the canoes so that his co-villagers could also spear it.
>
> Meanwhile, the "losing" party paddled off some distance, and then laying their paddles across their canoes they took up sticks and sang to make the sea-lion wild, so that he would break away or at least be difficult to subdue. They tried to remain unobserved but the other group was aware of the practice for they did the same thing when the situation was reversed. Proof that such singing was effective was cited: if only one group went out the sea lion was always easier to handle.
>
> After several more of the victorious groups speared the sea-lion, they put their paddles across their canoes, beat on them with sticks, and sang to 'intercept' the song of the opposing group so that the sea-lion would not be 'rough'. They 'named' the tongue, and lips, and hands of their opponents in order to deaden the latter's singing and drumming. (Lane 1953:76-77)

This example demonstrates that there are mechanisms for the joint holding of commons property between residence group communities. It is useful to recall the origin story of the sea lion (discussed at length in chapter 3), which connects these two communities and their special abilities to hunt sea lions through their commonly held charter myth. Other charter myths (for instance the connection between the Cowichan and the Sooke in the *Syalutsa* story also described in chapter 3) likewise frame rationales for jointly held areas. These symbolic references highlight the tight interlinkage of residence, descent, and the importance of the idiom of kin in the joint ownership and, as I will discuss later on, sharing of important resource areas.

Residence groups, like descent groups, are not fixed in time and space, but are flexible, dynamic social structures. To appreciate the complexity of the residence group social order, it needs to be described from a diachronic perspective. Drawing on the understanding of the residence groups of the Island Hul'qumi'num that I have developed over the years, and the excellent discussion provided by Rozen (1985) in his description of each ancient and contemporary named village in the region, I will describe how I believe Island Hul'qumi'num residence groups have developed over the past one hundred and fifty years (see Figure 7.1).

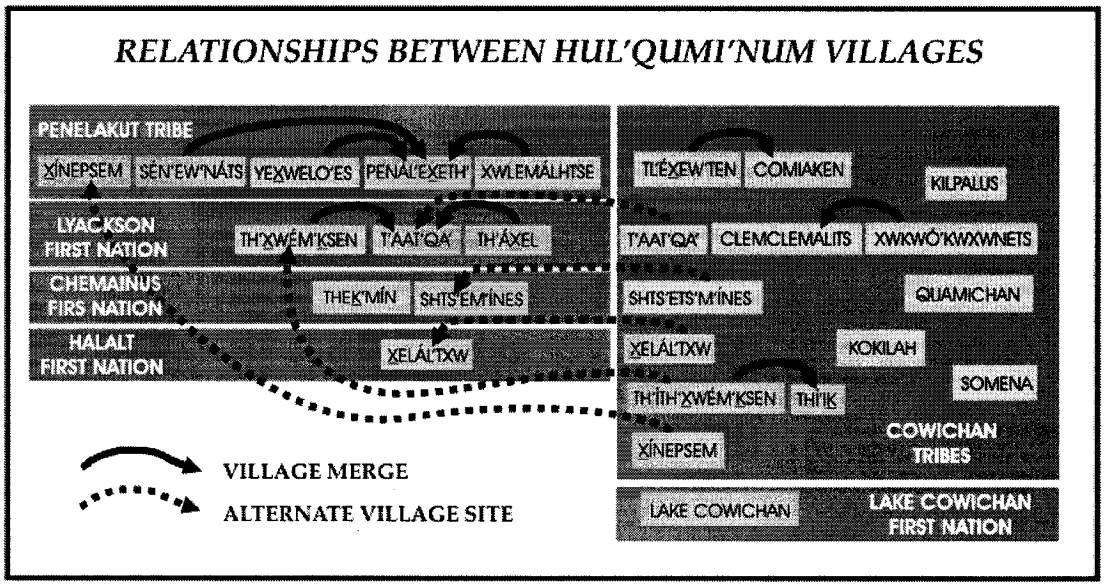


Figure 7.1. Relationship between the Hul'qumi'num villages

Since the early 20th century, the formation of the local residence group has changed in several ways. Following the pattern that is seen throughout the Northwest Coast area,[45] disparate smaller Coast Salish residence groups collapsed into larger village-group units. This process is frequently ascribed to population reduction through localized warfare

[45] To illustrate this general pattern see, for example Blackman (1990:258-260) for the Haida, and Codere (1990:361, fig. 2) for Kwakwaka'wakw local groups.

(Ferguson 1984; Donald 1997 especially chapter 5), and the dramatic impacts of the introduction of virgin soil disease by Europeans (Boyd 1990; 1996). Just as important in the reconfiguration of residence group identity was the creation of Indian Bands by the federal government as the primary administrative and governance body. Indian Bands have come to represent one of the primary residence group identities of Coast Salish people today.

Given that my fieldwork was with the six communities in the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group (Cowichan, Chemainus, Penelakut, Halalt, Lyackson and Lake Cowichan – which I will call Island Hul'qumi'num in this section)[46], the description I provide below is restricted to those communities, though information for other Halkomelem-speaking communities is available in papers by Suttles for the Katize and Burrard (1955; 1996 respectively), Rozen for the lower Fraser and Vancouver (1978; 1985 respectively) and Galloway for the Stó:lō (1993).

Today, Cowichan people recognize six (sometimes eight) 'original' villages within their communities (using the common English spellings): Quamichan, Somenos, Comiaken, Clemclemaluts, Koksilah, and Kanipsim (and sometimes Kilpalus and Theik). Historically there were six other named villages or residence groups in the Cowichan River Valley: *Tl'uxuw'tun*, *T'eet'qe'*, *Xwkwa'qwhwnuts*, *Shts'uts'm'inus*, *Xul'el't'hw*,

[46] I use the term Island Hul'qumi'num here for the communities that I have worked with, though I acknowledge that the Nanoose, Snuneymuxw and sometimes Qualicum and Malahat communities also have linguistic and cultural identity as Island Hul'qumi'num people.

and *Th'ith'xwum'qsun*. Some of these villages (*T'eet'qe'*, *Th'ith'xwum'qsun, Shts'uts'm'inus*, and *Xul'el't'hw*) have the same place name as other well-established villages (*T'eet'qe'*, *Th'xwum'qsun* (both on Valdes Island), Chemainus and Halalt, respectively). Rozen (1985) has speculated that the Cowichan Valley villages were the original villages of these communities, which spread out to their current locations in the late prehistoric or early historic period. Another highly plausible hypothesis, I would suggest, is that people from *T'eet'qe'*, Chemainus and Halalt, who were already established in their villages and went to Cowichan for protection in the early contact period at the height of the Kwakiutl-Salish wars (Taylor and Duff 1956; Mitchell 1989; Galois *et al.* 1994) or for harvesting on the Cowichan River, always returned to their original villages. Further archaeological or historical research may provide insight into the history of these movements.

These residence groups merged with the Cowichan villages recognized today, by or around the last quarter of the 19th century, when the Indian Reserve commissioners were laying out Indian Reserve boundaries. Duff (1964:26) wrote that by 1888 these villages came to be recognized by government as the 'Cowichan Tribes' (see also figure 2.3, above).

The histories of most of the other Island Hul'qumi'num communities follow a similar pattern. Chemainus people still recognize two (sometimes three) residence groups in their community: *Shts'um'inus* at Kulleet Bay, *Thuq'min* at Shellbeach, and sometimes *Hwkwumlehwuthun* at Coffin Point. These are all recognized today as the Chemainus

Indian Band. Penelakut presently has five village sites where people have formed residence groups on historic village and camp sites: Penelakut, *Yuxwula'us, Hwlumelhtsu, Xinupsum* (Galiano Island IR 9) and Tsussie. A sixth historic village site *Sun'uw'nets*, located in what is now the downtown core of the town of Chemainus, was the victim of inter-community violence (as the story in chapter 3 suggests), and according to extensive traditions I have heard from Penelakut elders, remaining villagers were forced to move to Kuper Island by the colonial administration. Lyackson historically was made up of three residence groups (*T'eet'qe'*, *Th'exul*, and *Th'xwum'qsun*) which by the mid-20th century had all aggregated at the village site of *T'eet'qe* at Shingle Point (the place name for which gives its name to the Lyackson Band). Today there are no residence groups of Lyackson people, all of whom have moved to urban centres as their reserve lands on Valdes Island have no electricity, running water or ferry service. *Th'exul* was never made a part of a Lyackson Reserve and has long been a private, non-Native residence. The historic Halalt village on Willy Island recorded by Edward Curtis (1913:39) as being named "*Tsiuhi̱um*" (as he wrote it), and by George Heaton (1860:2, 6) as "*Tsâ-o-kum*".[47] According to Rozen (1985:125), the Halalt people moved to this site in the from their village on the Cowichan River when it was flooded out in the early part of the 19th century. Having had an Indian Reserve also established for them nearby on Vancouver Island near where they had established potato patches, the Halalt people

[47] Though these words are clearly cognate, I did not re-elicit the term. Heaton suggested that *Tsâ-o-kum* meant 'spit' or 'beach', but the terms for these – *s'ulqsun* and *tsetsuw'* respectively (Hukari and Peter 1993:254, 136) do not appear to be unequivocally related. Rozen (1985:124-6), may have not considered Curtis and Heaton's name when he gave the term *Xul'el't'hw* [Halalt] to the village-site on Willy Island, where it seems the name more properly belongs to the people who lived at this locale, and their site of 'painted houses' (the literal namesake of *Xul'el't'hw*) on the Cowichan River.

eventually all moved to their current community at Westholme. Finally, Lake Cowichan is a single residence group with direct connections to historic communities.

As can be seen from this brief description, there is a great deal of complexity to the question of residence groups when seen from a diachronic perspective. Today, community commons properties are recognized as being held by the six Indian Band communities and to a lesser degree the presently recognized residence groups within these Bands.

Logics of Inclusion and Exclusion with Respect to Residence group Commons Lands

In this section, I will discuss the mechanisms and rationales that underlie inclusive and exclusive uses of the common residence group properties. The main basis for inclusion is kinship. Kinship is the central organizing mechanism in coast Salish society and plays a key role in the negotiation for access to resource areas. A further mechanism of control of these areas is the strict regime of private knowledge held about certain areas of land and the resources that are available there. Restricted technical knowledge and proper ritual practice in an area are important ways that the stewards of these commons resource locations limit exploitation by non-locals, to which their community members would object. Residence group commons areas are, at times, also physically defended from trespass, overuse or exploitation by unwanted outsiders. Such outsiders can include people from distant communities who have no kin relationships to local residence group members. They may also be kin who, in times of pressure on local resources, are denied access in favour of the collective right of the residence group members. Trespass rules

were enforced with finality in historic times. Today with the alienation of many resource areas by non-Natives, a broad application of these rules to the general population tend to have little power outside of Indian Reserve lands as the lack of face-to-face mechanisms for social control make them highly impractical to enforce.

Kin and the Idiom of Inclusion

The logic of inclusion in a residence group, besides affiliation by the mere fact of residence is, not surprisingly, largely conceived of in terms of kinship. Relations traced bilaterally through consanguineal kin and through important affinal kin ties comprise an extensive network of people who may be able to claim residence, permanent or temporary (on a visiting basis) and thus access common-resources. Suttles (1960) has provided an excellent discussion of the importance of affinal ties in the subsistence and prestige economies of Coast Salish communities based on his work in the mid-20th century. In this article Suttles emphasized the social and economic importance of visiting in-laws and engaging in formal and informal exchanges of food and wealth with them. Exchanges between co-parents-in-law have created alliances between property-owning families and their communities. The data presented below largely support Suttles' observations.

The moral ethic of inclusion was simply stated by Edmund Lorenzetto, a Stó:lō man who told Duff that there was a general principle that "anything to eat is for everybody" (1952a:77). Duff qualified this moral ideal by carefully making the distinction that areas open to free-use are made so for "all near-by groups" where there are greater degrees of

inter-relatedness through marriage. Indeed, general resource abundance and reciprocal obligations to extended kindred may make it morally unlikely that access to commons areas would be refused to a non-resident who is visiting and who engages in the expected exchanges (cf. Suttles 1960) with their kin.

Marjorie Louie talked about the importance of knowing who your relatives are for knowing what areas could be used for harvesting. Family is the key to being able to harvest in a wide variety of areas throughout the territory and beyond.

> They [the old people] didn't say 'We owned this place'. As they travelled they went to visit relatives, and they'd stop at places where they knew they could gather food. Generation after generation you know, travelling to these places that somebody says now "I own this" [like Indian Reserves]. Generation after generation, they knew where to go to gather food.
>
> It was just passed on. As you were growing up you knew where to go. I didn't realize this until I got into Indian names when my mother-in-law and grandmother-in-law started telling me to write down Indian names. And it showed how everybody was inter-related then, just through the Indian names. Because the woman were admonished to remember who their relatives were, because when she got married she went far away, so they said to remember this. Remember your relatives. When your children are born you name them after your relatives.
>
> My grandmother-in-law went back seven generations and her name came from, what you call that place, Musqueam. That's where her Indian name originated. When the people were dying of all the diseases, these two sisters were brought up by their uncle, so she gave me the Indian name of the man. That's where her name originated from [...].
>
> So you can see why these people now think we own that territory. But it was relationships, everybody was related. Certain time of the year like when the ducks are here, my in-laws knew that a relative in Cowichan would like some ducks. They'd shoot ducks and then travel down to Cowichan. Because the relatives came from there. [LM-i:60-89]

Marjorie makes a fundamental point in drawing the connection between Indian names,

knowing who your family are and access to both residence group commons and family owned lands. It is through this knowledge of one's kin and the prerogatives associated with kin that the tenure system operates. As described in chapter 6, Indian names are strategically given to children, linking them to ancestors who have lived in different parts of the Coast Salish world. An individual may have rights to access resource locations through the acknowledgement of these ancestral connections, in addition to the more direct consanguineal or affinal relations which may also be claimed.

Arvid Charlie also spoke to the importance of family connections, and the strategies that people took to maximize their ability to obtain resources in areas that were outside their own residence group commons or descent group-owned areas:

> In the old days we went to many areas where there were material things we needed for our use. Some of it was not in our, I guess what you'd call our 'core area' today. They were beyond – some of them way beyond.
>
> So, how I was told was to keep peace and be able to harvest those materials, we married off or left a man over there. Married off the girls there, or that particular man over there. So we could have a – I don't know if you can call it family rights or community rights – to be allowed to come in there. [03-04-01-CA-i:222-230]

These examples point to the principle that residence group commons areas are open to residents, and are ideally open to their affinal and consanguineal kin unless they are explicitly closed. The politics of access to these areas is negotiated through making one's residence or kin affiliation clearly known, though names, stories, genealogical knowledge, or ritual practice. Such an idiom of inclusion does not imply that the sites are simply open to all. As I will show later on, these sites are closed unless open to non-kin or non-residents, with serious consequences for those who do not recognize and respect

local protocols.

The Idiom of Sharing within Owned Resource Locations

In an economy that thrives on reciprocal use of owned resource locations, the idiom and practice of sharing are important to maintain opportunity and future access beyond one's own residence group or residence group area. Peter Pierre, a Katzie elder who was an informant for both Diamond Jenness and Marion Smith, told Smith that there was "no feeling of boundaries. Salt water people came up here [to the Pitt River area] to hunt – All my friends came. My country is like a great table everyone comes here to eat. Old people [are] good hearted, glad to see everyone. People from here never went down to get clams, people who visited brought them up and traded them" (Smith 1947 ch.6:3).

Sharing of use-rights to these areas does not create an unrestricted commons resource. Boas, for example, noted that access to these sites was controlled as "each gens [Boas' term for residence group] has its proper hunting and fishing grounds, upon which neither members of other tribes nor of other gentes must intrude except by special permission" (1890:833). Hill-Tout likewise observed that for the popular and distinctive spring salmon runs on the Harrison River (the Harrison River spring salmon have a fatty, golden flesh, unlike many other runs of Fraser River salmon), Chehalis people were paid by visitors for access: "tribes from long distances used to come every salmon season and pay the [Chehalis] a kind of tribute or royalty to be permitted to fish in their waters. Bands from Interior Salish tribes and from far up and down the coast would congregate there in the fishing season. Sometimes disturbances and fights would occur, but the [Chehalis]

were a strong and populous tribe and seem to have been able to more than hold their own with their visitors" (Hill-Tout 1904a:316).

Suttles provides some detail on the sharing of access to resources at individually owned reef-net fishing locations. He observed that while owners were in charge of the fishery at these locations, the crews who fished them could be (and often were) hired from any of the surrounding communities (Suttles 1951:219). Sharing was thus done through hiring wage labour who would get a portion of the catch, rather than granting access of free use.

Suttles' widely reprinted article on Coast Salish strategies of redistribution provides a useful general summary of the sharing of family held resources, and is worth quoting at length here:

> People also shared food with neighbors and relatives from other communities by sharing access to their techniques and/or resources. One conjugal family working alone had the instruments for and equal access to most types of resources within the territory of its community. But some of the most productive techniques required the cooperation of several persons. Moreover, access to some of the most productive sites was restricted by property rights. (1960:300)

Important for the Island Hul'qumi'num groups is Suttles' observation of Cowichan participation in the reef-net fishery (which is often characterized in the secondary literature as having been practised only by Straits Salish people), and the principles of sharing of owned resources: (which were entailed) "Some Cowichans fished in the summer on reef nets belonging to Saanich and some of the Saanich, who had no important stream in their territory, went to the Cowichan River for the fall runs of fish caught at weirs" (1960:300).

Suttles also details important principles of the sharing of access to the owned cranberry bogs of the Katzie: "When outsiders came, they had to get permission from the owners [of cranberry bogs] before they could gather the berries" (1955:26). As long as the berries were ripe, however (and young men were stationed at the bogs to ensure that outsiders did not pick them before they were ripe), "the 'owners' of the bogs did not refuse anyone permission to pick when the berries had properly ripened, nor did they exact any tribute from the outsiders" (Suttles 1955:26). From this, Suttles concluded that part of what made ownership of places like cranberry bogs important was that it enabled "the owners to play the role of hosts. A host at any one time and place is potentially a guest at another," and thus an important part of the potlatch economy (Suttles 1955:26; see also 1960:300).

The Kwakwaka'wakw ('Kwakiutl' in the literature) texts collected in the Boas-Hunt collaboration provide interesting comparative material to consider the ideological links between sharing and ownership within the context of the larger Northwest Coast socio-economic system (Walens 1981:73-81; Goldman 1975:42-44). In Walens' reading of these texts, he sought to define ownership in a Kwakwaka'wakw sense as "the right to accept some substance as a gift from someone else, and then only so that it may be given as a gift [...] To own something is to have the right to give it away" (1981:75). This may be a somewhat overstated view, given the emphasis on Kwakwaka'wakw potlatching that these particular texts represent, however, the reciprocal relationship embedded in the ownership is significant. Walens continues "the people who have the privilege of ownership also have the responsibility of performing the rituals that ensure the

abundance of food" (1981:75). Goldman cites the emphasis in these texts on killing as the appropriate response to trespass. Severe measures were critical, not for limiting access to abundant resources (in fact sharing is a key moral value), but rather, to fulfill obligations of the property-owning *namima* to their non-human ancestors who provide the continuing abundance (Goldman 1975:43-44; see also Boas and Codere 1966:35-36). In the Kwakwaka'wakw worldview, ownership of resources is not only productive for the social groups who own them, but also essential for the continuing ecological stability of the region. I would argue that Coast Salish practices of inclusion and sharing of resources, and the property regimes that surround them, play a similar role in the overall ecological system.

Private Knowledge and Control of Commons-Property

While moral ideals of inclusion of kind and sharing with neighbours represent the frequent, even normative practice around resources, there are mechanisms in Coast Salish society to *control* access to and use of these places. Private knowledge is central among these. Several ethnographers have observed that detailed technical and geographical knowledge about certain owned locations held privately by families acted as a means to prevent outsiders from exploiting resources. Jay Miller, writing about Lushootseed practice in the 19th century, argued that ritual knowledge and the proper engagement with local guardian spirits also contributed to limiting outsiders from harvesting in certain areas (1999:17-18).

Snyder recognized that knowledge restricted access to resources between community-

controlled areas. She observed for Puget Sound Salish that "[i]t was only practical that villagers, whose connections with host bands were the closest exercise exchange prerogatives. They were the ones most familiar with the geography, resources and techniques used in those places" (1964:74). Where village headmen were coordinating access to and exchange of locally owned resources, they had to coordinate with the families who were the local resource owners. She notes that "[i]t was the responsibility of persons through whom privileges were directly derived to advise headmen when these should be exercised, by how many, and exactly by whom" (1964:74).

There is an important relationship between having intimate knowledge of a local territory and being able to successfully play hosts to guests who come to share in the resources of that territory. Hosting and being a guest is a fundamental principle of sharing the resources in a community's territory, and is essential to the ongoing local economy. However, "hosts were not always present to guard against visitors' cupidity because they, themselves, might be off visiting other in-laws at the time. Hosts had the upper hand if they were at home because they controlled knowledge of the territory and the tools and techniques by which it was effectively exploited" (Snyder 1964:390).

In a review of the ethnographic literature, Onat observed that restrictions in the specialized knowledge and technology needed to utilize particular resource areas, within families, restricted others' access to these places (1989:8). Gunther observed for the Klallam, only a few hunters in the village had knowledge of the Olympic Peninsula mountains behind the village (1927:204). Both Suttles and Lane have noted that the

Penelakut and Lyackson people were the only central Coast Salish communities that regularly hunted sea lion (mostly *Eumetopias jubatus* but occasionally *Zalophus californicus*), and followed fixed rules, private knowledge and highly ritualized practice to engage in this hunt (Suttles 1951:110, 397; Lane 1953:76). This form of hunting was only possible at the few Gulf Island locations where sea lions haul themselves out onto rocks. Restricting the ritual knowledge for sea lion hunting effectively controlled the small islets shorelines frequented by sea lions.

Logics and Practices of Exclusion

Though the areas owned by a residence group are common property, they are not completely open for anyone from anywhere to take at all times. While the Coast Salish web of kin affiliation is wide, not *everyone* is interrelated. A general pattern has been observed that people from one Coast Salish community will have long histories of intermarriage into certain neighbouring communities and few if any direct relations with other communities further afield. Dorothy Kennedy has mapped out affinal kin networks in several Coast Salish communities, clearly demonstrating this pattern (2000:323). Unfettered access to these resource areas for 'different people' or 'foreigners' (*nuts'uwmuhw*) such as non-Salish people with whom there are very few if any kin relations, is unlikely indeed. Unless explicit, verbal understandings are reached between *nuts'uwmuhw* and local people, the concept of trespass in these commons areas is physically enforced by residence group members.

Community-owned common areas with 'special' resources were often highly restricted or

regulated vis-a-vis from outsiders. Nooksack people "rigidly excluded some outsiders from hunting mountain goats within their territory" (Richardson 1982:101), a resource associated with hereditary wealth and privilege, with the wool used to make blankets, and the horn to make bracelets and rattles. Marion Smith noted for southern Puget Sound groups that up-river villages allowed people from the salt-water to use their hunting lands and berry picking areas, and only restricted other up-river people from using their hunting grounds, while up-river groups were granted access to vegetable products and shellfish areas by the salt-water communities (1940a:25-26).

Snyder recorded oral histories of Skagit peoples' defence of hunting and fishing areas against "...trespass by uninvited strangers", which they thought of "the same as theft" (1964:432). She used the Skagit term *ch'ech'itsul* [*č'ač'izel*, as she writes it] to describe a system of laws which were understood throughout the region where "any trespasser was expected to be killed and buried on the spot by the first armed Native who saw him" (1964:432). Death was not the only historic solution. In one Skagit story, a boy who became lost at night was construed as a trespasser. The parties, the family of the boy and the owners of land, resolved the 'dispute' by having the boy's family present gifts to the offended land owners. The story "underlines the insistence upon exclusive property rights and clannish suspiciousness about any and all strangers" (Snyder 1964:433).

Comparative Perspectives: Land Ownership on the Northwest Coast

The comparatively extensive notions of property in Northwest Coast cultures are well reported in the ethnographic literature (Jorgensen 1980:135). Sapir (1912:239) noted a

relationship between certain structures in Northwest Coast languages (specifically the complex morphology and syntax of counting different kinds of objects) and the prevalence of property concepts in Northwest Coast cultures. Though focussed entirely on economic relations, Johnson (1986) has shown that on the Northwest Coast (in his study of the Kwakwaka'wakw), the potlatch has been a critical institution for forming and maintaining these property rights. As Suttles (1991) has discussed for the Kwakwaka'wakw, the potlatch can hardly be seen as a purely functional property institution, rather it is deeply embedded in and shaped by discourses of kin, ancestor, myth and spirit power.

One of the challenges in describing and comparing land tenure systems on the Northwest Coast is the ambiguity of the social unit to which property belongs (see also Cove 1982:5). The ambiguity appears at many different levels. For decades, ethnographers have struggled to adequately describe the social units of Northwest Coast cultures, often using the same terms to define different social units. Another source of ambiguity is the uncertainty among anthropologists as to whether property is owned by larger or smaller social units (say 'tribes' versus 'houses'). Ambiguity also appears out of more recent work in areas of the Northwest Coast where traditional economies have been disrupted, and many of the people living in the communities themselves cannot provide clear descriptions (in English) of the historic tenure systems. These ambiguities are not irreconcilable. A clear pattern emerges from a review of the ethnographic literature.

Philip Drucker has formed the generally accepted hypothesis that historically, the "basis

and only political unit within Native Northwest Coast culture was the local group" (1979:87). He defines the local group as having six characteristics, which I summarize below (Drucker 1979:88):

1) kinship unit descended from mythical ancestors
2) ownership of economic resource sites in local group
3) ownership of house sites in local group
4) ownership of ceremonial privileges in local group
5) each local group had a permanently ranked set of statuses
6) each local group was autonomous in decisions of war and peace

It is significant that ownership of resource and house sites are among the features common to local groups throughout the Northwest Coast. From the perspective of the comparative ethnology that Drucker's work is situated in, local group property institutions have long been a distinguishing feature of Northwest Coast hunter-gatherers.

Richardson observed that the northern Coast Salish communities have ownership principles more like their Kwakwaka'wakw and Nuu-chah-nulth neighbours, with "extended-family ownership of extensive hunting lands and fishing areas." The northern Coast Salish communities' extended families, however, were not "corporate ambilineal kinship groups" the property-owning units of their neighbouring groups (Richardson 1982:102).

Thornton documents that for the Tlingit, the corporate group (such as the clan or 'House' which are important Tlingit social units) is the property-owning group, while the family is the property using group. Different families can configure themselves as able to use the different properties owned by the corporate groups to which they can claim a

connection (Thornton 1998:xvii). Thus, as in the Coast Salish case, extensive knowledge of one's kin network is important for any given family to be able to access a diversity of owned resource locations. Writing in the 1940s, anthropologist Walter Goldschmidt recorded similarly for the Tlingit community that property was owned by clans and house-groups, while territories were owned by the 'tribe' (1998:10). The ownership of these different types of property ownership is recorded in Tlingit society by potlatching and totem poles (Goldschmidt *et al.* 1998:15). For a parallel account for the neighbouring Tsimshian, see Garfield and Wingert (1966 :13-15). Titles to land are established when they are publicly announced at a potlatch, and recorded by figures on totem poles that relate to the claims and titles (Goldschmidt *et al.* 1998: 16).

John Cove's discussion of Tsimshian land tenure is parallel to Goldschmidt *et al.* (1998), where the difference in title between 'houses' (*wilp*) (corporate groups) and 'tribes' was akin to the difference between 'fee-simple' and 'sovereign' title (Cove 1982:6). Though useful for illustrating the order and state of property systems in familiar western terms, not too much should be made of a literal parallel in the ways in which property rights and jurisdictional authorities are bundled with these kin-based institutions.

Since Boas (i.e. 1934:37), Kwakwaka'wakw ethnographies have consistently described the *namima* as the basic social unit, which included members sharing "exclusive access to an estate of resource gathering territories" (Lando 1989:7). In his unpublished Master's thesis, Peter Lando developed a careful ethnohistory of this key social unit (the *namima*), and the changes in tenure that have occurred over the past two hundred years

with respect to these property-owning groups. Lando found that in the late 18th century, each village represented one *namima*. Massive depopulation in the 19th century caused *namimas* to join together in new village groups. These new communities engaged in a Euro-Canadian wage labour economy; a shift away from the traditional economy led to a reduction in the importance of the *namima* as an economic force and institution of tenure, but territories were not relinquished. High status individuals "maintained their title to the *namima*'s estate of territories" (Lando 1989:9). As described earlier in the section on the history of Island Hul'qumi'num residence groups, similar social processes occurred in some Coast Salish communities.

There are restrictions on ownership of land properties in Northwest Coast communities. Goldschmidt *et al.* (1998:16) recorded for the Tlingit that: (1) the head of the clan cannot sell his property right, though he may transfer it in a legal settlement to another group and; (2) the head of the clan must allow members of his group use of the properties. Duff observed for the Kitwancool (Tsimshian) that no hunting or fishing grounds, nor any natural resources "in and under the ground" can "ever be cut in half and given to anyone ... even if they own or have power over it" (1956:36). He went on to say that "this law is so severe and powerful that no one from another clan or without clan rights can come to hunt, fish, mine, cut timber, or do any other thing on these lands without the consent of the head Chief and his council" (1956:36). Though rooted in the social organization of clan societies, rather than the more flexible Coast Salish descent and residence groups, these features of property in non-Coast Salish Northwest Coast communities are parallel to those found in the Coast Salish world.

From a comparative perspective, it is clear that Coast Salish people have the same kinds of property institutions as their Northwest Coast neighbours in Tlingit, Tsimshian, Kwakwaka'wakw and Nuu-chah-nulth communities; however, the social institutions in which the property is vested vary, as does the very social structure of these institutions. In Coast Salish communities, I have argued that it is necessary to understand how property in land is vested corporately in descent groups and commonly by residence groups, both of which are underlain by a moral ethic of inclusion and sharing played out within the streams of power conditioned by wealth accumulation and social inequality historically inherent in potlatch economies.

Ethnographic Accounts of Land as Not Owned in Salish Society

There have been two contradictory views in the published literature on Coast Salish customary principles of land ownership. The prevailing view among ethnographers has been that productive resource locations are owned by either particular families or held in common for a community. A contrary view among some has been that Coast Salish people recognize priority rights of access, based on privately held, specialized knowledge about resource harvesting, but there is no right to the land (or water) per se. These ideas are all based on ethnographic accounts from southern Coast Salish communities (as defined by Suttles and Lane (1990)) in Washington state.

Marion Smith, in discussing ideas of property for southern Puget Sound communities argued that land itself was not regarded as a kind of property because, from her findings, only individuals held property.

> Land in itself had no value and the products of the land were beyond the pale of property rights. Since the whole concept of property was individual, lands may hardly be called common property although they were open to what we would designate as common use. If we are to consider them from the view of the Puyallup-Nisqually themselves, they were not property. If the country belonged to anyone at all it was to the dwarfs. Property was that which could be manipulated and raw products became property only when they had been gathered by the individual (Smith 1940b:142).

This explanation stands out as being a rather narrow definition, even by western standards, of 'property'. I will explore this further below.

Elmendorf (1960:268), outlining a sense of tribal territory with particular areas of customary use by members of any given village, concluded that individual

> "[f]amilies, even those ranking highest in the upper social class, never laid claim to clamming or hunting or fishing areas nor did they collect rents or tolls for subsistence use of any areas". As such, "land was not looked on as private property as were slaves, plank houses, canoes, strings of dentalium money. This situation makes any attempt to subdivide the area of Twana occupation into sections owned by the various village communities fairly meaningless" (1960:270).

Such a view of the absence of residence group ownership of lands has also been expressed for individual land ownership within a village. Drawing on the mid–19th century observations of George Gibbs, Gunther wrote that "the Puget Sound tribes in general recognize no individual ownership of land except through occupancy. A house site belongs to an individual as long as he leaves any evidence of a building on it" (1927:188).

In a review of the ethnographic record for Puget Sound, Onat concluded that southern Coast Salish people did not recognize ownership of any specific resource areas, rather

"certain families and individuals in the families were considered the caretakers or stewards of particular localities and the resources and powers associated with them" (1984:90). Over the long term, she argued, this pattern of stewardship became "traditionally and habitually tied to certain families" who came to possess "specialized knowledge and technology in respect to a limited number of resources per individual", which in her view "achieved much the same end" as ownership (1984:92). Like Smith, Onat predicates her assessment of the institution of property in land on a narrow view of western notions of ownership.

Richardson (1982:102) has argued that the concepts of "ownership of resources and territory" were shared among the central Coast Salish groups. It is significant that the southern Coast Salish communities, such as those in Puget Sound, have tended to exhibit different patterns. An important question here is one of history. On the face of it, this variation occurred either because of important pre-contact differences in social organization, or due to the different colonial histories of the Treaty and non-Treaty Groups in Washington state and British Columbia, which roughly correspond to the central/southern Coast Salish divide.

Though I do not have further first hand data on the southern Coast Salish to more extensively explore these relationships, an important factor may be that many of the communities discussed above signed treaties with the United States government in the mid-19th century. There may have been less need to articulate connections to 'lands claimed' in the conversations with these anthropologists if their Coast Salish consultants

at the time were largely unconcerned with reconciling titles outside of Indian Reservation lands.[48] I would argue that these anthropologists' observations that there are no institutions of land ownership among the southern Coast Salish are not generalizable to the central Coast Salish communities to the north, whose land tenure system I have framed here, and are inconsistent with the pattern of Northwest Coast land ownership generally. Given the large number of specific examples of descent and residence group owned land provided below, and the detailed descriptions of the land tenure system described in the sections above, I have concluded that the reported absence of property in land among southern Coast Salish may be an artefact of euro-centric definitions of property that miss the character of the indigenous institutions of stewardship and rights.

A Detailed Reading of the Ethnographic Evidence for Property in Land

Initially, I had hoped that this chapter would contain a detailed description and accounting of the many descent group and residence group properties recognized by Island Hul'qumi'num community members, as evidence to support the model of land tenure I have provided above. I am unable to report on the extent of my own data in this regard for two reasons. The first is that for many of the corporately held descent group properties, private knowledge is an important aspect of control. In many cases, knowledge of the precise location of an area, and how and what is harvested there, is kept confidentially in families and not commonly disclosed to outsiders. More importantly, as

[48] This was not universally the case in this region, as several Coast Salish tribes in Washington State were not included in these historic treaties and have struggled for tribal recognition and the delimitation of a tribal land base ever since (Tollefson 1992).

I will discuss in the conclusion to this chapter, this kind of detailed specific information is very much the object of current legal discourses about Aboriginal land title and resource rights in Canada. The leadership of the Island Hul'qumi'num communities have elected to keep this information confidential. What is available for analysis and discussion, however, is the ethnographic material already in the public record. Below, I provide a close reading and accounting of this material, with the intent of providing specific examples of the kinds of resource areas held by descent groups and residence groups. I present, where I can, the information as it appears in the original source, so the reader may have a sense of the context in which it was written. What I have found overwhelmingly supports my model of descent and residence groups as the primary social units for ownership of resource harvesting places.

Ethnographic Review of Descent Group-Owned Resource Sites

As I review in detail below, the types of descent group-owned marine, intertidal and riverine resource areas include clam gathering areas, raised duck-net sites, bird-nesting areas, islets for sea-mammal hunting, reef-net fishing sites, fishing rocks in the Fraser Canyon, fish weir sites on the Cowichan River, sturgeon trap sites and some of the small fishing streams and bays. Descent group-owned land mammal hunting areas include pitfall sites for deer and elk, mountain goat areas, and certain controlled smaller watersheds for hunting. Owned horticultural sites include camas and fern beds, cranberry bogs, and wapato patches, among others. Essentially, as Homer Barnett has summarized with an example from the Sliammon community,"all of the food-gathering places were named, owned, and occupied in the summer season by individual families" (1955:29).

Not every resource harvested has an area which is corporately owned by descent groups, and those productive resource areas that were held by descent groups make up "only a small percentage of a given resource within a territory" (Richardson 1982:101). However, those areas which are owned are an instrumental element of the production of "wealth and prestige", rather than "a prerequisite for survival" (1982:101).

Clam Gathering Areas

Particular productive resource locations, such as certain clam beds, are also owned and cultivated by certain families. Robinson (1963:19) recorded that "exceptionally good clam beds" were owned by individual Snuneymuxw families. Bernhard Stern who worked with the Lummi in the 1920s further detailed this practice:

> They [Lummi family owners] took the largest rocks that were in the clam bed and moved them out to extreme low water marks, setting them in rows like a fence along the edge of the water. This made clam digging very easy compared to what it had previously been because there are only small pebbles and sand to dig in. (1934:47)

Stern made a point of mentioning that this kind of productive, cultivated clam area that was descent group-owned was not typical for all beaches, rather it was reserved for particular locations important to a family, while most other clam beds were largely open for other community members to use.

Suttles also mentioned that "a few of the best" clam beds were owned by families (1951:58; 1960:300). He enumerated and described particular beds belonging to Samish, Lummi and Semiahmoo families (Suttles 1951:68-69). He described, for one of these island locations, how several families can own individual beds, and the harvesting from

these beds was supervised – in the case he describes – by an elder woman in the owning family. The beds are inherited, but Suttles did not record in what way. Indeed, as present-day shellfish aquaculture practices in this same region show, beach locations can be enhanced and used productively year after year, through proper preparation and aeration of the substrate and selective harvesting of the mature clams.

Raised Duck-Net Areas and Bird-Nesting Grounds

Like clam beds, certain duck harvesting sites are also owned by families. An important method used to hunt ducks was to raise a net on permanently installed poles in a location where the ducks would pass through and catch them in the net. There are a limited number of locations in which this highly productive method was practical, and Suttles and Barnett have recorded that these locations were owned by particular families (Suttles 1951:72; 1955:26; 1960:300; Barnett 1955:251). Waterfowl eggs were also harvested, though few ethnographers detailed this practice. Robinson (1963:19) observed in the Snuneymuxw community that, "bird-nesting grounds with eggs" were owned by individual families.

Sea-Based Hunting Areas

Barnett (1938:130; 1955:251) records sites for hunting seals (mostly *Phoca vitulina*) as property owned by individual families. His specific example was a small "sealing island" just off Cape Mudge (*mutl'nech* 'calm from behind' in Island Comox Salish, Mitlenatch Island in English) which was owned by three Comox Salish families who lived near the mouth of Campbell River (Barnett 1955:25). Rose Mitchell, from

Sliammon, told a story of how this island was formed when Crow's canoe was transformed into stone by the Transformer. The berries on the island came from Crow's basket, which in turn had its warp and weft made of snakes which also still live on the island (Kennedy and Bouchard 1983:105). There appears to be a significant parallel between the way this story refers to the three Comox Salish families' ownership of the *mutl'nech* area, and the connection made in the mythic Stó:lō stories connecting resource sites to particular families through the transformations of *Xeel's* (Thom 1998).

Land-Based Hunting Areas

Owned Mountain goat (*Oreamnos americanus*) hunting sites in mainland Coast Salish areas "were divided up among a comparatively few families" (Barnett 1938:130). Barnett (1955:23) observed for the Klahuse, Sliammon and Sechelt that hunting sites "in the best places" were "owned or controlled" by individual families. Non-owners who wanted bears or mountain goats, "had first to apply for permission from the nominal owner of the land, who would accompany him... it was a serious matter to proceed without asking" (1955:252). Robinson (1963:19) noted that the rights of ownership to "mountain goat mainland crags" were held by individual families. Mountain goats live in very steep habitats, and often congregate in the spring around salt-licks. Their wool was very important for weaving prestigious and valuable *swuqw'a'lh*, the Coast Salish mountain goat wool blanket (Gustafson 1980; Johnson and Bernick 1986; Wells 1969; 1970; Kissell 1929) and for adorning the fringes of ceremonial *shulmuxwtsus* rattle, a hereditary privilege of certain families.

For ungulates such as elk and deer, Barnett recorded that hunting sites such as pitfalls and deadfall traps were properties owned by individual families (1938:130; 1955:241). William Lomas, an Indian Agent who lived for many years in the Cowichan Valley at the end of the 19th century, described in a December letter (1883) to the Superintendent of Indian Affairs something of what he had experienced of this system of hunting territories in the vicinity of Cowichan Lake:

> In this hunting each family has its particular district to hunt over. This mutual arrangement of proprietorship has passed from father to son for generations, and trespass seldom occurs, indeed I have found it difficult to get an Indian to go with us over the hunting grounds of another.

In my own work with Hul'qumi'num elders, it was reported that a few of the watersheds around Lake Cowichan were the property of certain families, while others were open to the whole Cowichan community. The following recorded discussion between Angus Smith, Dennis Alphonse and myself is an illustrative example of the way family hunting systems continue to be understood today.

> AS: The hunting territory was originally... Each family has their own hunting territories in Cowichan. Nobody can go in there. That's the same way with Lake Cowichan. There was only four of them, one from Cowichan, *Qwam'utsun* [Quamichan] and *Lhumlhumuluts* [Clemclemaluts] and Qw'umi'iqun [Comiaken] can go up there and hunt. They're strict on their hunting. If anybody went...anyone can ask them if they can go up there. You've got to get permission from them to go up there. These people used to go up there on a canoe. So that was his own hunting territory. This old man from Cowichan.
>
> There was some people that lived there in that area where that creek comes down. There was bighouses there. The *Qwam'utsun*. They even called those places like that, like *Qwam'utsun* [Quamichan], *Lhumlhumuluts* [Clemclemaluts], *Qw'umi'iqun* [Comiaken], *Xinupsum* [Kenipsen] [all names of Cowichan villages near the mouth of the River]. There was quite a few people lived there but this one family's hunting spot was that one place. That belongs to the Cowichan people.

BT: Were the other mountains in other places also family hunting territories?

AS: Well, in that area? I don't know if there's any other place in that area. But over across, on this side is a place they call... *Xwaaqw'um* [place name for area east of Youbou on the north side of Cowichan Lake meaning 'place of mallard ducks']. Yeah, right there. That's the creek next to Honeymoon Bay. Not Honeymoon Bay but Youbou, the mill. Just past that. There's a creek there, just past Youbou.

DA: A lot of Cowichan hunting?

AS: That's another hunting, everybody goes in there, it's open for them to hunt.

BT: So some of the places were open to everybody and some of the places were restricted?

AS: Some of them were really strict on their hunting. [AD-PR-SA-i:822-856]

Privately owned family ungulate hunting areas are not common in the literature, but the area around Cowichan Lake was recorded by an early observer, Robert Brown, who said that "one or two Samena families hunt on Cowichan Lake in the autumn... [and that the Somenos]...are the only tribe to frequent the upper waters of the Cowichan River." (Brown 1864:2; cited in Rozen 1985:188). This observation is further recognized by an intriguing short story told by Abner Thorne about the defence of these family hunting grounds.

There is a story of, I guess even with the arrival of firearms or rifles or whatever it was that they used. I don't know which mountain it was but these two Cowichan met, and I guess this guy knew that was this guy's hunting ground. They each put their gun on them, you know. They stood there for I don't know how long, you know. I was thinking they were better that they didn't fire at each other. So they, I guess they were particular. Yeah, they were particular about who was on the territory. [TA-AD-SA-i:129-168]

These rules around hunting grounds are understood in the broader context of community

commons hunting territories, which are discussed in the next section below.

Productive Plant Gathering Areas

Starchy plants have long been an important part of the Coast Salish diet and economies (Turner 1995:42; Spurgeon 2003:238). Such plants are not found growing widespread throughout the region, but are abundant in localized areas such as meadows, islets, fields and marshes. Douglas Deur has recently argued that the importance of the production of these plants in Northwest Coast societies has been under-emphasized by ethnographers and that indigenous horticultural practices, including transplanting, weeding, and selective harvesting among others, were a part of a Northwest Coast gardening (2000). Ownership of these garden plots was an important element in this horticultural system. Drawing largely on the work of Wayne Suttles, Deur summarizes for the Coast Salish ten species that were consistently identified as being:

> grown in plots that were owned by individuals or families, and inherited through longstanding systems of land tenure. These included blue camas (*Camassia quamash*), giant camas (*camassia leichtlinii*), nodding onion (*Allium cernuum*), Hooker's onion (*Allium acuminatum*), rice-root lily (*Fritillaria lanceolata or Fritillaria camscatcensis*), tiger lily (*Lilium columbianum*), bracken fern (*Pteridium aquilinum*), wapato (*Sagittaria latifolia*), bog cranberry (*Vacciniuim oxycoccus*), and an unidentified 'wild carrot' (possibly *Potentilla anserina* ssp. *Pacifica* or *Conioselinum pacificum*) (Deur 2000:224).

Jenness (1935b:10) saw that for the Snuneymuxw, "every family had its own bed of camas on Gabriola Island", while Saanich 'houses' each owned camas beds on Galiano and neighbouring islands. Barnett recorded that "root plots were held in severalty by families" (1938:130; 1955:251). Suttles mentioned that "a few of the best" root beds were mentioned by his Samish and Saanich informants as being "privately owned and

inherited beds" (1951:58), (see also Suttles (1960:300) and Turner (1995:43)). Suttles gave an excellent detailed example of the ownership of a small island (Mandarte Island in Haro Strait) by three Saanich people. The best beds on the island were marked by rocks to show they were owned. The island was burned at the end of the season for maintaining productive camas growing soils (1951:60). June Collins reported a similar patterns for the Upper Skagit:

> Land was divided into individual plots in these prairies, marked by a stick at the four corners. A daughter inherited the right to obtain roots from one plot from her mother... Use rights were based on descent; during the late summer women with such rights came from widely distant villages to the plot of their mother... each plot was three to four acres in size. (1974b:55)

Simon Pierre of Katize told Suttles that some wapato patches belong to families (though others were held in common for the whole tribe). Simon named nine patches that he could claim through his father's family. A family could gain a seasonal claim of ownership of a wapato patch from the commons "by clearing tracts, several hundred feet long, of other growth so that the roots could be gathered more easily", but once the season ended, it would again become "common property" (Suttles 1955:27; see also 1960:300).

Cranberry bogs are another property owned by families (Suttles 1955:26), though as I note below, they are often the collective property of a community. Suttles briefly mentioned fern beds as being "owned by extended families with control exercised by individuals" (1960:300). Finally, Robinson (1963:19) described "sizable marshes" [likely for cranberries] and "Indian potato patches" [likely wapato] as being owned by individual families. Historically, the ownership of these places would have been

economically important, as starchy foods are nutritionally important and that they are not extensively found throughout the territory.

Fraser Canyon Fishing Rocks

The Fraser Canyon, between Hope and 4 ½ Mile Creek is an extremely important and productive location for Coast Salish salmon fishing, particularly for the large Fraser River sockeye runs, but also some smaller spring salmon runs.[49] The steep, rocky canyon is lined with small pools and back-eddies that the salmon rest in on their way up the giant river. At certain times in summer and early fall, the hot wind blows through the canyon allowing caught salmon to be spliced and hung on racks to dry for storage in the winter. The combination of high salmon availability and the quick and efficient ability to store the caught salmon has made this area second to none for salmon production by Coast Salish people. There is one important constraint on the harvesting of salmon in this area. The geography of the canyon creates channels, bays and back-eddies in certain areas. To be able to access these areas, small fishing platforms are built over the swift, turbulent waters of the river. In the past, dip nets were primarily used to take salmon from these platforms,. Today this practice is supplemented by floating out small set gill nets. The sites where these fishing platforms could be built have long been the owned property of certain families.

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[49] In addition to being a centre for descent group-owned fishing sites, this area has been important in the legal landscape of Canada, as it is the site where Dorothy Van der Peet was charged with selling fish, resulting in a landmark decision of the Supreme Court of Canada (*R. v. Van der Peet* [1996] 2 S.C.R.507) which gave clarity to a broad range of Aboriginal rights issues.

Duff (1952a:19) described ownership of fishing-rocks in the Fraser Canyon area, which he says were owned by Tait (the 'upriver' group of Stó:lō) families. At these locations, fishing platforms called *láxel* in upriver *Halq'eméylem* were built at named places. These places, like the reef-net fishing locations described below, were managed by the head of the family. The moral standard for control of access to these sites was that the owner was "considered extremely selfish if he forbade anybody, related or not, reasonable use of the station" (Duff 1952a:77).

Fishing Streams and Bays

Though the individual sites in the Fraser Canyon may compromise the densest concentration of descent group-owned properties, there is a more general pattern of ownership of small, productive streams and bays by individual families. Suttles was told by Simon Pierre that for the Katzie, dip-netting locations on the streams are not individually owned as among the upper Stó:lō, but rather "the streams themselves were the property of the several Katzie 'families,' and an outsider could not fish anywhere on them without first receiving permission" (1955:22). Barnett provides a detailed description of the Klahuse families' ownership of the smaller streams and creeks draining into Toba Inlet. There were four families who controlled these streams, each family having between one and three streams or creeks for fishing (Barnett 1955:27). Barnett describes a similar practice of family ownership of small bays by individual Sechelt families.

Sturgeon Traps

Sturgeon (*Acipenser transmontanus*) are large sedentary fish that occupy the muddy bottoms of the Fraser River. Sturgeon can live for over one hundred years and are a food enjoyed by Coast Salish people. Though they can be harvested by probing with long spears along the river bottom (as described by Lord 1866:183-186; Stewart 1977:68-71), they may also be taken in a special trap in calmer, shallow river areas. Suttles (1960:300) mentions that for the Musqueam, sturgeon trap areas were owned by extended families.

Reef-Net Fishing Sites

The reef-net fishery is a particularly well documented example of family ownership, where named anchor points off Point Roberts and other locations were owned by families who had exclusive use of them during the reef-net fishing season (Stern 1934:126; Jenness 1935b:25, 26, 52). These sites were managed by "an individual who was a direct descendant of the former owners. These individuals permitted their near relatives to operate nets within their premises....[The] fishing rights are inherited in the immediate family" (Stern 1934:126). Barnett mentions that these reef-netting sites were marked off by cedar-block buoys to distinguish family ownership (1955:252).

Suttles (1951:161-222; 1960:300) provides the longest and most detailed description of the reef-net fishery available in the literature, based on his extensive fieldwork on this topic. In his study, Point Roberts is identified as a key reef-net location where sites were

owned mainly by Straits Salish families.[50] He recorded that "every reef-net location had an owner who had inherited it from his ancestors" (Suttles 1951:161). These owned reef-net locations were segments of the reef to which each family, under the guidance of the owner who was the 'captain', would go annually to harvest the running salmon. He described the practice of reef-net fishing in some detail, and enumerated the owned reef-net locations for each community that he studied. The evidence presented by Suttles suggests that these individual owners are also the heads of houses in the winter village (1951:218). Suttles also considered the evidence to ascertain whether ownership is by individual or by family. He concluded that "ownership can best be treated as if it were individual, recognizing that the owner may have felt obligations toward kinsmen who might be co-heirs but not co-owners" (Suttles 1951:222).

Suttles provided interesting detail on how these locations are inherited, and how disputes over multiple claims to a single location are resolved. Individual owners could claim rights to a location from their own inheritance or through their wives. There was general knowledge in the community of who owned locations. Disputes between individuals are resolved through hosting a community gathering where 'witnesses' are called and a 'speaker' is hired (usually a knowledgeable old person) to publically recount the 'history' of the inherited privilege (Suttles 1951:215-216).

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[50] In the 1980's, Washington State closed the Aboriginal reef-net fishery at Point Roberts to increase the availability of fishing locations for the canneries (Suttles 1951:219; Clark 1980), a closure which survived a treaty-based court challenge by a group of Lummi reef-net site owners (*United States v. Alaska Packers' Assoc.* 79 F. 152, U.S. Court of Appeals, 1879).

Fish Weirs

As I discuss in the next section, many ethnographers working in Coast Salish communities have argued that generally weir sites are the collective property of the community. However, David Rozen has provided a detailed picture of individual ownership of weirs on the Cowichan River. The late Abraham Joe (from Somenos) identified for Rozen 12 named weir owners, and the locations of their weirs with respect to their community. This information is summarized in Table 7.1.

Table 7.1. Weir owners and the location of their weirs according to place name (from Rozen 1985).

Weir-site Owner	Placename of Weir-site	General Location	Rozen 1985
Syultiim	*hwqw'um'qw'um'iimut* 'place to pull out of water'	the old part of *Qwam'utsun* village	p. 172
Quy'q'ulenuxw	*hwqim'ukw'um* 'octopus rock'	near *Qwam'utsun* village	p. 174
Titeyxwuletse'	*siyey'qw* 'burned-over place'	west of *Qwam'utsun* village	p. 178
Shhamuquthut	*So'mena* area	near *S'omena* village	p. 192
Xulhq'num	*So'mena* area	near *S'omena* village	p. 192
Shmaqwuthut	*So'mena* area	near *S'omena* village	p. 192
Jim *Yula'xw*	*So'mena* area	near *S'omena* village	p. 192
Ts'uyximulwut	*qwum'tsul'asum'* 'hugging the face'	upriver from S-pool	p. 198
Eyuxwun (from West Coast), through his Cowichan wife	*qwum'tsul'asum'* 'hugging the face'	upriver from previous weir at S-pool	p. 199
Skw'ul'xil'um	*ts'alha'um* 'place of maple leaves'	Tzartlam IR 5	p. 204
Qixuletse	*shul'u* 'penis'	Kakalatza IR 6	p. 205
Siyaluqwuthut	*Sqwuts* area	100 m downstream from Skutz Falls	p. 209

Rozen gives further details provided by Abel Joe, Abraham Joe (*So'mena*) and Arthur Joe on some of the ideology behind the ownership of at least some of these weir sites along the Cowichan River. For the weirs constructed in the *So'mena* area, the owners had to have "a direct or real relationship by blood to *Syalutsa*", the First Ancestor for the area discussed at length in chapter 3, who was the first to erect a weir and who "tied his first baby daughter (in a cradle basket) to the bottom end of his weir and she was transformed into salmon by *Xeel's* " (Rozen 1985:192), thus mythically linking him and his descendants to the salmon who return to this productive location.

Though inheritance is largely the mechanism by which use rights in respect of ownership are exercised, in this detailed examples of family weir ownership it can be seen how marriage also brought rights of use to the spouse who marries in to the property-holding family. The example of *Eyuxwun,* given in the table, a West Coast man who married a Cowichan women and had rights to construct a weir at her descent group-owned spot on the Cowichan River, is a case in point (Rozen 1985:199).

Ownership of Lands Within The Village

There is one class of family property – house sites in a village – for which there is no clear consensus on how historic property relations were practised. Gunther observed that for the Klallam, a house site within a village was owned by an individual family as long as they occupied the area (Gunther 1927:128). Barnett observed to the contrary that, for Snuneymuxw villages, "there were no boundaries or property limits separating the houses within [the] villages" (Barnett 1955:23). Today, as I will discuss later in this chapter, the

system of Certificates of Possession which are permitted under the Indian Act is a new system of tenures for modern house-site locations.

Current Reflections of the Family Property System

Ownership of family properties outside the Indian Reserve system is still active in some areas of the territory today. Frank Norris talked about the respect that elders still give to these properties:

> And the elders are very respectful on territories that were in possession of certain families. And even when I was dealing with Galiano for the parts there, we went and talked to several elders. [...] We were shown "Oh yeah, yeah, that's so and so's. [...]". And right away you know, the stories are still there and who owned certain little things and stuff like that. [13.02.01.-EMM:338-344]

Bierwert (1999:228-229) has described how one Stó:lō leader, Sonny McHalsie, has documented and maintained detailed records of fishing site owners along the Fraser River. During the time I previously spent doing work with Stó:lō people, it was clear that these customary properties are very significant in the lives and economies of Stó:lō families. They are sometimes hotly contested, as people work through their family lineages, and, I have heard at times, have even been defended at gunpoint. In Island Hul'qumi'num territory practical control of much of the land has been put in the hands of private, non-Native settlers who hold fee-simple titles. This mass privatization has, over time, resulted in ancient descent group tenures in off-reserve areas not being as vigorously or publicly debated and exercised as those on lands less radically alienated. However, as Frank Norris said, this descent group ownership system is still known and respected throughout the Island Hul'qumi'num community today.

Residence group Commons Property Resource Sites: An Ethnographic Review

There have been far fewer kinds of residence group properties described in the ethnographic literature than for descent groups. Coast Salish residence groups have been recorded as having hunting territories, clam beaches, fishing grounds, camas and wapato areas, berry patches and weir sites. Below, I have reviewed this literature to provide detailed picture of the kinds of areas held. These areas tend to be close to the winter village or major seasonal camp sites occupied by the residence groups. The description provided here, from a close reading of the ethnographic literature, is intended to provide a picture of the historic practice that underlies peoples' contemporary practice, understandings and experiences.

Hunting Territories

Most hunting areas, other than those few watersheds that are held by residence groups, are held in common by residence groups. Jenness pointed out this distinction between residence group properties and places like "the sea near the villages, the hunting grounds and berry patches round about, [which] were common property; any villager, whatever his station in life, might fish and hunt wherever he wished within the village territory" (1935b:53). Mr. Johnson, one of Jenness' Cowichan informants elaborated: "The six villages at Duncan formed a unit. Families from any one could hunt anywhere in the surrounding territory, for the villages did not separate hunting-grounds" (1935a:278). George Quakastun (who along with Fred Modeste's great grandfather *Ts'ustseemulthw* had visited King Edward on behalf of the Cowichan in 1906) confirmed this to Jenness, saying "In the old days each [Cowichan] village kept to its own part of the river and did

not poach on the territory of other villages. Hunters, however, might go anywhere" (1935a:278).

Duff (1952a:20) recorded for the Tait (one of the Stó:lō groups), that while hunting-grounds were not strictly delimited, " hunting boundaries of adjacent tribes that were somewhat more strict" were respected. He also observed that hunting-grounds were held in common (1952a:77). Certain confined locations were set up to drive deer into nets, which Suttles records "belonged to the community; anyone could use one" (though of course, the nets themselves were the property of the individuals who made them) (1960:300).

Marion Smith recognized that southern Puget Sound groups applied a "hunting territory concept ... to a large part of the actual area of the upper [Puget] Sound country [even though] it was utilized by a very small percent of the populations" (1940b:27). Elmendorf was informed that "any Twana was free to hunt where he pleased within Twana territory [the Twana being a collection of several residence groups in the Hood Canal area]. There was no clearly expressed village or individual ownership of hunting land" (1960:266).

It is interesting to note the different perspectives of these observers, with many of them claiming there were no individual family (residence group) properties. It may be that in some communities there are no individually owned hunting areas. It may also be that ownership of some areas is controversial within communities (as intangible properties

such as Indian names can be today), and that the people who were informing these anthropologists were not wanting to validate title claims which they did not agree with.

Clam Gathering Areas

Unlike hunting territories, there was little disagreement that there were both common-area and residence group owned clam beds. Stern noted that while exceptional clam beds were cultivated and owned, "other clam beds are used by everyone in the tribe" (1934:47). Barnett recorded that "clamming places were free to all" in a tribe to use (1938:130; 1955:251). Though Suttles specified that certain productive clam beds belong to individual families, "most shellfish beds were open to anyone" (1951:68). Elmendorf (1960:266) confirmed Suttles' observations for the Twana, where he identified that within Twana territory,"canal-shore sites" were free for any Twana to use, other than those specific sites to which particular families held customary rights of exclusive use.

Fishing Grounds

Barnett recorded that for the Klahuse living around Toba Inlet, the Toba River was the main river in the area that was held in common, where "almost every family, whether it had rights elsewhere not, set up camp here for fishing for herring and other fish." (1955:27). As discussed above, this common territory was held alongside residence group properties made up of many of the smaller streams and creeks draining into Toba Inlet.

Sturgeon (*Acipenser transmontaus*) fishing sloughs (as distinct from certain sturgeon

basket-trap descent group areas) were held in common by Stó:lō villages (Duff 1952a:19, 77). Suttles recorded that 'cod locations', often rocky reefs where these bottom-fish live and are available throughout the year, are well known but not privately owned; "anyone could fish there.... any time he wished" (1951:126). Several Hul'qumi'num elders recalled that Lyackson people had a fishing reef in the Strait of Georgia near Texada Island. Abner Thorne said "it was for rock cod and other fish. They could define it as their own sole jurisdiction" [TA-MR-SA-i:896-89 and 13.07.01.-EMM:63-66].

Camas & Wapato Gathering Areas

Suttles (1951:60) suggested that "perhaps most" of the camas (*Camassia quamash*) beds "were open to anyone", citing several examples of beds on the Gulf and San Juan Islands that, though located near beds owned by particular families, were considered common property (1951:60). The same was cited for wapato (*Sagittaria latifolia*) patches around Pitt Lake (in the lower Fraser River region), most of which were held in common by the Katzie, though some belonged to families, and seasonal claims to tracts of the commons areas could be made through clearing land for more productive root growth (Suttles 1955:27). Collins wrote that 'meadows' within the territory of the Skagit, which would have had these and other important plants, were owned by villages, and these were inalienable (1974b:80).

Berry Patches

Duff (1952a:77) recorded that berry patches were open to nearby communities to use. Berry patches within the territory of the Skagit were owned by villages, and these were

inalienable (Collins 1974b:80).

Weir Sites

Jenness recorded that for the Cowichan, a weir belongs to the family who builds it, but "other men in the same community might set their own traps at the weir as soon as the owners had satisfied their needs" (1935b:25, 52). Suttles' evidence is largely consistent with this, but he added that since almost everyone was involved in building a weir, "everyone therefore had the right to take fish from it" (1951:149). One informant clarified that "[t]he trap belonged to the whole tribe. One person who understands it is the head man but they got company to build it. Everybody puts his hand into making it" ('Washington' from Lummi quoted by Suttles 1951:149). Information for the weirs owned by Chilliwack communities is consistent with these accounts (Duff 1952a:62, 77). Barnett mentioned that for the Snuneymuxw, weirs were "for the use of anyone in the village" (1955:251), and that the only salmon weir on the Nanaimo River was controlled by the *Saluxwum* village of the Snuneymuxw community (1955:22). Elmendorf's (1960:269) information from Twana communities corroborates these accounts in saying weirs were "the communal property" of village members.

As mentioned in the section above, however, detailed information from Abraham Joe (from *So'mena*), who worked with David Rozen in the 1970s and 1980s, challenges the view that all weir sites were strictly common property, as much of the evidence above would suggest. For at least the weir sites on the Cowichan River, a parallel to the Fraser Canyon fishing platform site ownership is apparent. On the Cowichan, a weir was owned

by an individual heir who would control and direct its use. This individual would, according to the sharing ethic of the community, allow others to harvest from the weir when he was not using it.

Conclusions: Present-day Issues in Coast Salish Property Relations

While the bulk of the information used as the foundation of this discussion of Coast Salish descent and residence group property rests in records and recollections of historic practice, I wish to conclude with a discussion of an important and current aspect of the expressions of these institutions in contemporary life: the ownership of lands on Indian Reserves. I describe how forms of property described in the *Indian Act* have been absorbed into Coast Salish property institutions, and the challenges of reconciling these systems with conflicting idioms of individual property and residence group property, Indian Band administrations and traditional residence group social formations, and the ethic of sharing. I conclude with a discussion of how disruptions in local social and knowledge systems have created inter-generational challenges in maintaining customary laws, practices and protocols related to land ownership, and point to the ways historic land tenure institutions have become an important aspect of current legal discourses about Aboriginal title and rights.

The creation of Indian Reserves and the threat of pre-emption of lands that were not 'cultivated' by Hul'qumi'num people created ripples in the customary tenure system. Community commons areas had to be settled and ideally (in the eyes of the Indian Agents) farmed by individual band members in order that colonial administrators did not

further reduce the size of Indian Reserves. For some individuals, this created new opportunities to increase descent group-owned properties. For others in the community, it divided up common lands, enclosing them in a new social order.

In this example, Marjorie Louie, who married into the Chemainus community from Saanich, told about how people had to move from Kulleet Bay down to the area around the Coffin Point-*Hwkwumlehwuthun* area to 'cultivate' land and keep it from the settlers.

> When I first got here Madeline [Louie's] mother used to tell me that the old people said the water is our line. They didn't say this is our land here, this is our land there. The whole of this point [gesturing to the area around Coffin Point & Sharpe Point] into Ladysmith Harbour, they thought they owned it all, the older people.
>
> When the white man got here they told them [the old people] "you have to have your own land. You have to get a cow, you have to get horses, whatever, to show that you're using that land. If you don't use that land the white man is going to take it away from you."
>
> Aleck Louie's father originally from Chemainus Bay and that's where her father *Theyluhwtun* originally comes from is Chemainus Bay. And because her grandparents had no son, they had one daughter, so they told Aleck, you stay here and help my daughter with her cows.
>
> So, that's why they had this big property up here. They had it all fenced. Right up to where the gym is [near Shell Beach]. Their old fence was there.
>
> So, that was only recent when the Indian Affairs started telling Indians "You got to claim land, you got to use it, otherwise you're going to lose it" [AM-LM-LM-i:1492-1500].

In another conversation, Marjorie further elaborated this last point:

> That's the reason why we're living here now, there was a big fight...after the white man came and they started getting liquor, so they started fighting amongst each other. They had a big fight so my husband's grandfather's father moved out here.

> So the Indian Affairs got in then and they started telling Indians you have to have a farm so you can claim this land, because there's so many white people coming in, you have to own something. That's where ownership came in. They were told you have to fence your land, which was a concept our people didn't know.
>
> After the big fight he moved over here, he put a little house up here. And then he started clearing this land here. It was all cleared when I first got here. They use to grow hay there and had real lots of cows, these people.
>
> So her father gave her a share, my mother-in-law, gave her half the cows because she was the only child and she was a girl. When she got married he told her husband to stay here because he didn't have a son and he had so many cows. That's why the Louie's [Marjorie's family by marriage] are here, otherwise it would have been just her family.
>
> So after this old man came and he cleared this land, he cleared this part over and then another brother came and said he wanted to move out of Shell Beach, too much fighting there. "Okay, put your house over here, already got the land cleared." So his other brother put in a little house over there.
>
> And this part here was hay, so this is where Alfred [Marjorie's late husband] put his house years later. Told his mother he was going to trade you, that land up there is suppose to be Alfred's, said he wants this one down here, want to put my house there someday. So his mother said okay, she already had three younger sons, Alfred was telling her those boys can share that land up there and I'll take this one down here. She said it was okay. That's where ownership started, this is my land.
>
> [...] That's when people started fighting then because, and their families, it was really hard because people were dying at first contact. Because Alfred's grandfather moved here after the big fight in Shell Beach, he moved here and then somebody would come and say they'd need a place to stay. Okay, stay here, you're my nephew you can stay here. [LM-i:947-988]

In this example the area in question was common property of the community. It then became family land through the creation of an Indian Act land holding certificate of possession (which I will refer to as a CP) administered under section 20 of the *Indian Act* (see Lewis 1970 for a discussion of the history of CP's on the Cowichan Reserve).

Today, this area is one of only two CP's in the Chemainus community. Even these two CPs in the Chemainus have continued to be controversial and divisive. I have heard other stories challenging their legitimacy, claiming that the Louie family took advantage of warm relations with the Indian Agents to claim this piece of property while other members of the community were out fishing, displacing other potentially legitimate claims to and uses of the area. Because of these events, Chemainus has been a community that, unlike the Cowichan and Penelakut, is loathe to create more of these kinds of individual property interests on their common Indian Reserve lands.

On Cowichan and Penelakut Indian Reserves in particular (and to a much lesser degree on Chemainus) individuals have been able to create or claim property in land based on this CP system (and the system of Location Tickets that preceded it). Until recently, this system of individual property rights did not have the benefits of a formal registry and land title system that provides mechanisms of security and insurance for most property in western societies. Transfers of land through an informal, and until recently largely oral system of inheritance are fraught with disputes and disagreements (Lewis 1970:47, 52, 64, 141). Though the Cowichan and Penelakut administrations have taken major initiatives to regulate the CP system, contests over these lands have persisted since the creation of the system.

There are no prescribed descent rules for inheritance of these lands, other than those stipulated in the *Indian Act* for people who die intestate. There is a sense, particularly among the older generation, of the appropriateness of the extended family or even

descent group as collective holders of these properties, and there has long been a strong preference (though certainly not exclusive practice) of keeping CP lands within the family. Rules for inheriting or alienating land are, however, flexible. In one example, I have documented how CP land was passed on to children who, in the mind of the senior family member, have earned it or who are believed will make good use of it. Abraham C. Joe's inheritance of his father's CP land on the Cowichan Reserve is a good example:

> My grandpa told me this way, before he died, he lived in Genoa Bay, lived right in Genoa Bay. Had a little cabin.
>
> He looked me up there, gave me his house, gave me all the land he owned and he moved out.
>
> Lived in Genoa Bay. He got sick one day. We took him to Duncan Hospital and he told me to continue on. "You work. You work the land, the land I own, I give it to you. You proved it. You was the only one that worked. The rest of your brothers doesn't work. So all the land I own it goes to you. You look after it. You always got to remember in your everyday life, you have to depend on him for the rest of your life, no matter what you do, you always...if you're sincere in your mind and your heart. Yeah, I give it to you." [JA-i:868-878]

Abraham has certainly lived up to his father's expectations, working hard with his land all his life. He and his brother currently run a berry farm and a rock quarry on his land, as well as providing space for his modest home. There will be difficult decisions to make in the Joe family when the CP holdings of Abraham and his brother must be passed on, as their extended family is large and there will be many potential claims. The tensions between individual and corporate family property are always felt in the Cowichan community.

Abner Thorne, Angus Smith and Dennis Alphonse agreed with my proposed model of

Coast Salish traditional land tenure – that there are certain lands held by extended family groups, and communal lands held by those living in particular villages, and that a key mechanism to claim access to resources is through the recognition of kin ties. They emphasized, however, that the *Indian Act* system of membership in Indian Band communities has created problems for people in having potentially legitimate kin claims to resource areas recognized when those claims are not accompanied by membership or residence in the Indian Band whose lands are in question. Abner Thorne from Cowichan provided an excellent example:

> We can go to Kuper and dig clams now, but some time in the future our young people are going to get confused. They are losing sight of our relationship with each other, the young people. And they're becoming strangers to each other. So there has to be agreements like that on paper [that, he mentioned earlier, this is our sole jurisdiction] for that purpose. Even though we're all inter-related.
>
> We hear that now at meetings that even though somebody's part Saanich, half *Pun'e'luxutth'* [Penelakut Village, Kuper Island] Penelakut, says "No rights here." So it's changing. So we have to have something in place to keep that tradition going. [01-07-13-EMM:162-167]

In Abner's example, the younger people, who are often the ones making decisions about who has rights to clam-dig, are getting 'mixed up' about the resource rights that a person has based on his family ties.

The final example comes from Abraham C. Joe who, like Abner Thorne above, lamented that younger people do not recognize the importance of family relations in granting use rights to community lands. Abraham recalled how old man Francis James told him that Cowichan people had a camping ground on the north end of Tent Island. Now, Abraham finds that the young people say that this land, which is a part of a Penelakut Indian

Reserve, is the sole property of the Penelakut.

> Those young guys say 'All those men from Cowichan always want to claim everything. Claim, claim, claim *everything*. That's why you guys [the Cowichan] are getting ganged-up-on, you guys are claiming much too much'.[...]
>
> Those young people never sat down to realize that their *Stsa'lum'uqw* [Great grandparents] were agreeable because they were in-laws. Cowichan married an Indian woman and Indian woman married a Penelakut man. They got along together. That was the purpose for doing that. [16-10-01-EMM:1161-1169]

Common property tenures are enshrined in subtle laws in Coast Salish culture, guided by the nuances of complex kin networks and strategic residence choices. Abraham feels that some of the younger people, who do not understand these things well, are wielding blunt instruments by trying to 'claim, claim, claim *everything*' as open property to all First Nations communities. While such actions may be understandable in a context of resistance to colonial alienation of land, there is little room for them in the minds of the elders and others who recognize the more subtle issues of relationships and residence. This becomes acutely evident when such actions threaten to divide community opinion and spread out further the limited opportunities Coast Salish people currently have for deriving wealth from their lands and resources. Any young Coast Salish leader who tries to 'claim, claim, claim *everything*' in a court-centred Aboriginal title argument will quickly find that such tactics have little place and efficacy in that arena as well. To have legitimacy in the Canadian legal system, as well as the Coast Salish land tenure system, claims must be embedded in the customary laws and traditions that elders have tried to teach their children, grandchildren and several generations of anthropologists.

The practice of property relations internal to Coast Salish communities has been highly integrated into the fabric of the social, economic and political system. This system continues to have the same weight and importance in the lives and economies of Coast Salish people today in areas where few or no other incompatible forms of property rights have been created, such as on reserve and in fishing spots where 'the commons' of Canadian fisheries law has left marine areas largely unallocated as private property. As I will explore in the concluding chapters of this study, the expressions of property today which have the most wide-ranging power and effect are those made vis-à-vis non-Native settler society who have taken their own powerful legal forms of ownership and superimposed it on the Coast Salish land tenure system. I will show how the Coast Salish land tenure system has not been not supplanted, but rather struggles for practical expression against these powerful, even dominant systems. The institutions of local descent group and residence group land tenure are evoked in contexts of government and industry consultation over resource harvesting, treaty negotiations, and land claims related litigation. They are realms in which these old institutions of land tenure take on new aspects of social power, and provide a major challenge to Canadian legal pluralism.

Chapter 8
Coast Salish Territories

Introduction: Coast Salish Territories and Boundaries

The underlying aims of this chapter are to elicit a picture of Coast Salish territories as an aspect of the land tenure system, and to discuss how people experience territoriality and their sense of place within and beyond territorial boundaries. In pursuing this goal, I have been faced with the particularly challenging problem of coming to understand these concepts from a position that might make sense in a Coast Salish ontological framework. At the root of this problem are the apparently contradictory notions that territories are clearly an aspect of the land tenure system, but in the everyday experiences of sharing amongst kin Coast Salish people claim that there are no boundaries that divide them. I will address this problem in chapter 9, suggesting that common sense western constructs of boundaries and territories create such dilemmas, where Coast Salish people find none, understanding their territorial relationships as being nested in a complex world of property, identity, ancestry and kin.

To come closer to Coast Salish understandings of territories, I begin with a brief review of the Aboriginal territory debate in the ethnographic literature, from which it is apparent that any model of territory must be formulated as being tied to local ideas of sharing, property and kin relations. In the Coast Salish context, I review how ethnographic maps have shown territories as based on watershed areas that include residence group property, or on shared language or dialect. Each type of ethnographic mapping has produced models which have different shapes and sizes of territories and suggest different social

units as the appropriate territorial aggregate. Similar models of territory are also found in other areas of the Northwest Coast. I argue that among the distinctive features of the cultures in this area are the sharing amongst kin, joint holding of certain regions as territories, and enforcement of trespass rules against outsiders by residence group aggregates.

Territory in the Americanist Anthropological Tradition

An important debate in the ethnographic literature of hunter-gatherer/forager societies has been how to describe empirically the extent to which lands have been or are considered 'territories'. The early debates in a North American context focussed on the idea of the Algonquian "family" hunting territory proposed by Speck (1915) and ostensibly contrary to the evolutionary theories of Marx and Morgan, for whom societies at the 'lower' evolutionary stages held resources communally. Others challenged Speck's interpretations and held that the practices of northern Algonquian hunters were the result of acculturating influences, such as the fur trade, and that aboriginally, hunter-gatherers in North America did not have any concepts of 'private property'(see for example Leacock 1954; 1982; and Murphy and Steward 1956).

The hunting territory debate has not unfolded on the same terms in the Northwest Coast literature. Here, early 20th century ethnographers like Davidson (1928), Boas (1934:37), Drucker (1939:59), Oberg (1943:582), and Garfield and Wingert (1966:13-15), have all firmly asserted that the collective social units, local to the different regions of the Northwest Coast, held land as property and asserted territorial control over watershed-

sized areas. The fact pattern of the Northwest Coast did not fit well into the evolutionary arguments gripping hunter-gatherer debates in other parts of North America, and indeed Boas' distaste for the evolutionary discourse (Stocking 1982) may have further constrained the debate from the perspective of the Northwest Coast.

So, while in most of Aboriginal North America, territories have been the focus of some refined academic debate, locally on the Northwest Coast they have been taken as a given. The recent attempt to shift the debate on territories in northeastern North America to one of ontologies (Scott 1988; Poirier 2001) and the political questions raised by overlapping land claims on the Northwest Coast (as exemplified by Sterritt *et al.* 1998, and discussed below in chapter 9) suggest that neither position is adequate, and that any view of territories must take into account local senses of property, kin, social organization and place.

Scott (1988) has emphasized that we can only begin to understand hunter-gatherer views of 'territory' by exploring the conceptual framework upon which such an idea is based – in the case of the James Bay Cree, the key factor is the system of relations between humans and among humans, animals and the land. Poirier has recently argued that for the Atikamekw of Québec, the conceptual framework for understanding territories "derives from customary ways of dividing, sharing and transferring areas with which families have been entrusted" (2001:99). She has characterized Atikamekw territories in Québec as bounded by waterways, formed by sites and hunting grounds, and interconnected through itineraries of experience on the land and water (2001:107). This

is a useful description for thinking about Coast Salish territories. For Coast Salish people, like the Atikamekw, closely interrelated networks of bilateral kin who hold these territories have important connections to the land itself, the animals and spirits who dwell in the land, and the ancestors whose stories are mythologically transformed and emplaced in the land. In addition, I would argue that the property relations of descent and residence groups play a decisive roll in structuring the extent of territories in a Coast Salish context.

Land Tenure beyond Descent and Residence Group: 'Tribal' Territories

A key question in coming to understand territories in a Coast Salish context is, what is the appropriate social unit to which a territory may be ascribed. I argue that the core territorial social unit is the broad community of inter-related residence group communities within a local region. This social unit, which some have called the 'tribe', is not a formal political entity (Kennedy 1995; Miller and Boxberger 1994), but rather numerous kin networks that crosscut and bind descent and residence groups, resulting in the practice of territories being 'tribal' in a sense of intense regional interactions and connections to place. Elmendorf has described this for the Twana, saying one of the social bonds that united the community in the absence of formal political unity was "the feeling for a common Twana territory, which coincided with the drainage area off Hood Canal. Since peoples to the east and southeast also lived on inlets and drainage systems, the Twana felt that one should go 'halfway to their waters' in these directions before considering oneself in "foreign" country" (Elmendorf 1960:266). Marion Smith similarly argued that tribal territories are "aggregates of smaller units [of land] hunted over by

family groups" (1940b:24-25).

These intense kin networks often share other non-political features, such as a common language or dialect[51], and often have a common collective identity reflected in 'tribal' names such as Cowichan, Chilliwack, Lummi, Saanich, or Sooke. In such a community of kin where language or dialect is shared and the region of control is discrete, such as a watershed or an island area, I have heard these areas referred to as 'core' territories. In places amicably used, occupied or related to by members of neighbouring residence groups who share tightly bound kin networks, and where these networks crosscut language or dialect communities, shared, jointly held territories result.

Elmendorf (1960:270) provides a picture of the sense of territory held by Twana Coast Salish as largely bounded within watershed units, but decreasing generally as they moved away from occupied village or intensively-used waterfront areas:

> Territorial interests were indistinguishable from subsistence interests, and these adhered to usable stretches of territory. The environs of a winter-village community's settlement (or settlements, in the case of the Skokomish extended community) were used intensively by and regarded as property of that community. Away from the village environs meant away from the local watercourse, and the feeling of group use-ownership faded out as watersheds, drainage area boundaries, were reached. Similarly the whole drainage area of the canal was Twana country, but the portions of that area felt as most definitely Twana owned were the intensively used shoreline and river sites. Concern with an exactly established watershed boundary between Twana and non-Twana never entered anyone's mind.

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[51] Morphy (1995:191-2) has observed a similar pattern of dialect shifting as closely related to the attachments of local ancestral inheritance groups to place among Austrailan Aboriginal hunters.

Collins likewise recorded that for the Upper Skagit, "[v]illage rights tapered off as one moved from the houses along the river toward the ridges which separated the Skagit Valley from the Nooksack, the Stillaguamish, and the Plateau peoples" (1974b:80). These descriptions are consistent with the notion that there is a distinction between areas clearly owned by descent and residence groups, and that the region within which these owned locations are located is considered the territory of the communities who are rooted there.

Ethnographic Maps

Most ethnographers who have written about Coast Salish people have discussed the 'tribal territories' of the communities that they have worked in (see Richardson 1982:101 for a summary) and many have produced accompanying territory maps. These maps have given a varied picture of Coast Salish territories, differently distinguishing areas based on property, language or land use. Below I examine how the ethnographic maps produced for Island Hul'qumi'num illustrate the varying ways that territories have been represented, the important differences between representations of territory based on property, language and land use, and the general inadequacy of idealized representations which do not consider temporal variation or shared territories.

The earliest of the systematic ethnographic maps that represent a more proprietary idea of territory in the Coast Salish region was prepared by Boas after his first few field seasons on the Northwest Coast. I have redrawn this significant map and simplified Boas' orthographies for the Island Hul'qumi'num region in Figure 8.1. Boas was concerned

about the accuracy of his map, having constructed part of it from 'inquiries' he made, and having had little opportunity to confirm locations in interior regions (1887:129). Boas was quite explicit that the territories he mapped were held as property by these communities.

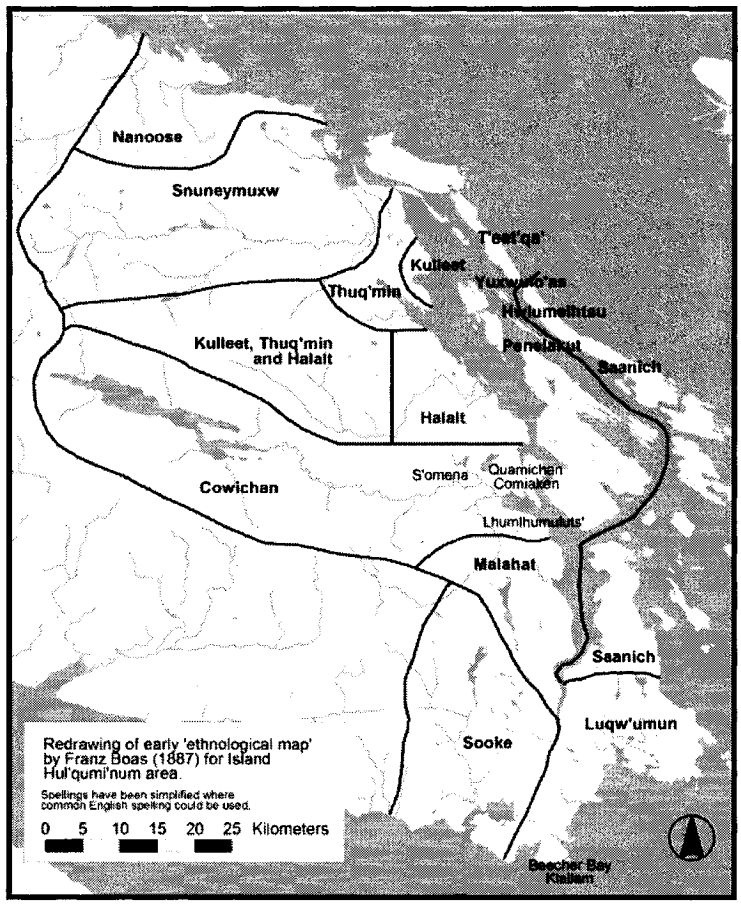


Figure 8.1. Early ethnographic map for Island Hul'qumi'num area (after Boas 1887)

Noch heute besitzen alle diese Stämme [die Cowichan] Uferstrecken am Cowichan River, wo sie ihre Wohnsitze errichten dürfen. Die Kulleet, Thuq'min and Halalt werden häufig als Chemainus bezeichnet und besitzen gemeinschaftlich den Oberlauf des gleichnamigen Flusses. Die Admirality Insel [Saltspring-Insel] wird von den Halalt und Penelakuts besucht. Im Cowichan-Thale finden sich noch drei weitere Ansiedelungen, doch wurden mir deren Bewohner nicht als gesonderte

Stämme angegeben, so dafs ich nicht weifs, zu welchen Stämmen sie gehören. Es sind dieses die Kenipsen, Kilpales and Koksilah. Alle Stämme des Cowichan dialects und die Squamish gehen im Frühjahr zum Fraser-Flufs, um Lachse zu fangen. Die Nanoose und Snuneymuxw haben allein das Recht, auf dieser Reise die Enge zwischen Gabriola und der Valdes-Insel zu benutzen. Den übrigen Stämmen dieser Gruppe, welche auf der Vancouver-Insel wohnen, gehört die Enge zwischen der Valdes und Galiano-Insel.

[Still today, all these tribes [the Cowichan] possess stretches of the riverbank where they may establish their residency. The Kulleet, Thuq'min and Halalt are frequently referred to as Chemainus, and jointly own the upper run of the river of the same name. The Admirality Island [Saltspring Island] is visited by the Halalt and Penelakut. In the Cowichan Valley, three further settlements can be found, but their inhabitants were not presented to me as separate tribes, so that I do not know, to which tribes they belong. These are the Kenipsen, Kilpales and Koksilah. In the spring, all of the tribes of the Cowichan dialects and the Squamish go to the Fraser River to catch salmon. Only the Nanoose the Snuneymuxw have the right to use the passage between Gabriola and Valdes Island for this journey. The remaining tribes, who live on Vancouver Island, own the passage between Valdes and Galiano Island.] (Boas 1887:132-133)

Boas' 1887 map is a landmark representation of Island Hul'qumi'num communities' territories despite its imprecisions in mapping (very generalized lines), village placement (locations being confused on Kuper/Thetis Island) and possibly the narrowness of exclusivity of the ownership of the passes mentioned. It describes territories as belonging primarily to residence groups, pointing to the notion that portions of territory may also be reflected by aggregations of residence group properties. Boas distinguished the degree of interconnectedness of property relations by representing, as shared territories, areas held by residence groups at Kulleet, *Thuq'min* and Halalt on the upper Chemainus River, the Halalt and Penelakut on Saltspring Island, several Cowichan villages in the Cowichan Valley, and the Nanoose and Snuneymuxw around Gabriola Island. Such a representation of shared territories has not been reproduced in the

ethnographic literature since, in spite of the importance that Boas (1890) placed on these issues very early on in the ethnographic tradition of the area over which he had so much influence, and his explicit call for such studies in Coast Salish communities.[52]

The other clear description of territories based on aggregations of property, not language area, are the maps of Straits Salish, Lushootseed and down-and upriver Halkomelem territories by Suttles (1951:5, 8, 14, 22, 28, 34, 42), Haeberlin and Gunther (1930:8), and Duff (1952a:20), respectively. These maps similarly choose residence groups (or in certain areas residence group aggregates in a watershed) as the territory holding bodies, but fail to indicate any shared territories. Their accompanying ethnographic accounts describing these territories better reveal the shared areas. The example from Suttles is helpful to illustrate this point. Suttles provided a map of territories of each of the Straits Salish communities, illustrating their individual territories as discrete and not interlocking (see Figure 8.2). He points out that the groups of villages that hold these territories, which he reluctantly called 'tribes', were not formal political entities. Their tribal unity emerges from sharing "a common dialect and a common territory" (Suttles 1951:287).

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[52] For descriptions of territory in the central and northern Coast Salish areas, see Hill-Tout 's(1902b:406) description of Kwantlen territory on the Fraser; Hill-Tout (1904a:316) for the Chehalis also on the Fraser; Smith (1947:6:3) for Katzie and Coquitlam territory; Suttles (Suttles 1951:7-45) for an outline of the territories of the Sooke, Becher Bay Klallam, Songish, Saanich, Semiahmoo, Lummi, and Samish; Duff (1952a:19-24) for a description of territories of the Tait, Pilalt, Chilliwack & other Stó:lō groups; Suttles (1955:8) for Simon Pierre's description of Katzie territory and 19th century tribal movements on the lower Fraser; Barnett for description of Comox (1955:25), Kalhuse (1955:27), and Sliammon territories (1955:29).

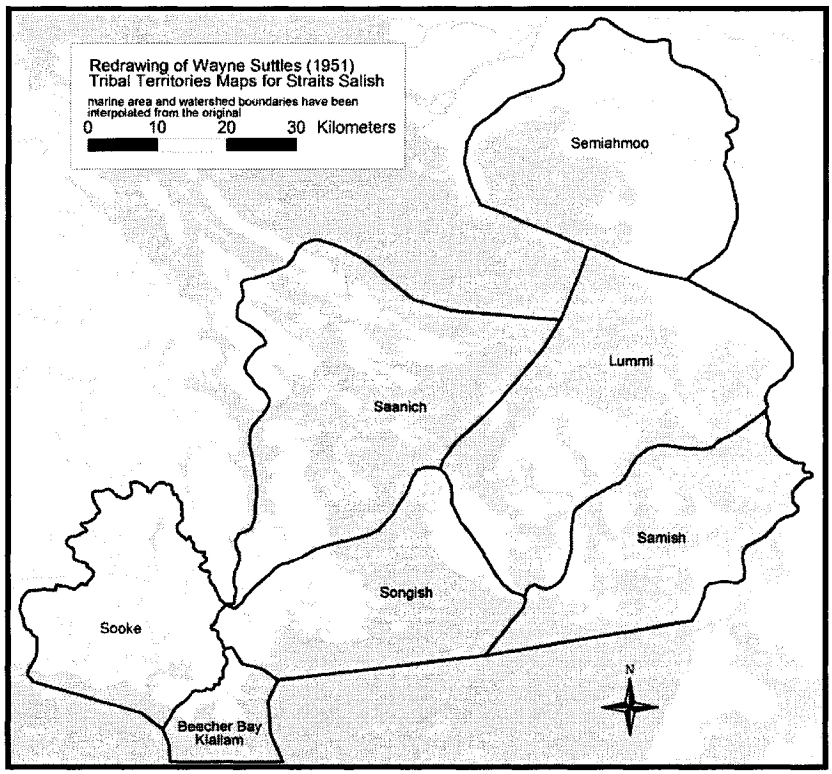


Figure 8.2. Tribal territories map for Straits Salish (after Suttles 1951)

Suttles based his map on "the extent of use and also of knowledge of informants of the groups in question as well as direct statements of the informants themselves" (1951:287). He was satisfied that these mapped boundaries were useful descriptions of the territories of these communities because "the statements, knowledge of the uses of territory, and knowledge of place names of different informants of different tribes corresponds [sic] fairly closely" (1951:287). He does point out, however, instances where certain areas are shared with other 'tribes', for instance the reef-net locations in Sooke territory shared with Klallam (1951:13), areas of Orcas Island that Lummi shared with the Saanich (1951:21), the hunting territories of the Semiahmoo and Nicomekl (sometimes referred to as Snokomish in the literature) in the watersheds draining into Boundary Bay (1951:29),

and the mainland fishing locations in Samish territory shared with their southern Nuwhaha [a Lushooteed-speaking residence group on the Skagit River] neighbours (1951:41).

The other major approach to mapping the territories of Coast Salish people has been to define areas based on language and dialect divisions (see for instance Mitchell 1971:20; Suttles 1987a:endpapers; Suttles 1990:454; and the overview map in Figure 2.1 of chapter 2). The maps are frequently styled in the tradition of ethnographic mapping (described in Darnell 1998:177-242) as a means to describe the distribution of discrete cultures and to theorize broad classifications of Aboriginal languages. The pattern has generally been to draw territorial boundaries around watershed and island areas of the winter villages and campsites of people who speak a particular language, dialect or micro-dialect. A variation of this mapping has been to base territories on distributions of place names known by or based on particular dialects. David Rozen has used such conventions to map and describe the territories of the Island Hul'qumi'num communities which he groups, based on micro-dialect divisions, as Nanaimo-Nanoose, Chemainus, Cowichan and Malahat (1985). In his appendices, Rozen provides several maps that indicate the territories of these groups and larger language communities, all with contiguous, non-overlapping boundaries (1985:313-316). In his text, however, he describes these territories as less discrete in certain places. The area between Boat Harbour and Yellowpoint, for instance, is described as being shared between the Snuneymuxw and Chemainus communities (Rozen 1985:52). The Gulf Islands, from the southeast portion of Saltspring and Active Pass to the east, are described as being shared

with the Saanich (Rozen 1985:118, 242-244).

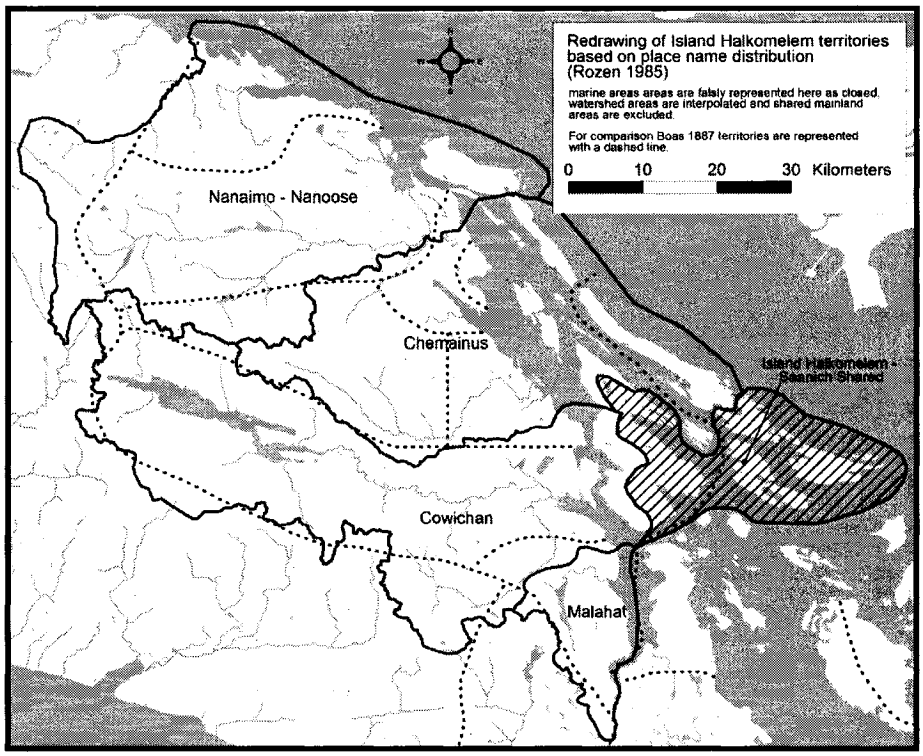


Figure 8.3. Island *Hul'q'umi'num'* territories based on place name distribution (after Rozen 1985)

In Figure 8.3, I have redrawn Rozen's territory maps, indicating some of these shared areas. The correspondence between communities who share a micro-dialect and those who share descent and residence group property areas is revealed by the relatively close correspondence of the territories in Rozen's map to those recorded by Boas (which can be seen from the superimposed lines in figure 8.3). One of the differences is due to the imprecision of Boas' mapping, which was intended to show general patterns for comparative purposes, not in detailed cartographic precision. Another difference is in Boas' distinguishing of individual residence group territories among the communities north of the Chemainus River. These groups are not identified as having individual

territories on the basis of language and place names in Rozen's mapping. It is significant that Rozen's mapping reflects shared territory areas, in this case between Island Hul'qumi'num and Saanich communities in the southern portion of the Gulf Islands. Occurrences of places names from both languages in this area revealed to Rozen principles of shared land use and occupancy in this area.

I turn briefly here to an examination of the basis for several of the positions of the boundary lines in Rozen's map, specifically the boundaries between Snuneymuxw-Chemainus, Cowichan-Saanich, and Chemainus-Cowichan. These boundary areas are significant, as they have been clearly articulated by certain Island Hul'qumi'num community members as being useful for understanding the shape and extent of territories. Such notions of boundaries are highly contextual in their meaning and interpretation and, as I will discuss later in this chapter, their meanings are frequently challenged by Coast Salish people hesitant to undermine important relationships to kin and place.

Boat Harbour has been depicted as the northern boundary between Snuneymuxw and Chemainus First Nations. Alexis Louie from Chemainus framed this location as the "unofficial boundary" between these communities, being the furthest extent for either community in their "seasonal migrations" (Rozen 1985:11). Though I have heard extensive accounts from community members about current and historic seasonal use of resources beyond this area for both communities, these accounts are sometimes given in the context of Boat Harbour as a boundary marker indicating a territorial divide between the Snuneymuxw and Chemainus winter village settlements and possibly the terrestrial

and foreshore-based residence group property areas between them. Similarly, Rozen gives Hatch Point as the boundary marker between the Cowichan in the north and the Saanich to the south, acknowledging, however, that people from both communities had a long history of occupation together to the south of this apparent boundary marker (Rozen 1985:230, 235). Simon Charlie also confirmed to me that he thought of Hatch Point as a marker of the boundary line between Cowichan and Saanich, a line he described as extending between Manson's Store at the north end of Shawnigan lake, the little park near Brentwood College, the Cobble Hill railway station, and Hatch Point, [13-02-01-EST:1114-1128].

Though the communities between Boat Harbour and Hatch Point have had a long standing political accord in representing themselves collectively with a single Hul'qumi'num traditional territory line under the banner of the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group (illustrated in figure 9.2), Rozen very clearly defines Mt. Sicker as being the boundary between Chemainus (Chemainus, Penelakut, Lyackson, Halalt) and Cowichan communities, based in large part on dialect differences and what he describes as the understandings of Abel Joe and Abraham Joe (from S'omena) of community division (1985:128).

> Sicker Mountain is an extremely important place to the Island Halkomelem. This area was the mutually understood linguistic and territorial boundary between the Chemainus dialect-speakers and the Cowichan dialect-speakers of the Island Halkomelem language. Both groups (the Chemainus and the Cowichan) refer to people living south of the latitude of Sicker Mountain as "Cowichan". Strangely, people living north of Sicker Mountain are not referred to as "Chemainus", since that would designate them as residents of the village at Kulleet Bay only. They are called *sne'el'uts* 'those living on the other side'. This term, derived

> from - the word *snel'uts* 'other side', is used by the Cowichan to refer to all the Chemainus people but particularly the Island Halkomelem in the Chemainus dialect area on Vancouver Island. The Chemainus and Nanaimo dialect area residents most often refer to themselves by their village name; at least this has been the case since the early historic period.

In my experience, I have never heard the term *sne'el'uts* used by either Cowichan or other Island *Hul'q'umi'num'* speakers to refer to people living north of Mount Sicker, though I do concur that the usual practice of identity is with the residence group name. I did hear on some occasions a tentative sense of territory being distinguished between the Cowichan Tribes and the communities to the north. Workers in the band offices, for instance, sometimes use the Chemainus River or the Chemainus River watershed as a pragmatic border between the Cowichan and other communities when determining workloads, though everyone involved clearly express this as a convention of convenience, not an acknowledged political or territorial boundary line. Abner Thorne, while recognizing the ties between Cowichan and Halalt that he personally experienced, based on genealogy and Indian names, mentioned that Chemainus are connected closely to Lyackson, Penelakut and Halalt, but that "the lines are more defined" between these communities and the Cowichan [26-09-00-TA-MR-SA:44-46]. Abner makes sense of this division in his discussion of the First Ancestor stories. In Abner's view, *Syalutsa* fell from the sky at Koksilah Ridge, *St'uts'un* fell from the sky at Mt Prevost, and *Swatlome* fell from the sky at Swallowfield, which is right at the mouth of the Chemainus River. Rozen, in his discussion of the mythology associated with the place names in the Mount Sicker area, largely concurs (1985:129). In his stories, these were the founding ancestors of the Chemainus and Cowichan communities (as I have discussed in chapter 3).

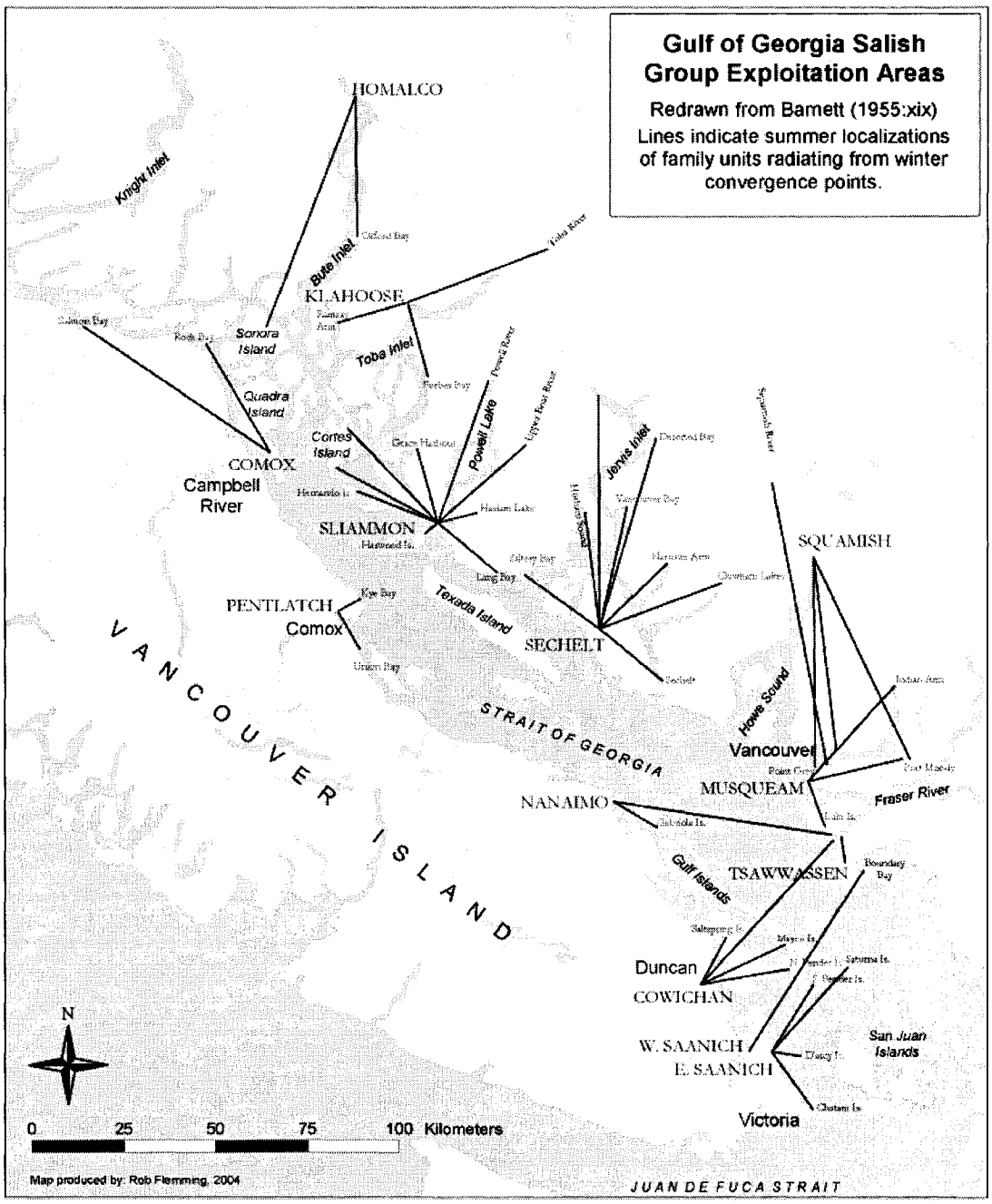


Figure 8.4. Barnett's Gulf of Georgia group exploitation areas (redrawn by Rob Flemming, 2004)

A very different example of the ethnographic mapping of Coast Salish territorial relations to land is one where boundaries are erased and territory is depicted as a network of resource harvesting sites. Homer Barnett, a student of Alfred Kroeber, created a visual

image of Coast Salish territory that tries to reconcile the interconnectedness of these communities within a territory (1955:xix). A re-drawing of this map is shown in Figure 8.4. Barnett felt, from the information he collected, that territorial boundaries were difficult to define. He viewed tribal territories as being

> ...centered upon beach sites conveniently located with respect to gathering and hunting grounds. Certain productive localities were claimed and resorted to during the seasonal round, but most of the land was unclaimed. Hence it is difficult or impossible to draw boundaries. A more satisfactory conception pictures the village groups of a certain region occupying simultaneously or in turn several traditionally assigned spots for their hunting, gathering, and wintering activities (1955:18).

This view is reflected in his published map of the Coast Salish region, which rather than depicting regions as bounded by borderlines, shows the winter villages he investigated, with lines radiating out to examples of summer camps to which people from these communities travelled each year (see Figure 8.4).

Barnett's map gives a unique cartographic picture of what Poirier (2004:62-3; 2001:107) has described as itineraries of movement through the land, here reflecting Coast Salish seasonal travels to owned resource locations throughout their territories. Barnett's map is a bare schematic of this movement and interconnection. Were something of the yearly Coast Salish travel within their territories mapped, a complex picture much like a flight chart of the world's airlines would emerge, showing hubs and satellites, with specific places being nodes of connectivity between people in the wider Coast Salish region.

Barnett's map and the accompanying description is both useful and deceiving. The map challenges conventional ethnographic mapping by indicating no boundaries, making

instead the nodes of travel, land use and sharing the primary analytical unit to show relationships to territory. These activities are usually largely silent in traditional ethnographic maps represented by solid polygons bounding discrete territorial areas. However, the representation of Coast Salish non-territories, as it were, leaves one with the false impression that the white spaces in between the nodes of activity are empty, culture-less places. Indeed, Barnett's text claiming that "most of the land was unclaimed" (1955:18) lies counter to the clear notions of territory that have been expressed in the ethnographic literature before and since Barnett's work. Such an interpretation may have been made in response to the current scholarship of the day which, as reviewed earlier, theorized that Aboriginal territoriality emerged only in response to European culture. Indeed Barnett's own work, published only a few years earlier, observed that "on the mainland at least boundary lines were rather well defined" (1938:119). Given the obvious political sensitivity that such a representation of territory has in the context on unresolved land claims, it is clear why this style of representing Coast Salish land use has not been more widely adopted in the literature.

My own cartographic ideas in the tradition of ethnographic mapping has produced the map shown in Figure 2.1. This map was skilfully assembled and rendered by GIS specialist Hillary Rudd, bringing together an understanding of how larger linguistic divisions map onto smaller territories based on approximate aggregates of resident group and descent group property for Coast Salish 'tribes'. The watershed-based boundary lines for each territory represented on this map are intended to provide only a schematic of Coast Salish territories. We have not been able to represent, with precision, the

complexity and nuance of temporal changes to territorial boundaries[53] or the location and extent of shared territories. Such a map, while useful from an outsider perspective for locating Coast Salish communities in the world of social and territorial relations, belies the highly integrated network of ties among and between these groups and does not represent well the extent of lands owned, occupied, or for which communities claim jurisdiction.

Though I am cautious, because of the importance of kin networks, about making a linear representation of Coast Salish territories with contiguous boundaries following along watersheds, this is the way ethnographers have most commonly described them, and Coast Salish people themselves have frequently drawn watershed boundaries on maps as representations of their territories in land claims.

Comparative Northwest Coast Context in Representing Territories

This view of watershed territories, held by aggregates of local residence and descent groups, with certain regions acknowledged as shared or joint territories, is not dissimilar to what is described elsewhere on the Northwest Coast. There are, however, important differences in territorial size, where territories in northern Northwest Coast areas are found to be larger than those in the south. Figures 8.5 and 8.6 are representations of

[53] Changes in the occupants of territories, and their shapes and boundaries, are well recorded in the ethnographic literature. The lower Fraser River area had significant changes throughout the fur trade and early colonial period with, for example, the Kwantlen, who were very successful in controlling access to Fort Langley, expanding their territory (Hill-Tout 1902b:406; Suttles 1955:8, 12). The Squamish (Ryan 1973:40-42), Semiahmoo (Suttles 1951:29; Suttles 1998:174) and perhaps the Sooke and Klallam (Suttles 1951:9-13) have also seen changes in the shape and size of their territories.

Kwakwaka'wakw and Tlingit territories, based on ethnographic work by Galois *et al.* (1994) and Goldschmidt *et al.* (1998:188-205) respectively. These figures illustrate the parallel structure of territoriality among Northwest Coast groups.

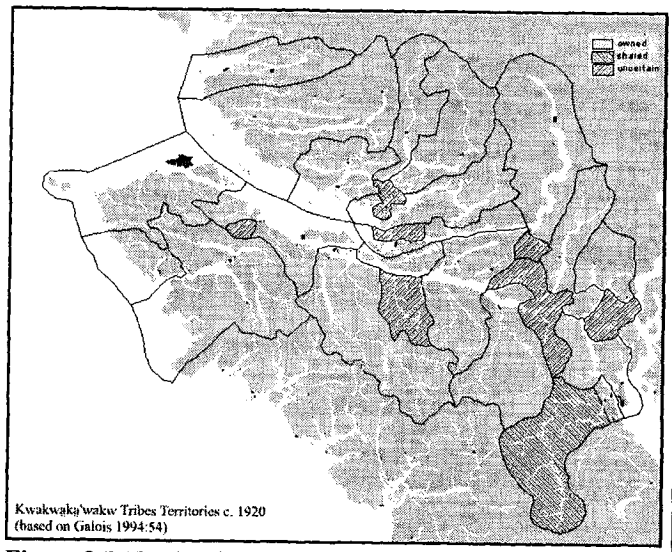


Figure 8.5. Kwakwaka'wakw tribes territories (after Galois 1994:54)

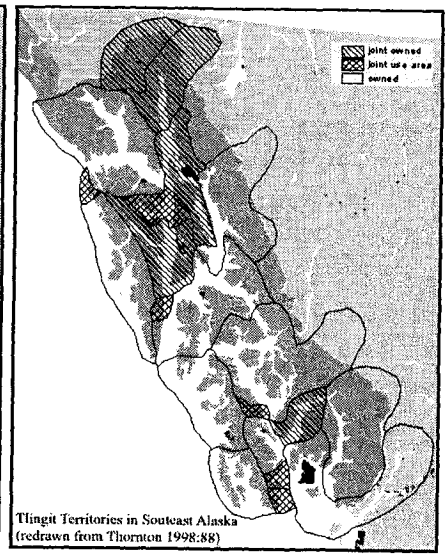


Figure 8.6. Tlingit Territories in Southeast Alaska (after Thornton 1998)

One important distinction is the physical area of the territories of these communities. Using a Geographic Information System (GIS) representation of these territories, I have calculated the average size of these territories, measuring both water and land portions of these areas, but not using 'joint/shared' or 'uncertain' territories. The average size of territory for a Tlingit local social group is 994,978 hectares, while the average analogous Kwakwaka'wakw territory is 144,165 hectares. The representations of northern Straits Salish territories, which I have redrawn from Suttles (1951) (see Figure 8.2 above), have an average of 82,321 hectares. The redrawn Island Hul'qumi'num territories, defined here by Rozen on the basis of distributions of Nanoose-Nanaimo, Chemainus and

Cowichan place names (1985), average 151,320 hectares (see Figure 8.3 above), not including 'joint/shared' areas. The average for all the Coast Salish communities represented in the redrawn Suttles/Rozen ethnographic maps is 103,021 hectares. These figures all compare to 582,507 hectares for the water and land portion of the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group Statement of Intent line (see Figure 9.2 below), which has been drawn across the Strait of Georgia to include a portion of the lower Fraser River, an area which Rozen did not include in his assessment of Island Hul'qumi'num territory.

The Kwakwaka'wakw and Coast Salish territorial sizes from the ethnographic accounts are highly comparable in area and in the territory-holding social unit. The northern Straits Salish areas are smaller on average than the Island Hul'qumi'num areas, due in large part to the lack of any major river systems in their respective territories. The Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group Statement of Intent territory boundary is comparable when considering the territory represented is an aggregation of several historic communities' territories.

A significant difference in scale is apparent between these southern Northwest Coast territorial representations and the northern Northwest Coast territories shown in Goldschmidt *et al.*'s Tlingit maps (Figure 8.6). These areas are nearly ten times larger in scale than the southern Northwest Coast communities. The differences in these figures initially surprised me, as the size and nature of the territory holding social groups are of parallel orders. There are however, important differences in resource abundance between Tlingit areas in the Alaska Panhandle and Coast Salish areas in the Strait of

Georgia (cf. Suttles 1968), the northern areas being less densely abundant with productive resource locales than the southern areas, which account for these differences. In sum, I have argued that territories are held by highly integrated networks of kin in named social units that I cautiously refer to as the 'tribe'. These territories may generally be represented by watershed areas of, using round numbers, about 100,000-150,000 hectares per Coast Salish 'tribe'. This territorial system has analogies in other Northwest Coast communities and I argue is an important aspect of relationships to place throughout this cultural region.

Idioms of Inclusion and Exclusion in Coast Salish Territories

Coast Salish people normalize relationships of sharing through extensive recognition of kin traced bilaterally and through descent, as well as the itineraries of travel and residence that people make throughout their lives. Such normalized sharing relations result in a dominant idiom of inclusion influencing territorial relations with neighbours. In places, this resulted in the extensive practice of allowing sharing of resources within the territory of a social group. In other cases, it resulted in certain areas being acknowledged as the shared or jointly held territories of multiple groups. Looking back on their lives, I have heard elders reflect that indeed there seem to be no borders, only fence posts and boundary markers experienced along the way. Territory, in this sense, is not a commodity relationship with land, but rather a way of ordering kin and sharing relations. In such a land tenure system, based on what Bird-David has called a "relational epistemology" (Bird-David 1999), there is no contradiction in sharing being the normal (but not exclusive) practice in these territories.

Sharing Territories

In my discussions about territory with Hul'qumi'num people, it was often said that land and resources are shared with relatives, that people had to respect each other and that there were no boundaries; everyone was related through kin or Indian names. When we talked about territories and the neighbouring communities of the Hul'qumi'num people, Roy Edwards often cited the proverb *uy'ye' thutch u' suw ts'i ts'u watul'ch*. This adage can be glossed as 'treat each other well and you will help each other'. He did not like talking about drawing boundaries between his neighbouring communities and thought we should instead talk about how to respect those neighbours. During a large meeting attended by elders from Cowichan, Chemianus, Penelakut and Nanaimo (the latter being a community with 'overlapping' land claims), Roy spoke of the importance of this respect in not disputing land and resources.

> So my dear relatives, to all of you, you know when we come to a big potlatch, we always have our hand out to different people, doesn't matter how far they come. We treat them with respect. That's our Indian way, not the white people's way. And this is something that we have to follow, we have to learn to help each other. No matter how hurt you are, the hard feelings that you have towards one another, but the thing is to compromise.
>
> *Uy'ye' tulch u' sus'o' suw ts'i ts'u watul* [Treat each other good, right and you help each other]. Those words never disappeared ever since you were young, maybe all of you have heard that. *Uy'ye' tulch u' sus'o' suw ts'i ts'u watul* means many different things. *Mukw stem tsu' thu' thaam u tu suleluhwtst, ts'i ts'u watul ch* [Everything they told us, the ancestors or elders, help each other]. [01-02-26-EST:562-582]

This good advice lays out the moral ideal. Although, as I discuss further below, access to territories is not granted to everyone on all occasions, the idiom of kin – directly, through marriage, or through descent group reflected in Indian names – provides the rationale

through which territories are shared throughout the Coast Salish world

This pervasive ethic of sharing is often implicit and reciprocal amongst family members, even when one's extended kin are not members of the same property-owning residence or descent group. In the next example, Arvid Charlie explains how individuals from different residence groups, and indeed language communities, share access to resources within the territories of the other. Arvid was explaining how Cowichan people were connected to areas in Semiahmoo territory of Boundary Bay, and reciprocal consideration was shown Semihamoo kin on the Cowichan River.

> Now, *Luschiim* [Arvid's Indian name], the name *Luschiim*. I said it is part *Hwlummi* [place name for the Lummi community], and that is also part Semiahmoo. Now everybody's got four grandparents and you go to your great grandparents, you've twice as many. So, one of *Luschiim*'s roots is Semiahmoo, one of his main roots. The other one *Hwlummi*, who had a town in the islands.
>
> Now, which islands? I don't know, Orcas? You know? I don't know. His other name is technically Orcas Island. He had two names.
>
> So I reached *Semyamu* [Semiahmoo; White Rock]. We have also, like *Hwlummi*, we have lots of connections to Semiahmoo area. Now if I remember, there was no border [Canada/USA] there. So, as I mentioned earlier, *Luschiim* had heavy roots over there.
>
> Now, if you're going to go into my *s'tsamuqw* [great grandparent] on my dad's side, I will go to my dad, go to his mom, Monica, her mom is Mary, one of her main roots, or maybe the main root, I'm not too sure, is Semiahmoo. [...]
>
> Mary, as I've said, had heavy roots in Semiahmoo, and her family used to come and camp at *Tlulpalus* [Kilpalus] Reserve which would be the east end of the present day reserve by the creek. Mary's family had a campground there, and they were the most easterly camp. Then Donette Charlie had a camp. Donette's family and *Luschiim*, that's working west.
>
> So my family knew that, called that spot Semiahmoo. That's why we call

> it Semiahmoo, is because our other part of our family came to visit and stayed for weeks at a time there. And that's what I mean, we have to acknowledge each other. [03-04-01-CA-i:1026-1050]

Arvid was careful here to talk about how the connection works both ways – that an area with good harvesting locations like the Cowichan River may be shared jointly with members of other communities, just as Cowichan people themselves may similarly expect to have their connections to lands in Semiahmoo territory recognized. This practice of sharing does not imply joint ownership of or jurisdiction over these territories. While each area is acknowledged as the territory of the other community, the kin ties between these communities are appropriate for establishing practices of respectful use.

Snyder documented for the Skagit that families had "special privileges, by rights of descent and inter-marriage, to food areas beyond those of their village, band or tribe" and that a village headman had to manage the resources so that "grounds within his own jurisdiction were used efficiently and protected from uninvited campers" (1964:74). This extra-territorial right of access was not unlimited. The reciprocal access to the resource areas, Snyder argued, was "recognized only in theory", as it was "a breach of etiquette, if not wholly unauthorized, to send as guests persons [to another territory] in the name of a village or band, and not a particular family" (Snyder 1964:74). Kinship in this example is the primary axis through which the ethic of sharing is exercised. Though drawing on access to one's spouses kin's territory is theoretically ideal, in practice it provides an axis of constant tension and negotiation. The relationship between in-laws is expressed in Coast Salish oral traditions as normatively tense (1964:75, 389-391), and navigating the practical or political limits of relationships in these vast kin networks is one of the central

challenges of personhood in Coast Salish life.

Sharing Territories: Coast Salish and Kwakwaka'wakw Relations at Cape Mudge

A clearer illustration of sharing within territories may be drawn from examples of extra-territorial use between Coast Salish and non-Coast Salish communities. In the discussion below, I detail how sharing is practised at the northern periphery of Coast Salish territories. Oral histories relating to Cape Mudge suggest that though once held as part of Coast Salish territory, since the cessation of the Coast Salish - Kwakwaka'wakw wars in the 1850's, relations of sharing have been established and reinforced through kin ties.

Until the mid 1800s, there was a long history of wars and slave-raiding between the Lekwiltok (the southern-most Kwakwaka'wakw community) and the Coast Salish people. Oral histories from Coast Salish people living in Puget Sound, the Fraser River and southern Vancouver Island all recount *Yuqwulhte'x* (as they are called in *Hul'q'umi'num'*) raids on Coast Salish communities. For former northern Coast Salish communities along the souther Kwakwaka'wakw boundaries, territory was lost and villages were abandoned in the late-1700's or early 1800's. As Taylor and Duff have reconstructed from archaeological, historical and oral histories from Kwakwaka'wakw Chief Billy Assu and carver Mungo Martin, the Lekwiltok permanently settled at Cape Mudge – one of the northernmost ancient Coast Salish village sites – between 1841 and 1853 (1956:62; see also Barnett 1955:24-26). Galois, in his highly detailed work on the history of Kwakwaka'wakw territories, described how the this Kwakwaka'wakw community seized this area of Coast Salish territory.

> Warfare was a significant factor in the territorial changes that took place between c. 1780 and 1850. How far contact was responsible for these wars, by what mechanisms, and to what effect, is often unclear – particularly in the early years. Nor is it possible to determine whether territorial acquisition was a motive for these hostilities: it was sometimes a result. [...] Many of the events described in the published narratives of the great Lekwiltok/Salish wars probably took place between about 1825 and 1845... By 1847, the Lekwiltok controlled Quadra Island. (Galois *et al.* 1994:51, 55)

During my work with Island Hul'qumi'num people, and previously with Stó:lō people in Chilliwack, vivid stories of the warfare from these times were recalled by elders. The stories I heard remembered children hiding, women being taken as slaves and the men being killed. They also frequently discuss how people from different Coast Salish communities helped each other in the face of the disturbances during these times.

Establishing the terms of sharing in this area began with a marriage arranged to end the war, and reinforced by the sharing of prerogatives such as Indian names and masks. Oral traditions recall these wars ending with a marriage between the Coast Salish and Kwakwaka'wakw. Though historians have proposed that naval intervention may have played a major role in establishing peace (Galois *et al.* 1994:234), such European interactions do not figure into local understandings of the history of community relations at this place. A marriage alliance arranged between a Cowichan woman and a Lekwiltok man who then lived at Cape Mudge was wrought from a decisive battle led by Cowichan and supported by a coalition of other willing Coast Salish allies at Maple Bay, just north of the mouth of the Cowichan River (Rozen 1985:131; Boas 1889; Jenness 1935a; Humphreys n.d.). This important marriage reopened the Cape Mudge area for island Coast Salish people to fish and camp at for generations after the couples were wed.

Simon Charlie talked about this important union and the territorial rights that it affirmed for the Island Coast Salish communities:

> We went right over to the *Yuqwulhte'x* side. In Cape Mudge we have a fishing ground.
>
> But that's when they stopped. They wanted to stop the wars that we had with the *Yuqwulhte'x*. So they got two young people together to stop the war. Those elders was one of the last ones that got married to a *Yuqwulhte'x* person. They stopped the war. That is why we got that fishing ground right there in Cape Mudge. [18-07-01-EMM:349-358]

Simon's story is a concrete example of kin ties crossing territorial boundaries, particularly in the context of establishing use rights in this relatively distant area. On another occasion, Simon provided information about the family of the Cowichan woman who was married into the Kwakwaka'wakw community at Cape Mudge to end the war. He reaffirmed that this marriage was responsible for the right to fish in the area, and indeed is implicated in the Coast Salish practice of hunting mountain goat in Knight Inlet, a long fjord further north into Kwakwaka'wakw territory than Cape Mudge.

> Oh yeah, I guess they fight here and there, and even among ourselves. But the main ones was the *Yuqwulhte'x*. Yeah, well the last one that was done, there was several of them. His grandaunt *Stuwaal*'s sister got married to a young man from Cape Mudge to stop the war.
>
> And that's why we got that fishing ground right in Cape Mudge. So we can go there and fish. But as for the hunting, we went up to Knights Inlet. That was where we used to go to hunt for goat's wool. [23-07-01-CS-iii:842-863]

The importance of this marriage has also been discussed from the perspective of Kwakwaka'wakw oral tradition. Harry Assu, a Kwakwaka'wakw leader from the Cape

Mudge Band[54] told how the Island Hul'qumi'num people came to have a camp just north of the lighthouse on the Cape Mudge Indian Reserve.

> We have a good feeling for all those tribes down Vancouver Island to around Cowichan. My grandfather told me that the way we overcame hard feelings between neighbouring groups of people was through making good marriages with them. (Harry Assu, in Assu and Inglis 1989:13)

The connections between the communities has been reinforced since this marriage, through the exchange of Indian names and hereditary ritual prerogatives. Dennis Charlie recalled the connections that were made between an older generation of people from Cape Mudge and Coast Salish people, highlighting the interplay of Indian names between the two communities.

> My mother used to talk about this when she was growing up. Her father's mother, old man Bob Seward, his mother was from Cape Mudge. Sister of the old man Tom Price from Cape Mudge. This is how we got to be connected over there with the *Yuqwulhte'x* [Cape Mudge people]. *Nilh p'e' 'o' shtun niiw 'muhws tthu qux sne' Snuneymuxw tun' ni' Yuqwulhte'x m'i wuqw'u thut, tthu xutustum m'i wuqw'uthut* [translation: This is where they are from. This is why the Nanaimo people have names from Cape Mudge, they drifted, it is said.] They drifted down. [21-02-01-EMM:427-430]

Chrystal Nahanee, a Coast Salish woman from Snuneymuxw who worked with me on many of these interviews with elders, carried a Kwakw'ala Indian name. Conversely, there is a Salish *sxwayxwuy* mask at the Kwagiulth Museum and Cultural Centre on Quadra Island. Tracing the inheritance rights for how this mask got into the collection at this Kwakwaka'wakw museum has frequently been discussed by Island Hul'qumi'num

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[54] Harry Assu is Billy Assu's son, who was in turn one of the primary consultants for Wilson Duff's paper on the southward expansion of the Kwakwaka'wakw people.

elders who have seen it there.[55] This mask, the shared Indian names and marriage ties all are important links to the land at this contested northern end of Coast Salish territory.

Since the cessation of inter-tribal conflicts in the 1840's, there have been continued social engagements between these communities, creating a relationship of hosts and guests. Penelakut elder Henry Edwards illustrated this notion in a discussion we had regarding the idea of defining, with a line on a map, territorial boundaries for the Island Hul'qumi'num communities who were members of the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group. He was generally uneasy with the idea, and framed his discussion in terms of his experiences staying at Cape Mudge, an area that is today Cape Mudge Indian Reserve 10, at the southern tip of Kwakwaka'wakw territory.

> In a way, a long time ago, they didn't have no boundaries, no boundary. The people right from Kuper [Penelakut] go down to Campbell River and they used to have a fishing ground next to that lighthouse in Campbell River on the east side. Cape Mudge. And all the Indian cabins were right close to the lighthouse, up right in front of where the spring water used to be. There was no boundaries. All the Cape Mudge people go down there. They didn't have no boats, just throw in fishing. There was hardly any gas and the running boards sometimes, that was in 1947 or something. '37, a long time ago, used to have the cabins. People had hard times but they used to get somewhere, long time ago. And they sit there the whole summer, like, after the fishing and they'd come home. Cape Mudge. They camped there. There's no boundaries [EH-i:104-122].

Henry was clear that territorial boundaries between Coast Salish and Kwakwaka'wakw communities ought not be conceived in the cartographic terms I had presented them. Their fishing territories were shared to the point that the Coast Salish people had cabins

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[55] Boas (Boas 1921:951-6) has a lengthy account of marriage ties between Kwakwaka'wakw and Comox Salish from whom four masks and dances passed.

located on the Kwakwaka'wakw Indian Reserve. Henry went on to talk about the notion of getting explicit permission, which in his experience was unnecessary under the terms of the relationship established at this location when people were going to get food.

> No permission. They go up there anytime when they need something. They get cabins up there too, until they get enough and they pack it and carry it on their backs coming down. [...]
>
> When they need something they go up there and get it. They don't ask. There's no boundary for their meals. [...]
>
> They go when they need something. They go out in the Gulf and eat, any place on the little Islands. They get their deer or seal or something like that. Porpoise and all that stuff. They dry it and take it home [EH-1:298-310, 415-420].

Henry later went back to emphasize his point that for communities, which were on good terms, like the Kwakawaka'wakw and Coast Salish, there were effectively no boundaries.

> To us there are no boundaries for a long time, way back generations. All these people go to Campbell River. Indians up there don't say nothing. Campbell River Indians. Indians over there used to go across river there and pick all the berries they need, people don't say nothing. They won't kick you off for anything, them Indians up there in Campbell River. Go up in the other part and pick salmon berries, they don't chase you. They're only glad to get different people up there. Play that *slahal* [bone game]. [EH-i:926-934]

Henry's final words provide the key context. He emphasizes the hospitality of the Kwakwakawa'kw hosts toward the Coast Salish guests. They are glad to see their neighbours and gamble together. Henry also knows that there are family ties between these communities today, stemming from the wedding arranged in the mid-1800s to end the wars between the two areas. Kwakwaka'wakw people at Cape Mudge understand this ethic of hospitality, feasting and playing host to guests, which in turn gives them connections in the social world of the Coast Salish for potlatching and sharing of other

resources.

Arvid Charlie, Abraham C. Joe, Fred Modeste, Marjorie Louie and Irene Harris have all spoken with me about the history of a Coast Salish camp just north of the lighthouse at Cape Mudge. These elders have memories of this camp from childhood, when they and their parents fished in the area. I have had the opportunity to visit the area twice and both times, I was told by Chief Ralph Dick and workers from the Hamatla Treaty Society (an organization which represents several of the southern Kwakwaka'wakw First Nations in treaty negotiations) about the Coast Salish camp. In the summer of 2003, I visited the former camp site, which was being bulldozed and excavated to provide sites for tourist RV campers. Archaeological deposits were everywhere to be seen. I was travelling with several of the Island Hul'qumi'num Chiefs and others, many of whom talked then about the idea of putting a plaque at the location to commemorate the Coast Salish camp that had been used for generations, and the connections of their communities to that location. This is work that they hope will be done one day.

Two decades earlier, Chief Harry Assu also spoke about the Coast Salish camps at Cape Mudge. Chief Assu's recollection emphasizes that Island Hul'qumi'num people from several communities stayed at that camp.

> The Salish people from Cowichan, Ladysmith, and Chemainus and Nanaimo people used to camp in our reserve here for the summer every year of my life until the 1960's. They camped on a bench of land north of the lighthouse within sight of our village. They fished from there and sold their salmon to the cannery at Quathiaski Cove in the early days. Families came, and some of the women spent the summer spinning wool and knitting Cowichan sweaters. We have been friends with them for a long

> time. And that includes the people as far south as Cowichan on Vancouver Island and the Salish on the Mainland as far south as North Vancouver. (Harry Assu, in Assu and Inglis 1989:14)

Valid connections of sharing, even friendship were established with people tracing decent to the Coast Salish people there, kin ties thus permeating territorial boundaries. Although Coast Salish ties to sharing the resources at Cape Mudge are strong as a result of the history of descent there, such sharing is not without significant tensions. Fred Modeste recalled going to the Cape Mudge area for fishing and the tense interactions that he had in the past with some of the people there:

> I used to go fishing up at Cape Mudge. The Cowichan and the Nanaimo and Kuper Island people had a camping ground. They used to camp there, fish. We were disliked but they couldn't say nothing. Cape Mudge people [disliked the Coast Salish because] we were in their territory. [05-06-01-MA-ii:272-279]

Fred's narrative suggests the strength of the connection that the marriage, which ended the war, brought between the Island Hul'qumi'num people and the Cape Mudge area. Their rights to be there were recognized even when local Kwakwaka'wakw people may not have liked them to be there. In a land of abundance, it is difficult to deny relatives food.

The oral histories about Cape Mudge are instructive in understanding territory in several ways. First, they emphasize how territory may be lost through warfare with a non-Coast Salish people, as the events prior to 1840 at Cape Mudge confirm. The loss of territory in this case is not, however, completely unambiguous. Marriage ties, hereditary ties through naming, the long-term presence of Coast Salish place names and symbolic landscapes, the recognition of rights of use and, importantly, rights of residence at the

Cape Mudge camp, indicate that Coast Salish claims and connections to this area are not by any means extinguished, and that appropriate protocols of sharing amongst kin are respected.

Shared, Joint Title Territories

There are areas, particularly in places located away from the permanent winter village sites of the Coast Salish residence groups, that become, over time, shared or jointly held territories. Snyder has described how for several Lushootseed communities, property rights have 'merged' together through interlocking kinship ties, creating in certain areas of their territories what may be called overlapping claims to particular resource areas (1964:392). In the Island Hul'qumi'num area there are several such shared territories where neighbouring residence groups claim title to the same general area or region, frequently on the basis of the property rights in land that are held by different descent or residence groups within a single general area. Prominent examples are frequently found in the southern Gulf Islands, and the Fraser River. In the former, long traditions of shared territory with the Saanich are known in the Mayne-Saturna-Pender Islands. Although only Saanich Indian Reserves are established there today, people from the two communities continue to jointly and amicably harvest and exercise traditional jurisdictions over resources and ancestral remains. The latter shared territory area, being the Fraser River, is discussed in depth below.

The south arm of the Fraser River is an excellent example of shared territories. Island Hul'qumi'num people assert the legitimacy of long shared legitimate territorial claims to

certain stretches of the Fraser River with the local residence groups who presently live in these areas. Though this lower Fraser River area has been illustrated in all ethnographic maps I have reviewed, save one (Ham 1982:67), as the exclusive territory of Fraser River based Coast Salish communities such as Kwantlen, Musqueam or Tsawwassen, the long presence of Island Hul'qumi'num people on the south arm of the Fraser River is a mostly undisputed fact (Rozen 1985:245). Duff (1952a:27) outlined the most well known example from information provided by one of his Kwantlen informants who recalled that lower Fraser River groups jointly held the south arm of the Fraser River with Island Hul'qumi'num communities:

> Part of Kwantlen territory on the South Arm was held in common by several Cowichan villages across the strait. The area was called *Tl'uqtinus*, and extended from Woodward's Landing to Ewens Cannery, some mile and a half.

The earliest written records of the region from the fur trade on the lower Fraser River corroborate this oral history of a strong Island Hul'qumi'num presence at the river's mouth. In 1824 John Work (Elliott 1912:212) referred to the mouth of the Fraser River as "the Coweechan River". At Tilbury Island, where *Tl'uqtinus* is located, he camped at a village site that "extends at least 3/4 of a mile along the shore, while passing it I counted 54 houses but on coming near they are found to be so situated that not more than the ½ of them were counted" (Elliott 1912:223). Between the 20th and 24th of August of 1825, Dr. John Scouler (1905:202-203), ship's surgeon on the HBC vessel *William and Anne*, had several encounters with the 'Cowitchen's' when they camped near the mouth of the south arm of the Fraser River. James Murray Yale took a census at Fort Langley in 1838-9, which indicated 79 'Cowaitchin' men, their wives and followers. There are

innumerable accounts of the Cowichan and other Island Coast Salish people camping and trading fish and furs on the Fraser River (Maclachlan 1998). Abner Thorne talked about his understanding of the early fur trade history for this area:

> We didn't go there just for fishing. *Tl'uqtinus* [place name for Lulu Island, South Shore portion] was a year round settlement, it wasn't just a camp. When the white man got there was 700 Indians there and they just took that land from under them, people didn't know, but they're still there and until such time as they got kicked out. And they just didn't go there for the fishing, they went for *stth'equn* [bull rush/reeds] that's the reeds and cranberries and blueberries. While people were fishing they were also making the mats and other stuff and drying the berries. [13-07-01-EMM:451-457]

Abner's inclusion of plant harvesting here implies a claim to land as well as to rights to marine and riverine resources. Arvid Charlie also talked about the influence of the Island Hul'qumi'num people at the time of the Fort Langley Journals. He recounted a story told to him by Stó:lō people.

> They dreaded that time when coast people, meaning us; came up the river with many canoes, and you can look in the Langley journals, it wasn't just a hundred, it was many canoes. And this is their story that they, some of them left when we came. You could imagine if it was 150, 200, 300 canoes coming up. I wouldn't oppose anybody either if I was you know, a smaller reserve. But also in turn for that, this is from the old people, that we looked after this area in a way if anybody else came there, meaning the north people, that we did not just stand by and watch our friends or relatives get raided, we protected the area, including our relatives. [18-07-01-EMM:870-876]

These narratives emphasize that the relationships to territory here are not predicated on the sharing of the resources of other people. The historical presence of Island Hul'qumi'num people on the Fraser River was grounded in the force of numbers, becoming indeed strategic and powerful allies for their neighbours in the mainland Halkomelem communities.

The village site of *Tl'uqtinus* is not the only documented place occupied by Island Hul'qumi'num people on the lower Fraser River. Several other Island Hul'qumi'num sites are known, from the mouth of the river at Canoe Pass, upriver to where the south, middle and north arm of the Fraser divide. Anthropologist Wilson Duff's unpublished notes (1952b) have a very useful short discussion of the 'Chemainus camp on Fraser', taken from a discussion with Big Joe of Chemainus Bay.

> The camp *Tl'uqtinus* was on the north bank of the main channel opposite Deas Island. Four 'nations' had houses there. Beginning at the upper end of the camp they were: 1. *Thuq'min* winter village at Shell beach on the east shore of Ladysmith harbour, 2. *Q'ul'its'*at Kulleet ('Chemainus Bay'), 3. *Pun'e'luxutth'* at Penelekuts Spit on Kuper Island, 4. *Leey'qsun* on Valdes Island. The camp consisted of single row of plank houses facing the river. While the whole camp was divided into these four segments, each group had several houses and my impression is that they were standing rather closely side by side with no particular break between segments. The *Xul'el't'hw* [Halalt] people, whose winter village was at *tsi'xwum* on Willy Island used to go with the Kuper Island people. The Nanaimo had their own camp on the river but Big Joe is not sure where. The Cowichan came only to Cannery Point off Point Roberts. The Chemainus people must have gone farther up the river long ago because they know the names of all the tribes up there. (1952b)

This account is significant because it is one of the few early Island Hul'qumi'num discussions of the area by a non-Cowichan, spelling out in detail some of the patterns of how residence groups came to jointly and in common use this Fraser River area. The unity of these village at *Tl'uqtinus* suggests that descent groups crosscut residence group boundaries.

Contemporary Island Hul'qumi'num elders have also spoken with me about the history of their use and occupation of this area. The late Rose James from Penelakut remembers the 'old people' telling her that they used to camp where the cannery in Steveston now

sits:

> They had little sheds, little shacks made out of split cedar, just split cedar and they built it there and made their beds there for themselves those elders. When fishing, when the fish went up the rivers and they used to go there to get the fish to smoke and dry and put it away for the winter. [...] And that's what they used to do for them, they were never stuck for any thing what to live on for the winter months. They stayed there and helped themselves. [28-03-01-EMM:1011-1026]

Myrus James from Penelakut likewise remembers his mother taking him to pick blueberries around the Steveston area, and on Sea Island in particular, when he was young. Theresa Rice from Chemainus and Malahat, and Simon Charlie both recalled Island Hul'qumi'num people fishing at Steveston, while Henry Edwards recalled Chemainus people having a camp there as well. Steveston is a town located near Canoe Pass, a small side channel along the lowest reaches of the Fraser River, upon which no other mainland Halkomelem group had a permanent settlement. Henry Edwards, Myrus James, and Abner Thorne all specifically mentioned Penelakut and Cowichan camps at Canoe Pass where, Abner Thorne recalled, the late Cowichan elder Abel Joe was born in 1914. George Harris from Chemainus discussed Island Hul'qumi'num people gathering berries, collecting bullrushes and fishing around Canoe Pass. Rozen was told by Abel Joe and Abraham Joe from Cowichan and Arnold Guerin from Musqueam that this place is called *xwlhits'um* meaning "place for cutting [cat-tails]" (Rozen 1985:248). Today a large group of recently recognized status Indians living in this Steveston/Canoe Pass area trace their descent from the former Penelakut village at Lamalchi Bay. They are petitioning the Federal Government for recognition as an Indian Band under the collective name Hwulitsum First Nation, which is taken from this place name.

Further upriver at Annacis Island, Roy Edwards and Abner Thorne both talked about the Island Hul'qumi'num fishing camp called *Xukw'usum'*. Henry Edwards also recalled Chemainus people having camped and picked cranberries and blueberries while they were fishing at this place.[56] Further upriver, Douglas Island was mentioned frequently by several people who were or had been active fishermen, as being an important place for Island Hul'qumi'num people. It is the island just upriver from the Port Mann Bridge, right at the confluence of the Pitt and Fraser Rivers. Arvid Charlie said that Douglas Island was "one of the exclusive to us people [sic]", and that it is a "very good place to get the real tall reeds, plus berries and other things". The late Dennis Alphonse said that it was one of his favourite fishing grounds.

The connections Island Hul'qumi'num people have to these places on the lower Fraser are not expressed as being based on marriage or trade, but rather on residence groups owning camps and productive resource locations on this regionally important salmon river. Today, however, these Island Hul'qumi'num claims are not accepted by all. In political meetings and fisheries negotiations, both the Musqueam and Tsawwassen have expressed their view that such use, in the past, was only under protocol with these respective First Nations and that Island Hul'qumi'num people merely shared access to the area through their hosts' generosity. Such claims are contested by Island Hul'qumi'num elders and leaders, who argue a strong propriety right to the area rooted in

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[56] This may be the same place listed by Rozen (1979:62, 65; see also Suttles 2004:574) as *Suw'qw'aqsun*, meaning 'drift-away point', being the only named campsite in the area, directly across the river from the 4,500 year old (though now largely destroyed) St. Mungo archaeological site DgRr 2 (Pratt 1992:50-1; Matson and Coupland 1995:99).

these settlements and the ancestral fishing and gathering activities that happen there.

In discussing this Musqueam position, several Island Hul'qumi'num elders recalled the history of their connection to the area. Abraham C. Joe talked about having spoken on several occasions to two prominent Musqueam elders, Cyrus Point, and Dominic Point (sons of the late Johnny Point who was one of Wayne Suttles' informants) about the presence of Island Hul'qumi'num people on the Fraser River. They said to him that "not only Cowichan owns that place on the Fraser River. Nanaimo, Penelakut, Cowichan and Chemainus own that Fraser River area" [22-05-01-EMM:34-38]. When Abraham was younger, he went fishing on the Fraser River with his grandfather who worked as a fisherman. Hi grandfather met Johnny Point who explained the relationship of the Cowichan people to the land at the mouth of the south arm:

> I was with my grandpa when we went up the Fraser River, we went up there and you're not allowed to fish Saturday and Sunday. We went up river up there and we met this old man. I told our people, you have to go to Musqueam to interview this man, his name is Johnny Point. You interview that man.' We met him up on the big... about 5,000 acres of flat ground up there where the wild blueberries grow. That's where we were going. We got up there, everybody go in gas boats, gas fishing boats, there was a bunch of boats tied up there.
>
> We got up there and walked a little ways and we seen this man standing over there...when he met my grandpa. Musqueam people are close related to Cowichan. Cowichan women married Musqueam. So we have close relations on this family. My grandpa's side, my grandma's side, in the marriage. That's what this man was, Johnny Point. Talked to my grandpa "I'm so glad you're home. You're home." And I was right there, I was a young lad listening. And he looked like that, looking towards the east...5,000, 10,000 acres. He looked like that, going like that to my grandfather, "You're home. Did you know that this here is your home?" My grandfather said "Yeah, yeah I know that." "All this here is your home. This is the Fraser River. You people use to live across there." In there is a slough, a pretty big size slough, Cowichan had a camping

> ground over there and they even called this little creek, they call that Cowichan. [22-06-01-JA-i:351-387]

For Abraham, these were highly significant words coming from such respected Musqueam historian as Johnny Point. Specific Island Hul'qumi'num property rights are recognized in this narrative by Musqueam people, and the relationships guiding the shared territory are negotiated through the idiom of kin.

These strong connections to places on the lower Fraser River were the foundation for the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group to include that area as part of the core territory line. Based on this historical connection to the land (no Island Hul'qumi'num communities have Indian Reserves in the area today), the Chiefs of the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group assert an Aboriginal title claim to the area, beyond a mere right to fish. Resolving these overlaps with the Musqueam, Tsawwassen and other communities that are now based in the area, is viewed by many Island Hul'qumi'num people as a major challenge, but one seen as worth taking on, given the continued economic and subsistence importance of the Fraser River sockeye fishery and the high value of real estate in the area.

Two types of sharing have been outlined in this section. The first is the moral ideal of sharing access to territories with close kin. Sharing can create tensions between kin, particularly in-laws, when the welcome is overstayed. As I will discuss in the next section, though sharing is an important idiom in Coast Salish territories, there are still jurisdictions where customary laws, controlling harvesting or trespass by outsiders, are enforced. The second kind of sharing occurs in jointly held territories between

communities. This is found in areas where highly interconnected use rights to important but distant regions of a territory are held collectively by several communities. As I will detail in chapter 9, there are other territories also shared with or jointly held by Island Hul'qumi'num people.

Territories as Controlled, Closed Common Areas

As discussed above, one of the central principles in sharing territories at the edges or beyond one's network of extended kin is the ability to play the social positions of host and guest. Though the social world of Coast Salish people is extensive, people do not play host to everyone all the time. Community members have the right, in theory and in practice, to restrict outsiders from trespass or use of land and resources within their territories. Enforcement against trespass is largely dependent on outsiders over-harvesting or overstaying their welcome or failing to respect local protocols – social, ritual and technical – about resource harvesting. Historically, appropriate reprisals for trespass were death or reparations through potlatching. Below I provide several narratives and ethnographic descriptions which explicate the principle and practice of exclusion.

Arvid Charlie outlined the relationship with the Nitinat (a Nuu-chah-nulth community (non-Salish) from the west coast of Vancouver Island), and their use of Cowichan territory in the mountains around Lake Cowichan and the upper Cowichan River.

> Going back to compiling all the things I've heard [from talking with other elders], 'core' [territory] would be where we went. If somebody was to come in there, they'd have to be close family if they came inside of that

> 'core'. Or have specific use area that everybody recognized that they'd come to and camp at. Maybe with permission, maybe just a general understanding.
>
> Those two are important: some with permission, some with a general understanding that "Yes, this is where so-and-so camps. They hunt around it, harvest around it".
>
> I say that because of where Nitinat, our brothers and sisters over there, were known to come into Cowichan Lake. But if they come beyond a certain point they were killed off. But they were tolerated up in here [pointing generally to upper Cowichan Lake area on a map], from what I understand. [...]
>
> As they [West Coast people] were married, they would have that right because they were married to a Cowichan woman. So that woman had rights to be there. Family, their children, grandchildren. That's how I understand it. [03-04-01-CA-i:272-294]

Arvid's example is interesting because he distinguishes the two different kinds of rights discussed in the previous section – a general right to joint use of a territory that is acknowledged as shared between communities, and a specific right to use of a locale through permissions granted between in-laws who are from different communities. He is unmistakable about the consequences of a Nitinat hunter acting outside of these rights – he would have been killed.

Elmendorf provided a similar example in his writings on the Twana, a southern Coast Salish group. He outlined the joint use of Twana territory by amicable and often inter-related neighbours (1960:267) and described a general principle held by Twana people towards those who over-extended their welcome.

> There was, however, a definite dislike of 'outsiders' persistently intruding, for hunting, on Twana territory far outside their own drainage area. Such intruders were 'impolite,' they 'didn't know how to act,' 'they hadn't been brought up right.' Informants HA and FA used these expressions

> independently. If persistent, intruders might be told to 'get out and use their own country' (Elmendorf 1960:267).

These comments resonate with those made by Arvid Charlie. Respecting local protocols with respect to extra-territorial use of resources is essential. People who use these territories without drawing on their web of kinship and people who were so socially distant that they spoke languages unrelated to the Salishan speech of Coast Salish communities, such as unilingual speakers of Nuu-chah-nulth or Kwakwaka'wakw languages, were likely not to know or respect local protocols.

Snyder pointed out the categorical distinction Skagit people make between communities of different Coast Salish peoples living in the region, and 'foreigners' who did not have any rights to land or resources in the area.

> Neighbours were humans *a'citibixw* ('us living here'), because their lives were regulated in the same way, according to the same rules. They understood the subtleties of the feud, the snub, the verbal innuendo. But never, for most Skagits, could *sti'tlalh* [foreigners] be one of the *a'citibixw*. They were capable only of physical not social destruction; in other words, they could not humiliate. And so Skagits dealt accordingly with *sti'tlalh*. Reprisals could be swift and brutal, consequences never were social but as impersonal as any in the world of Skagits. (Snyder 1964:435)

Such distinctions are important for understanding the limits to which territory was shared. It was clearly a closed territory, not open for anyone, but rather quite limited to those people who understood the rules by which the resources could be extracted. Collins, who also worked with Skagit communities, substantiated Snyder's observation. Thompson trespass into Skagit territory was objected to on the grounds that they did not follow the accepted routines of needing to "visit their relatives there first to announce

their presence, their intentions, and to be given tacit permission" before hunting in Skagit territory (Collins 1974b:80).

As Snyder has shown through oral histories of 'hunting deaths', 'outsiders' whose behaviour toward resource management could not be controlled through social pressures such as embarrassment and ostracizing, were not free to use the resources in the territory and were often summarily killed if encountered encroaching (1964:432-433; see also Duff 1952a:77).

Many oral histories are told today about the violent defence of Hul'qumi'num territory against outsiders, particularly those from Nuu-chah-nulth and Kwakwaka'wakw communities. Several examples of conflicts with the former will illustrate this history. Angus Smith talked about a place called *S'athin'us* at the foot of Lake Cowichan where two families kept watch against West Coast peoples' incursions: "They never allowed any West Coast [people] to come through Lake Cowichan. You can even find some of the people they killed. Cowichan killed quite a few of them" [09-07-01-AD-PR-SA-i:894-904]. Arvid Charlie talked about a retaliatory raid by Cowichans on the Ditidaht people at Cheewhat River south of Bamfield, a site recorded as *ƛu·ʔu·wsaʔtx* [Clo-oose Indian Reserve] in Nuu-chah-nulth (Arima and Dewhirst 1990:392). Arvid said that one of the elders, from whom he asked for clarification on the story, said the raid happened because "we got tired of them coming down (the Cowichan River) so we fixed it" [03-04-01-CA-i:303-304]. In the 1930s, Mr. Johnson from one of the Cowichan communities, told Jenness that "Cowichan Natives from all the villages hunted around Cowichan lake.

The west coast Natives did not reach that lake until the middle of the last century. The two peoples had several skirmishes there" (Jenness 1935a:271).

It was not only 'foreign tribes' that were physically challenged within Island Hul'qumi'num territories. Fred Modeste told a story of how the communities at Cowichan Bay would not let the ships of newcomers into the bay during the early colonial period. Fred said

> they really protected it because they wouldn't let other tribes come in, they just didn't like other tribes come in and it got worse when the ships start coming in they wouldn't let them in. They kept trying. The Indians went out there in a big canoe and they told them to leave [05-06-01-AF-ii:517-521].

Though the history of resistance to colonial incursions into Hul'qumi'num territory was discussed earlier, it is a history that Fred pointed out should be remembered in the context of describing Coast Salish territories.

These stories of exclusion of outsiders from individual Coast Salish territories underscores something of the tensions between playing the role of host and guests, and enforcing property and territorial rights of the family group or community. The tension of appropriate sharing with in-laws mentioned earlier is exacerbated in situations when the in-laws are from communities having 'foreign' cultures and languages, or when as shown earlier, Coast Salish people exercise their prerogatives of sharing in communities at the peripheries of their own territories. In the case of colonial intrusions into the territories of Island Hul'qumi'num people, generations of challenges have been mounted, and continue today in the form of legal contests and unresolved land claims.

Understanding the details of how the ethic of sharing and exclusion plays out in Coast Salish land tenure system may have a powerful role in resolving these land claims with the Canadian state. In chapter 10, I will review how principles of sharing territory and shared, joint territories have been recognized as elements of Aboriginal title in Canadian common law.

Summary

In this chapter I have described how current theoretical notions of Aboriginal territories suggest taking into account distinctive indigenous relationships to place, land and to other person-agents in the land. In the Coast Salish context, I have described how territories are appropriately conceived of as being held beyond the level of a single descent or residence group, and may include all of the area within the watersheds of places where residence groups have common property or alternately where multiple residence groups share a language, dialect or micro-dialect. These territories are of a similar order to other indigenous notions of territory on the Northwest Coast, though there are some important distinctions in size based in part on resource density. Finally, I have described Coast Salish notions of territory, the pervasive ideologies of sharing with kin, and the tensions which emerge in the exercise of powers to prohibit trespass or defend a territory.

This discussion of cartographic practice of territorial representation and the narrative practice of recognizing appropriate mores of inclusion and exclusion has left a seeming paradox. How can there be territorial boundaries in a world of highly interlocking kin

ties, where knowledge and use of land may not be restricted to economic, resource harvesting activities in owned areas, but includes senses of spirit, ancestor, identity and myth that go to the heart of Coast Salish dwelling in place? How can such territorial ideas be reconciled in the political milieu of land claims, where western preconceptions of Aboriginal territories create a dominant expectation that the territorial overlap be resolved in order to settle the claim? These questions are the subject of chapter 9.

Chapter 9
Boundaries and Overlapping Claims

Introduction

To grapple with the seeming paradox of Coast Salish territoriality within an ethos of borderless kin networks, I turn to Barth's (2000) suggestion that concepts of borders and boundaries have to be relativized in the context of local cultural and linguistic constructs. I argue that delineating territories based on strictly on Coast Salish land use and occupancy is inadequate to take into account broader relationships between people and place. Property, language, residence and identity are categories which are appropriate to Coast Salish understandings of their territorial boundaries, while ideas and practices of kin, travel, descent and sharing make boundaries permeable.

The chapter concludes with a consideration of the boundary lines created by Coast Salish people in the context of putting forward to the state their claims to the land. Here I argue that, in the maps and Native language terms used to describe territories and boundaries, Coast Salish leaders have attempted to balance their own understandings of territory in a frame that is familiar to the state. I will show how such efforts are treated cautiously by community commentators on Coast Salish political and cultural affairs who are concerned that by making claims in these terms, relationships between kin and to place are threatened by the power that such expressions have to transform Coast Salish social and political relations.

The Paradox of Boundaries in Coast Salish Territories

Theorizing ideas of boundary, Barth has argued that common English views of the concept divide territories on the ground, set limits marking distinct social groups, and provide a mental template for division of categories of things (2000:17). Such visions, he argues, cannot be universally applied in other cultural and linguistic constructs of boundary. Barth's analysis leads to relativizing the concept, suggesting that the culture and language of local understandings must be explored to resolve the seeming paradox suggested by Coast Salish perspectives.

I argue that conventional ethnographic mapping of territorial boundaries must be re-imagined in the Coast Salish context. Narratives from elders suggest that a cadastral matrix of boundary lines and polygons delineating limits on travel and resource harvesting mis-represent Coast Salish understandings. The idea of territorial boundaries, conceived as unproblematic, straightforward delineations of the ownership of a territory by a social unit such as a descent or residence group, fails to take into account the cultural concepts of sharing with kin and the many levels of relationship to land that Coast Salish people might have. Myers (1991:19) has provided a critique of Radcliffe-Brown on just this point of assuming one-dimensional relationships between social organization and territory in hunter-gatherer societies. An understanding of how boundaries are conceived must consider the political, ideological and spatial relationships to the land and the people who dwell within it, what Myers called a view of place as "the totality of relations among people" (1991:20). Poirier has followed such a view of the boundaries of Atikamekw territory in Québec, suggesting that "if there are any borders at

all between these areas of responsibility, they are essentially flexible and permeable, and they are reevaluated according to needs and events; here, the principle and logic at stake centres on networks of shared responsibility towards a living land (Poirier 2001:107). Non-Native notions of boundaries for Coast Salish people are simultaneously dissolved by travel, kin, and descent, particularly when thought of in relation to communities within and neighbouring Island Hul'qumi'num residence groups.

When I asked Arvid Charlie how the word 'boundary' might be translated into *Hul'q'umi'num'*, he responded that the appropriate word would be *xutsten'* meaning marker, index or indicator, and said that "it's kind of hard to define" [03-04-01-CA-i:219-220]. Peter Seymour, Willie Seymour and Roy Edwards all gave the word *q'uluxutstun*, meaning 'fence' or 'enclosure',[57] putting my enquiries in check with the caution that such *q'uluxutstun* or fences did not exist between communities other than the hard lines drawn around Indian Reserves which separate those who now live on- and off-Reserve. Irene Harris went further in highlighting a general distaste for the exercise of eliciting *Hul'q'umi'num'* terms for boundaries, explaining that her grandfathers had told her that *hwulunitum* [non-Native] ideas of boundaries were strictly for animals, not for First Nations people. *Hwuhwilmuhw* [First Nations people] with kin ties in multiple communities is not so 'domesticated' and does not have such fences. Many of the other conversations I had about boundaries emphasized such sentiments.

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[57] The word *xutsten'* 'marker' is clearly cognate with *q'uluxutstun* 'fence'. */q'ul-/* is the root meaning 'to go around/over something'.

Island Hul'qumi'num people have expressed the view that non-Native concepts of boundaries are powerfully reinforced through the administration of the *Indian Act* provisions which create formal membership divisions between the communities, creating differences between on-reserve and off-reserve members where ties through travel, kin, and descent suggest there should be none. A brief excerpt of a speech by Abraham C. Joe in one of our Mapping Committee meetings exemplifies the point:

> The way the white man wants us to have boundaries, we never had boundaries before. We went from one end of the island to the other. And I think we gotta come up with something that would erase those boundaries. [01-02-21-EMM:1353-1357]

Abraham went on to stress that in the old social order of his and prior generations, territorial relations were centred around kin connections. If you had family, there was no boundary preventing one from travel.

> Those days the old people used to make canoes and travel all over. All the way past Seattle up into Tacoma to a big house up there. They travelled on canoes. [...] Like Rose [James] says 'There was no such thing of our ancestors [that they drew boundaries]. They visit one another, they were related.' No matter how far you go you've got relations. Down the United States you got relations. And they all got along good. [...] There's no such thing as borders, no I don't believe it. [28-03-01-EMM:1143-1156]

For Abraham and many others, these arbitrary boundaries – treaty lines, international boundaries, or the meets and bounds of an Indian Reserve – all create a dilemma in a kin-oriented social world. Coast Salish people make careful reference to their potential extensive bilateral kin networks to navigate these boundaries, the passports of family trees.

A person did not need permission from their relatives to go somewhere, stressed another

Cowichan elder in a follow-up meeting, "they [your relatives] never questioned who you are, they knew who you were and you just go and you would just go do whatever you can" [01-03-28-EMM:824-825(AP)]. The ethic of sharing and giving away wealth, not hoarding it, provides a moral basis for this assumed permission. In a system where village exogamy, combined with bilateral kin reckoning, creates a very wide kin network, it indeed appears that there are no territorial boundaries.

The apparent norm of territorial openness must, however, be understood in context. At the level of descent and residence group properties and of territories, the presumptions of permission *are* sometimes withdrawn, such as when the Penelakut First Nation closed their community-commons held beach to their Cowichan relatives who wanted to exercise their commercial communal licence there and when members of the Cowichan community closed the Cowichan River to their Penelakut relatives. The land tenure system is thus an essential mechanism in guarding against over-exploitation and the inappropriate movement of wealth from one community to another. At the same time, Coast Salish values and morals keep resources from being hoarded. Coast Salish mythology elaborates on both of these aspects. Cowichan elder Ruby Peters has published a version of the Seagull story in *Hul'q'umi'num'*, with an English translation (Hukari *et al.* 1977), which teaches about the drastic consequences of gluttony and not sharing with your relatives. These principles are constantly in tension in Coast Salish views of people-land relations.

The tension of these ideas is further highlighted when people grapple with the boundaries

of Indian Reserves and band membership imposed by the Canadian state. Robert Guerin expressed his concerns with such boundaries, emphasizing the interconnectedness of people through descent and marriage.

> I have a hard time talking about how we are different because I don't believe that we are, hey. I don't think there is a line that separated the Cowichan people from the so-called Chemainus people, from the Musqueam. I don't think that exists, hey. [04-04-01-GR-i:807-812]

Robert himself recalled his own close kin ties to several communities in the Coast Salish world, including Musqueam, Penelakut, Chemainus and Cowichan. For him, an expression of the recognition of bilateral kindred challenges visions of boundaries expressed in the context of the administrative units of Indian Bands or the territory maps produced for treaty talks.

Irene Harris similarly discussed her concerns about a proposal to draw territorial boundaries amongst Island Hul'qumi'num communities to advance separate land claims. She felt that such an action could further divide the Lyackson and Chemainus communities, both to which she has intimate connections – to Valdes Island through her Lyackson grandfather, to Kulleet Bay through her long residence in the Chemainus community and to Gabriola Island through the graves of deceased kin from these communities being buried there. She feels the processes engaged in producing these overlapping land claims would create unnecessary divisions between these communities, where boundaries should not exist:

> My grandfather is originally from Lyackson but, in those days it's like that, the people from the Northern came down and massacred, you know. And they started from there and Lyackson was the first. When *Shts'um'inus* [Chemainus] heard it, they went over there, and they got all

> the children that were left orphans and they brought them down to *Shts'um'inus*. And that's how my grandfather came to Chemainus Bay.
>
> And then when my grandfather was telling us that when the younger generation grew up and start having their families, they came out with that typhoid. That was the first epidemic they had and they all got scared, and they all moved down to Gabriola, you know, that [False] Narrows and that's where that cemetery is. And when people went there some of them were already deceased on the canoes, and they tried to bury them, because they couldn't do it in that [canoes], I think it was those cliffs [at False Narrows] where they had the burial. So that's where there's lots of Lyackson people buried there too, not only them there's lots. See that, and that's how a lot of our stories are getting mixed up because of that, you know we have different, my grandfather used to always talk about that Lyackson. We used to go over there and he used to tell us you know this is where your *sxwayxwuy* [ritual mask] comes from. This is where your *st'ulmeylh* [song for the mask dancer] comes from you know.
>
> But that was the thing, we always mixed, you know, we never, I don't think we had a different nations; we were all in one. [21-02-01-EMM:772-802]

Drawing hard boundary lines between these communities as part of individual land claims settlements of Coast Salish communities on Vancouver Island would be, for Irene, "a mistake like what Indian Affairs done long time ago" in creating the Indian bands and Indian Reserves which have the power today to separate families and divide communities. Such boundaries might become implicated in restricting freedom of travel or resource harvesting for people in these communities, supplanting the porous relations of the territory and property of kin with the impersonal divisions of state-backed harvest areas or treaty settlement lands.

Simon Charlie has emphasized this last point most succinctly. Boundaries for him are colonial tactics used to divide Coast Salish people and disperse their political and economic power. Kin ties and sharing, he emphasizes, undercut these colonial forces.

> Our big problem, I think, is that we're so intertwined that there was no border. Saanich would come here and, you know, they were part of the family. Same with Nanaimo. And it bothers me now that, you know, when somebody wants to come and fish, our young people say, 'oh you don't belong here.' No, our way of life was if we belonged to, like, related to the Musqueam. We can go over there any time and live there if we want to. The same with the Lummi. My grandfather met his uncles in Lummi and they told me the house is still there any time you come, you come you live here. The same with Musqueam. The Points were very close to us and old people told him any time he wants to go to the house, I go there. But now the Indian Affairs brainwashed our young people that we only belong to one band. That wasn't the way it was before. [10-04-01-CS-iv:74-85]

It is helpful to carefully interpret the intent of Simon's words. There were no restrictions on community membership and belonging in a pre-Indian band sense. An individual was able to activate their family network and harvest in or even take up residence in another community. These communities, however, retained their own sense of identity and property, reflected in part by the labels of identity and affiliation with residence groups. Within the realm of kin, sharing is expected, although as I have detailed earlier, rules and limits on sharing are clear and people who disrespect them within these territorial boundaries are treated with outsider status.

Property, language, residence, and identity with the actions of the mythic community-forming ancestors appear to be useful categories for understanding the territorial boundaries envisioned by Coast Salish people. Kin, travel, descent and a pervasive ethic of sharing indicate the social contexts in which these boundaries become permeable, and indeed put the concept of boundaries in some tension, if not paradox, in contemporary political expressions. Where state systems create territorial boundaries which are more totalizing, bounding and limiting the recognition of kin connections and

appropriate practices of travel sharing, Coast Salish people categorically reject them, though they often have to adjust their lives to them because of the administrative and bureaucratic power of the state which creates and maintains them. Where Coast Salish people are expected to create or define their own territorial boundaries, as I discuss below, they are cautious about engaging them and the paradoxes and conflicts they produce.

Ontological Dilemmas in Contemporary Tribal Territories

In drawing territorial boundaries for submission as statements of intent in the British Columbia Treaty process (see Figure 9.1),[58] I argue that Coast Salish people have attempted to balance their everyday, community-based interest in ideals of sharing amongst kin with the power of their proprietary and jurisdictional interests in territory. I would not go so far to say that, as Ingold has argued, Coast Salish people "systematically invert their own understandings" (2000b:133) in articulating their collective connections to place in this way. It has been rather, as Scott (2001:7) has argued, an employment of dual strategies to persuade outsiders of the distinct Aboriginal cultural meanings in the land, while negotiating the legal position of their territories in terms familiar to Euro-Canadian concepts of property and jurisdiction.

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[58] Tables 2.1 and 2.2 earlier in this study further sorts out the complex political affiliations of these bands and tribal councils, and their linguistic and historic identities as residence or village groups.

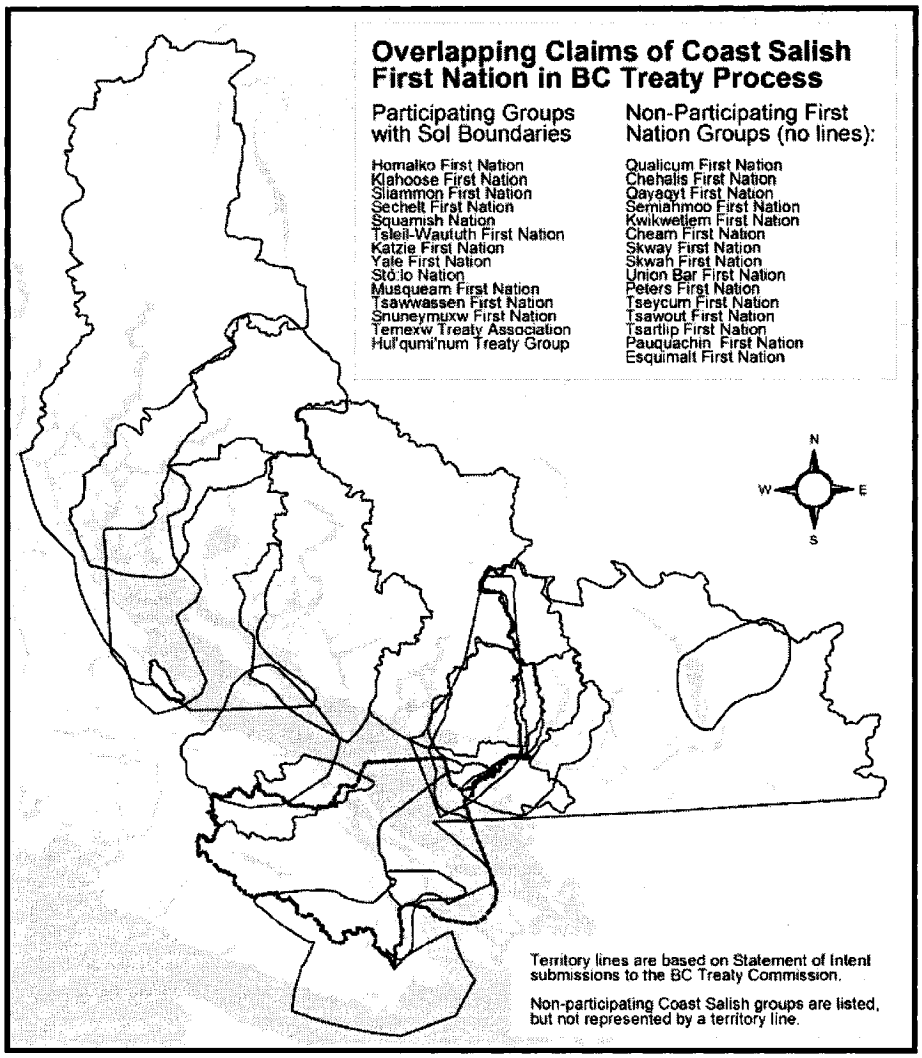


Figure 9.1. Overlapping claims of Coast Salish First Nations in BC treaty process

Their 'Statement of Intent' maps indicating self-defined traditional territory boundaries have now formed a complex set of overlapping claims. This was in part because the First Nations filing the claims are 'nations' on different, self-defined socio-political scales. Some of the groups submitting a claim were individual Indian Act defined bands (i.e.: Tsawwassen or Snuneymuxw First Nation), some were groups of bands forming all or (more often) part of a cultural or linguistic group (i.e.: Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group), and

others were political alliances that crossed cultural or linguistic boundaries (i.e.: Te'mexw Treaty Association). This process of engaging in negotiations with varied levels of Aboriginal communities goes against the recommendations of the 1996 Royal Commission on Aboriginal people. The commission argued that the right to self-determination be vested in "Aboriginal nations", rather than "small local communities", the former being "a sizeable body of Aboriginal people with a shared sense of national identity that constitutes the predominant population in a certain territory or group of territories" (Canada 1996: 10). Such self-determining Aboriginal nations would produce more efficient Aboriginal governments, and would better reflect the greater communities' connections to their traditional territories. While the process established by the British Columbia Treaty Commission recognizes each community's ability to be self-determining, it created a situation where contemporary political differences between self-defined First Nations of varied scale may make increasingly difficult the maintenance of long-term cultural and kinship connections among Coast Salish communities.

In spite of the immediately obvious problems of overlapping claims, Coast Salish leaders and negotiators have, since entering the British Columbia Treaty Process, expressed their communities' assertions of Aboriginal title, jurisdiction and rights over their territories through the use of these Statement of Intent maps and by identifying indigenous language terms for the notion of traditional territory. During my work in Coast Salish communities, I have been privileged to be involved in the drawing of two First Nations' Statement of Intent maps for submission to the British Columbia Treaty Commission. Below I will illustrate, through the example of the Statement of Intent maps for Stó:lō

Nation and Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group, and the indigenous language terms used to identify the concept of traditional territory in these maps, the strategies used by Coast Salish leaders to achieve the dual goal of expressing territoriality in terms familiar to western bureaucratic institutions while portraying the multifaceted complexity of their peoples' relationships to land.

My first experience with this process was with the Stó:lō Nation in the fall of 1994. The Stó:lō leadership were preparing to enter the treaty process, and were required to submit a Statement of Intent map in order to begin the process. Having cartography skills, I was asked to hold the pen in order to draw a line around a boundary that had been determined by senior staff and political leaders. In general, the map followed the watershed areas around places that were named in *Halq'eméylem* (see map illustrated in Carlson 1996:endpapers). Over the next ten years, a time when the Stó:lō Nation developed as a political institution representing most of the Fraser Valley Coast Salish First Nations communities (Kew and Miller 1999), this map became a reified representation of Stó:lō Traditional Territory.

The image of the Stó:lō traditional territory as depicted on this map has been given the Upriver *Halq'eméylem* name *S'olh Tumuhw, Our Land.* This name originated in a phrase documented while linguist Brent Galloway was working with the Coqualeetza Elders Group. The phrase *s'olh tumuhw tu ikw'ula, halhmut tu mukw'stem it kwulet*[59] was

[59] This phrase is written here in the Cowichan practical orthography for consistency with the terms in other Salishan languages throughout this study.

elicited by Galloway in the context of a long place names mapping project, and has been glossed as 'this is our land, we need to take care of it'. To an Upriver *Halq'eméylem*-speaking audience, the phrase is evocative of Stó:lō ownership and jurisdiction over their asserted territory, and the patrimony felt towards their lands. The phrase also carries the political weight of the unsettled, unresolved land claims, in being directed in part at an audience of the settler society. Though the area defined in the Stó:lō traditional territory map is quietly critiqued by some First Nations leaders (both Stó:lō and their neighbours) as being a massive expansion of territorial claims by the Fraser Valley based Indian Bands' political leadership (particularly in the mouth of the Fraser River and the head of Harrison Lake), the term *s'olh tumuhw* and the distinctive image of the territory line has become a familiar feature of the current political landscape in the Lower Mainland of British Columbia.

In 2001, I became involved in redrafting the Statement of Intent line of the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group. In our consultations with the community elders, it was very clear that the old Statement of Intent map, on file at the BCTC, did not adequately express Hul'qumi'num people' s connection to the territory. Several important areas were completely excluded from the old Statement of Intent line, which caused great concern and debate among the elders and other members of the Hul'qumi'num community who felt that the line their leaders were promoting may 'short-change' future generations needing a settlement covering their entire traditional territory. I embarked on a series of focus groups, individual interviews, Chiefs' and elders' meetings to discuss crafting a new line. The end result was a submission of a 'core' and 'marine' territory

line to the BCTC, to reflect the Aboriginal title territory of the Hul'qumi'num people, as well as the marine area within which Aboriginal rights are exercised (see Figure 9.2). During these meetings, the focus of the conversation often turned to the boundaries and borderlines of Hul'qumi'num communities' territories. While community members readily identified boundary markers, it was only through intense community discussion that firm borderlines were agreed upon. This idea was more problematic for Hul'qumi'num people who talk about such matters via idioms of kin and sharing.

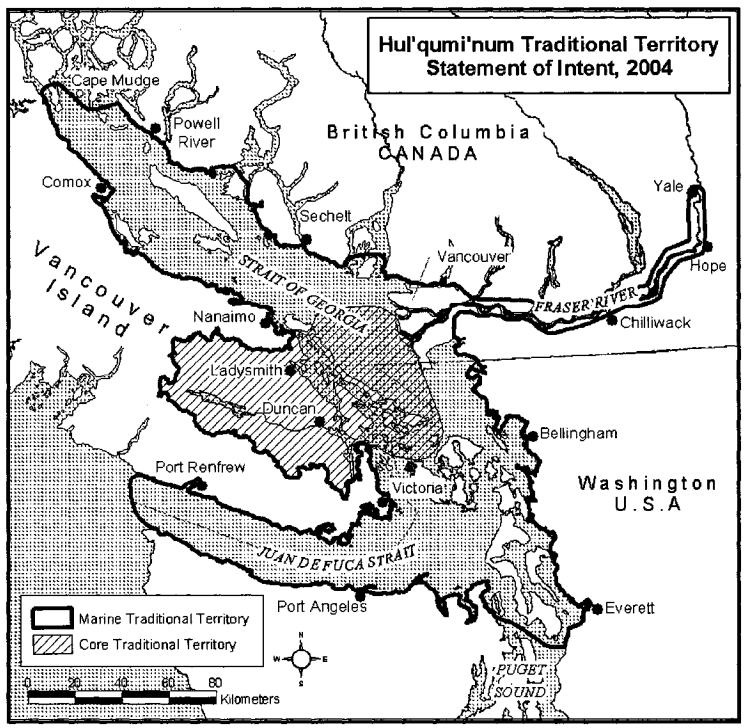


Figure 9.2. Hul'qumi'num traditional territory, 2004

Just as the delineation of boundary lines of Hul'qumi'num traditional territory was challenging, so was the choice of a *Hul'q'umi'num'* language term for the claimed area. Though the phrase *s'olh tumuhw* is commonly heard in the political discourse in Island

Hul'qumi'num communities, it was not seriously considered as a moniker for the map, possibly in part because of its high profile use in the Stó:lō context, a group with whom the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group has overlapping claims. When I asked fluent speakers independently about the term, some agreed that it might be useful to express the idea of 'territory'; however, many felt that it inadequately conveyed the Hul'qumi'num idea of territory. Ruby Peters countered with a different term, *stl'ulnup*, which she felt was a more subtle expression of the idea of territory. This word means 'territory', or more literally the ancient land of the Island Hul'qumi'num people. Ruby referred to the Statement of Intent map as illustrative of the scope of this term in reference to an idea of territory.

In my further enquiries with fluent speakers, I found that when used in the context of talking about land, the term *stl'ulnup* can be glossed as 'ancient ground' or 'original land'. Mabel Mitchell, a Hul'qumi'num linguist, explained that the term can be used when speaking about the ground on which the old-style Coast Salish longhouses were constructed. If a longhouse was moved, the original house site was *stl'ulnup*, the ancient ground. Wayne Suttles recently informed me that one of his Lummi consultants also defined the Straits Salish term *st'ulnup* as 'homesite'.

The word *stl'ulnup* also can be recognized in a reduplicated form in several place names. A Lummi speaker told Suttles that *stl'ultl'ulnup* was a place name for a village at Flat Point, Lopez Island (1951:37). Stern (1934:107-108) recorded that the village originally located at this named place moved to Gooseberry Point on the mainland. Alfred Louie

and Alexis Louie from Chemainus told Rozen that *stl'utl'iinup* (perhaps meaning 'deep ground') is the name for the village site at Departure Bay in Nanaimo (1985:45).[60] This was an old winter village site that Rozen's informants said was the "...'real home' of most of the Nanaimo people", whose Indian Reserves were made along or close to the Nanaimo River (1985:45). A Sooke consultant told Suttles that *st'luntl'unup* was a place name, but did not mention the location or a story. These place names are clearly cognate with the word *stl'ulnup*, the sense of the 'ancient ground' in the reduplicated forms referring to sites of original settlement.

I had further opportunities on a number of different occasions to discuss this term with fluent *Hul'q'umi'num'* speaking elders including: Philomena Alphonse, Dora Wilson, Ray Harris, Roy Edwards, Norbert Sylvester, Abner Thorne, Ross Modeste, Ruby Peters, Arvid Charlie, Florence James and Mabel Mitchell. These people met to discuss and debate an appropriate term to use to refer to the traditional territory of the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group. During these meetings, the nuance of the meaning attributed to *stl'ulnup* was further explicated. Ruby Peters, for instance, expanded on how this term could be used in the context of defining Island Hul'qumi'num 'territory':

> *Stl'ulnup* is said because that means that belongs to the people from the beginning of time. [01-07-10-EMM:305-307; AD-PR-SA-1:975-1021]
> *Nilh tsun p'temut kws nuten 'iis hw'iint tu stl'ulnup i' thus nil's swe's tu syuw'en tumuhw kw o'stem a ni'ni* [I did ask my mother, when she was

[60] The term *stl'ulnup* can be partially analysed. The prefix /s-/ is a nominalizer, while /-unup/ is the clear lexical suffix 'ground'. Hukari (Hukari 2003) suggests that the term may be analysed /s-tl'-ul-(u)nup/ <nom-root-aug-'ground'>, where the /-ul-/ may be the augment /-al-/ which is often found accompanying a lexical suffix, and the meaning of the root unknown. Suttles (personal communication 2003) also finds the root difficult to analyse, suggesting that it *may* be /tl'el/ 'be detained (by circumstances including friends), get stuck (as at some place).'

> still here about *stl'ulnup*. She said ancestral land, and whatever is there] ancient ground, traditional ground, the original. That's how she explained it when I asked her what *stl'ulnup* meant. She was talking about bighouse words and she said that you can call that *stl'ulnup* because that's where the long house is and that's where our people stayed. That's the original land where they were. And she said any land can be *stl'ulnup*. The original belongs to the Native people. Ant that's how she explained it to me. I thought I better let you know what was told to me quite a while ago. [27-02-03-EAB]

During a break in one of the meetings that we held to discuss this idea, Roy Edwards took me aside and told me that the term could be used with a broader meaning. Working from my notes of that conversation, I recorded Roy as having said:

> *Stl'ulnup* includes all the things like the land, the water, the trees. *Tumuhw* has many different meanings. It can be confused with the Temexw Treaty Association. It is just the land, not everything on it. *Stl'ulnup* also includes all the 'secrets' that a person has for use in the big house. It is all the old things a person has in the house that's theirs, that they inherit. If we say *s'olh stl'ulnup*, we mean its all ours, all of our lands and all the things on it. It is inclusive. Everything within that boundary line that we drew is ours. That's what it means. It includes the minerals and the tress and the land and all the things we inherit. [27-02-03:RE-i-FN]

After several hours of discussion over the course of four days, this group of elders agreed with Ruby that *stl'ulnup* was the best term to use as a *Hul'q'umi'num'* expression to accompany the map of their traditional territory. The key meanings of this term are that the land referred to is ancient, that it evokes an association with other kinds of inherited properties, like the big-house 'secrets' described above by Roy Edwards, and importantly that it refers not only to land/earth/ground, but all the things on and under the ground. Most of the elders in the group emphasized that it was important to come to a consensus on the term, and were pleased that *stl'ulnup* was suggested because it carried such a breadth of meaning. Interestingly, not everyone felt that it was useful to translate English

concepts like 'Aboriginal title' into *Hul'q'umi'num'* and that by doing so we were 'pushing' some of the *Hul'q'umi'num'* ideas or using them in new ways.

These maps represent the efforts of contemporary Coast Salish leadership to represent the complexities of Coast Salish territorial assertions in the political milieu of negotiating their vision of place within the constitutional and institutional framework of the Canadian state. The Salishan language terms used to describe these illustrations of territory reflect the balance that this leadership, and the elders who advise them, have tried to achieve in expressing in their own terms some of the core notions of property, authority, ancestry, identity and permanence that give rise to the territorial claims. Cruikshank has characterized processes such as this as "the difficult task of reconciling the state's narratives about land as bounded units to be owned and operated for profit with their own spatial understanding that stories crosscut maps" (1998:16).

However, these maps and terms have not left everyone fully satisfied that an ontological balance has been reached. Some Hul'qumi'num community members have expressed deep concern over the construction of borders and boundary lines for treaty negotiations with state government. These people see boundaries and borders as arbitrary and artificial at best, and at worst a part of a recurring colonial mechanism of government to create division between communities and kin and weaken the potential strength of the Coast Salish people as a Nation. These people are concerned that the power of such maps and terms will have the effect of severing their connections to place, framing the future of engagements with the land exercised as rights negotiated under land claims

settlements firmly in western ontological terms.

Chief Rick Thomas has best articulated the core problem created in trying to resolve borders and boundaries and territories with the drawing of a simple line. He said

> I extend my appreciation for the elders taking the time to come out and voice their concerns on the issues that are before us in the treaty process [the drawing of the boundary line for the Statement of Intent]. Not only the process, but the situation we are in and the governments put these division lines between us. We always seem to come to the conclusion that we are all related and that these boundaries shouldn't be there. [02-02-01-EMM:5-10]

The borders imaged as simple boundary lines on this traditional territory map offends kin- and ancestor-centred senses of place, and have the potential, if empowered with the institutions of the state, of limiting many of the other kinds of associations with land in the Coast Salish world that I have discussed in previous chapters.

Such a critique was well articulated by George Seymour who made a speech during an elders' meeting on the creation of a new Statement of Intent submission for the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group:

> The treaty process that has been going in this area for I think about eight years, since the treaty started. Now we're at this point. I remember and I'm beginning when they first started, half way through they started meeting with other Nations, West coast *Methelumuhw* [west coast] people, North coast people and all the different people from the different Nations.
>
> And my hope was because there was no borders, because we feel there's no borders within our lands, we travel far and wide. Our old people travelled long ways.
>
> And I'm hoping to look at that Salish territory, Salish waters, right from Campbell River across Powell River, Sechelt and all across the mainland there right down to the States. I was hoping we'd all get together and talk

about that Salish territory, because that's a big resource, in our area Pacific Rim, resources. That is ours.

As I mentioned before that the government is forcing us into things, drawing these little borders. When they first come and made a reserve they drew us the little borders and then 'divide and conquer' they call that I think. And we could see it again, just getting a little bit bigger that's all, and it's creating bad feelings amongst us. But we're still one people.

I just like to mention that was my hope, to see all the Salish people on the coast get together and lets talk about this big Salish territory.

But my concern is, you know, looking at the borders that we're forced to draw and you know the government's dictating, "Oh we're not going to negotiate this, we're not going to negotiate that." They're not giving us much.

And we talk about the taxation, I have a hard time with that too because, you know, when you look at the whole Salish territory, I think they should be paying the whole Salish territory peoples that taxation. I am really concerned just like everybody else, really concerned about this, and I hope we can get together to discuss this Salish territory with all the people that understand the Hul'qumi'num language. *Huy tseep q'u* [Thank you all]. [26-02-01-EST:405-435]

George articulates a vision of the 'Coast Salish world' as being an area within which Hul'qumi'num people have travelled, traded, intermarried and moved. He is concerned that the treaty process moves Coast Salish communities further from their customary laws and traditions, and into the colonial compartments created by the Indian Act reserve system.

These sentiments have been echoed by many other community members. Each time I introduced the Hul'qumi'num traditional territory map in the context of other First Nations' overlapping land claims maps, that had been submitted to the British Columbia Treaty Commission (depicted here in Figure 9.1), the elders I worked with became

deeply concerned. Talking about these issues in 'government words' troubled them as the terms used ('overlaps', 'boundaries', 'final treaty settlement land') diminish the ease with which people can fluidly activate their community connections. They consistently suggested that the solution to the overlap problem would be to work out co-management agreements with all their neighbours so that there is accord vis-à-vis the 'outside' governments, but flexibility to develop inter-community relations as internal matters without government interference. Their solution was, essentially, to work out modern-day arrangements to implement a vision of the Coast Salish world (Figure 9.3).

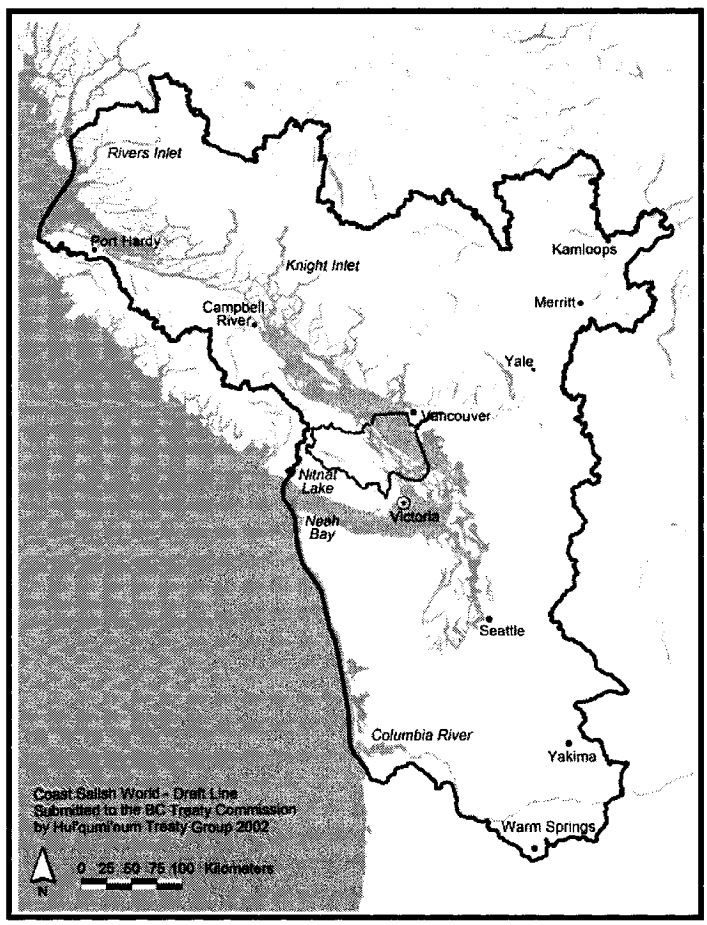


Figure 9.3. Coast Salish world draft map, Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group, 2002

The Coast Salish World map depicts a line around all of the territories for which the elders involved in the treaty process had told stories recalling travel, trade, alliances, kin ties, regional ritual practices, harvesting areas, graveyards, and owned resource areas. The area is more expansive than shared language (Island, Downriver and Upriver Halkomelem) or language family (Coast Salish), including links to hunting and trading areas in Rivers Inlet, Kamloops, Yakima, and Warm Springs Oregon. Though this map is still considered under development, it has been frequently used as a reference point in treaty negotiations for a possible entitlement area for wildlife harvesting.

A number of years ago, Willie Seymour made a speech to a group of senior First Nation Chiefs and politicians about the problems of creating borderlines in land claims. He, like many of his fellow Coast Salish elders, reminded these leaders of the difficulties in striking a balance between making claims that will be accepted and understood by the state, and the strength and unity of kin connections throughout the Coast Salish world. Willie recalled his speech to me one day in a conversation about the potential problems of overlapping land claims.

> I had, what was shared here. I had the same argument at the [First Nations] Summit level. It was about 10 years ago, I went to a Summit meeting they had at the Hotel Vancouver. I went over there to get some documents signed. I was doing work with Coast Salish. Joe Mathias had spent a day and a half talking about exactly what we're doing today. Talking about overlaps. How they're going to deal with it, and there was a really heated argument on the floor, especially outside Coast Salish, you know. And the Kwakiutl are saying there is no way they are going to be flexible. That they are going to hold strong in their position. The interior, the north of Squamish and Chehalis, those First Nations were saying that, that their boundary is firm. You know, it's this mountain and there is no flexibility whatsoever. And then, Stó:lō was defending their area as well, very strongly, that Cowichan's were intruding.

And anyway I sat there. I got interested and I sat there and listened, and listened to the arguments.

Finally, Joe Mathias come over to me and he says, "what do you think of all this?"

I said, "that's not an argument. There's not even a, there shouldn't even be a concern at this political table."

He said "I want you to say that. I want you to get up and say that." So, he went back and, I think he was chairing the meeting, I think. Because he called on me, that was one of the first meetings, the first few meetings I was involved in, so he called me to a microphone.

So, I got up and I spoke. I say, "I'm having a real difficult time defining the term boundary, or territory, or fence, because I never heard that terminology before. You know, I never heard that ownership to a family except to say that our grandfathers shared. They'll invite each other to come to their hunting area, or to their fishing area, or harvest area. They invite their relatives to go share with them. The reason I have a problem is that my family name, I'm registered Chemainus First Nation, but if we go by, by these rules, I'm displaced, because my family name don't even come from *Shts'um'inus* [Chemainus]. My name *Xwulqwutstun* [Willy's traditional name] comes from *T'eet'qe'* [Lyackson village at Shingle Point]. My father's name comes from a place called *Qwul'sthut* [Bazan Bay] Bazan Bay near Sidney, that's where *S'xwulten* [Willy Seymour's father's name] comes from. My grandmother is Penelakut and my grandfather is Lyackson, my great grandfather is Lyackson. My grandmother is *Meluxulh* [Malahat] but her name comes from Lummi and her grandfather's name came from Lummi, *Tthut'suwenuhw* [persons traditional name]. I says, "I'm totally confused with the arguments going here. Am I going to be divorced from all my family ties with this new rule that is going to be brought down?"

And it just hushed, you know.

So the ones that were arguing the hardest just shut right up. You know, that's all I said. All I did was talk about my family tree and it showed how diverse my family is. How great an area that we shared. And I said I have a connection to each of those areas. And my grandmother is a descent of Douglas Treaty, *Meluxulh* [Malahat] and her grandfather was *P'oqwutsun* [Paquachin]. One of my uncles actually occupied that land. My brother owns the land now. Yeah, he's from *P'oqwutsun* [Paquachin]. It was handed down to him from our uncle. So, when we begin talking internal boundaries, it's going to be quite the interesting topic. [21-11-00-TA-AD-

SA-i:672-719]

Willie Seymour, one of the great Coast Salish orators of recent years, silenced this group of Chiefs and First Nations politicians in their discussion of creating boundaries. He reminded them of the customary law they all know – kin ties break down any boundaries and sharing is a key underlying principle of life on the Northwest Coast. Willie's vision has not yet turned to firm political action, as the Coast Salish and neighbouring communities have stood behind their territory maps submitted as Statement of Intent maps to the BCTC, drawing lines between families, communities and nations. A political solidarity of all the Coast Salish communities within Canada to pursue land claims jointly may be required to reduce these challenges, (though even then, lines between Coast Salish and neighbouring First Nations would be cross-cut by kin relations and claims to common lands and resources). Present indications of the Coast Salish political leadership and community sentiment, however, suggest that the problem of these overlapping claims will continue to bedevil their collective aspirations.

Summary and Conclusions

In the first half of this study I presented a case for Coast Salish senses of place embedded in the experiences and narratives of myth, ancestor, spirit, language, identity and history. In the second half of this study I have described the foundations of the Coast Salish land tenure system. I argued that some relations of property are at the level of local residence and descent groups, while territories are held by residence groups sharing a watershed, bounded by language and ancestral identity, and conceived as areas of controlled sharing. Kin ties and reciprocal obligations maintained through visiting, gifting, feasting (Suttles

1960) and events like winter dancing and canoe racing (Suttles 1963) create a pattern of 'using' places in these neighbouring territories. As several elders often said, 'we always go there'. Not 'going there' would be fundamentally *inappropriate*, as these relations are the foundation of the society itself.

I have concluded the ethnography in this chapter by discussing the ontological challenge that Coast Salish leaders are faced with in expressing their property and territorial claims to the state, while rooting these claims in the varied expressions and experiences of place. The challenge of expressing boundaries in western property terms is clearly perceived by elders and leaders who feel that standard boundary maps and experiences of Indian reserves and Bands as units of colonial and administrative power and control are inadequate to reframe inter-community and community-state relations in land claims. Returning again to Barth's idea that boundaries must be conceived of in relativistic terms, taking into account local senses of place and relational epistemologies, I argue that the melange of territorial boundaries that form these overlapping claims can be re-conceived as circles of inclusion, recognition and mutuality. Such a perspective is consistent with that described by Scott and Mulrennan for Torres Strait Islanders, whose overlapping claims "appear to be the ordinary and indeed primary condition of property, if we overcome common senses of property as precise, discrete and unproblematic objects and delineated spaces" (1999:148). From this perspective, overlapping claims become essential to Coast Salish social, political and economic life, reflecting and reinforcing an integral part of Coast Salish phenomenal experiences of dwelling in the world.

Chapter 10
Looking Forward: Theorizing Place in Western Legal Discourses

> You must know first how a man uses his soil, how he weaves round it his traditional legends, his beliefs and mystical values, how he fights for it and defends it; then and only then will you be able to grasp the system of legal and customary rights which define the relationship between man and the soil. (Malinowski 1935:320)

Conclusions and Future Directions

The central ethnographic challenge in this study has been to understand densely intertwined cultural meanings that are embedded in place, and to describe how those meanings are vested with intersubjective power through discursive practice and experiences of daily life. As Malinowski has emphasized in my epigraph to this chapter, ties between myth, spirit, and property are essential to theorizing the relationships which are at the basis of indigenous claims to land. I have argued that these relationships must be conceived in terms of the multiple senses of place that are encountered in local experiences of dwelling. The relations are ideational and emotive, entailing thinking with and experiencing the land. In the Coast Salish context, the senses of place focus attention on the connections and interrelations between myth, legend, ancestor, spirit, song, identity, language, property, territory, boundary and title. Such intensely local senses of place foster relationships with land imbued with a numinousness that is threaded through the many modes of cultural practice, resulting in what Clammer (2004:95) has called an "inalienable patrimony" which forms the ontological basis of Aboriginal land claims.

I wish to conclude this study by arguing that these relationships between dwelling in

place and claiming land are compelling as a theory of indigenous property and that such a theory, if vested with the social and political powers of western legal systems, can be instrumental in reconfiguring the ways Aboriginal claims to land may be recognized and affirmed. Such a theory explains the basis of Aboriginal assertions of land claims and self-government as being grounded in being-in-the-world.

In the Coast Salish case, the indigenous property claims which this theory attempts to explain, are configured by relationships to land; relationships embedded in ancestral ties, embodying the spiritual and social powers of everyday experience, and structured by the customary laws and cultural practices of relations of kin, property and sharing. These relationships, which may be thought of as the essence of Coast Salish senses of place, are at the very nexus of Coast Salish assertions of Aboriginal title and rights.[61]

The conceptual frame Aboriginal people use for measuring legitimacy of assertions of connection to land, as Scott has argued for the James Bay Crees, are based on beliefs, values and social relationships (1988:40). This is true in the Coast Salish context, where beliefs rooted in the experience of spirit and ancestor, the values of inclusion and sharing, and the social relationships of wide networks of kin connections all connect people to place. While such relationships are at the core of Aboriginal title claims, they are not

[61] It is important to understand this not to be an exhaustive statement, but a substantially illustrative one. There are, of course, other 'senses' and 'relationships' which give rise to title and rights. For instance, as I have argued together with McLay *et al.* (2004), relationships with the dead, the places spirits of the dead dwell, and the customary laws which guide these relations may also formulate important Aboriginal rights that could include title.

easily reducible to western ideas of property. Indeed, western property law needs to make conceptual space for indigenous property relationships. I argue that by examining local discourses and practices related to place we shift the terms of western discourses about land from ones that separate space and place, culture and nature, spirit and property, to perspectives rooted more closely in Aboriginal worldviews, ontologies and experiences of dwelling.

Testing Ethnography in Canadian Courts

As a means to scrutinize my assertion that a theory of Aboriginal senses of place may be useful in formulating Aboriginal title claims, in this section I provide a critical discussion of the legal tests for proof of Aboriginal title set out by the Supreme Court of Canada. I evaluate the perspectives taken throughout this study in light of the requirements of these legal tests. I have found that while the Coast Salish senses of place described in this study meet many of the requirements of these legal tests, many of the tests are founded in ethnocentric assumptions which may have to be reformulated in order that Aboriginal property claims can be more fully understood in this legal framework. Short of this, I argue that further evidence providing a more encyclopaedic examination of historic and contemporary practice will likely be necessary to fully establish successful territorial claims of Aboriginal title.

On December 11th, 1997, the Supreme Court of Canada gave its reasons for decision regarding Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en Aboriginal title and jurisdiction in the *Delgamuukw* case. The case was an important step in the development of legal definitions and tests to

prove Aboriginal title in Canada, and the conditions under which government may justifiably infringe upon it. This landmark decision has set the terms of the debate for First Nations communities who seek, through appealing to the power of Canadian legal discourses, a just and fair resolution to the social inequalities they find themselves subject to, particularly in relation to land.

Chief Justice Antonio Lamer has formulated a vision of the source of Aboriginal title in his reasons for Judgement in *Delgamuukw*. He described the source of Aboriginal title as a *sui generis* right in Canadian common law through the blending of pre-existing British "common law which recognizes occupation as proof of possession and systems of Aboriginal law pre-existing assertion of British sovereignty" (Lamer CJ., *Delgamuukw v. R* [1997] 3 S.C.R. 1012). This vision of Aboriginal title provides a unique and important opportunity for the kinds of Aboriginal relationships to land described in this study to gain constitutional recognition and affirmation.

To gain legal recognition of the specific existence of Aboriginal title, it is not sufficient to merely assert that it exists. The courts have established a requirement for Aboriginal people to provide proof for the existence and extent of Aboriginal title claim. The framework for the legal proof of Aboriginal title has unfolded in the context of a number of legal tests that Chief Justice Antonio Lamer set out in the *Delgamuukw* and *Van der Peet* cases. These legal tests require the Aboriginal claimant to satisfy the burden of proof (reviewed in detail in Thom 2001b) for Aboriginal title. Table 10.1 provides a summary of each of these tests. The centrality of the concept of culture in these tests

opens important avenues for richly situating Aboriginal claims in the various phenomenally experienced engagements with place.

Table 10.1. Tests for existence of Aboriginal rights and title
*Van der Peet (VdP)/ Delgamuukw (Del) (adapted from Thom 2001b:10)

1	take into account the perspective of Aboriginal peoples themselves (*VdP*)
2	take into account both the relationship of Aboriginal peoples to the land and the distinctive societies and cultures of Aboriginal people (*VdP*)
3	identify precisely the nature of the claim being made (*VdP*)
4	ensure that the practice, custom or tradition is of central significance (*VdP*)
5	ensure that the right is of independent significance to the Aboriginal culture in which it exists (*VdP*)
6	ensure that the cultural claim is distinctive to the Aboriginal culture, though it need not be distinct (*VdP*)[62]
7	ensure that the cultural claims are those which have continuity with those that existed prior to contact (*VdP*); claimants must show continuity between present and pre-sovereignty occupation (*Del*)
8	adjudicate claims on a specific basis (*VdP*)
9	claimants must show exclusive occupancy, though shared exclusive occupancy may be considered (*Del*)
10	ensure that the influence of European culture will only be relevant to the inquiry if it is demonstrated that the claim is only integral because of that influence (*VdP*)
11	approach rules of evidence in light of evidentiary difficulties inherent in adjudicating Aboriginal claims (*VdP*)

Tests One, Two and Three

One of the most important objectives of this phenomenological study is to create an epistemological bridge between Aboriginal perspectives and those of non-Aboriginal witnesses to them, addressing the essence of the first two tests. Such an approach is consistent with anthropologist John Cove's suggestion, made long before *Delgamuukw,*

[62] By the notion of a cultural claim being 'distinctive' without necessarily being 'distinct', the Supreme Court is referring to aspects of a culture that make that culture what it is ('distinctive'), but that such aspects need not be found only in that culture ('distinct').

Sparrow or *Van der Peet* went to trial, that to argue Aboriginal title cases, anthropologists could advantageously integrate studies of the cultural geography of Aboriginal people with studies of cosmology to model holistic systems of land tenure that take into account Aboriginal worldviews (1982). I have argued in this study that to take these perspectives into account, an account of dwelling, experience, embodiment, meaning and power of place is required to grapple with Coast Salish perspectives of the very places that they claim.

The legal community has provided critiques of how the objectives set out in tests one and two, of taking into account Aboriginal perspectives, can be reconciled with the requirement in test three for Aboriginal rights to be defined as specific practices, cultures and traditions integral to the distinctive Aboriginal cultures making the claims. Zalewski argues, along with dissenting judges in *Van der Peet,* McLachlin and L'Heureux-Dubé, that for Aboriginal perspectives to be taken into account "the courts would also have to examine the social structure and beliefs of that Aboriginal group" as "it is the laws and ideologies of Aboriginal groups, not mere practices to which those laws and ideologies give rise" that should be considered to fairly and respectfully protect Aboriginal rights (1997:451-452). Borrows concurs with Zalewski, taking issue with how these facets of the *Van der Peet* and *Delgamuukw* tests bring Aboriginal rights "more fully under the cultural assumptions of the common law... [establishing] non-Aboriginal characterizations of Aboriginality, evidence and law" (1998:52). The prominent local ethnographic discourse of land use and occupancy studies (Tobias 2000; Weinstein 1993) that has proliferated in recent years, as a response to assertions of Aboriginal title and

rights in British Columbia, largely fails to highlight the distinction between ideology and practice, and alone, in my view, largely fails to fully represent the different senses of place which underlie the views of Aboriginal people themselves and their relationships to the land.

Tests Four, Five and Six

The fourth, fifth and sixth *Van der Peet /Delgamuukw* tests revolve around the idea that narrowly defined cultural practices must be of central significance. In this thesis, I have made two broad arguments which speak to these points. The first is that land is very much a central object of Coast Salish discourse, and the multitude of relationships with place, and the social, spiritual, political and economic consequences of those relationships are of central significance in the practice of Coast Salish culture. The second is that the land tenure systems (and, as I have argued elsewhere, other property systems (Thom and Bain 2004)) of Coast Salish people, like those of their Northwest Coast neighbours, are distinguishing features of Northwest Coast cultures among Aboriginal people in North America.

These tests have been critiqued by members of the legal community for the implausibility of the notion that some cultural trait could be so critical (or integral) to a society that without it, the culture would be "fundamentally altered or other than what it is" (Zalewski 1997:444). Indeed this critique points out the epistemological difficulty involved in abstracting any particular activity from its place within the larger cultural practice. Borrows sees the continuing use of the idea of practices which are integral to a

distinctive culture as having the "potential to reinforce stereotypes about Indians"; attempting to prove what is integral to Aboriginal societies "is steeped in questionable North American cultural images" (1998:43 note 40). It is my hope that this study which has focussed on practices of dwelling in the land has not committed such a fallacy.

Such thinking has led to a discourse where rights and title are considered in the narrowest sense, argued species by species, location by location. A legal option published by a law firm used by the Provincial government in British Columbia (Mackenzie 2003) illustrates this view:

> It appears that Aboriginal title, which must be proved at present on a case by case basis may not exist on every acre of land throughout the Province. The most probable areas of Aboriginal title will no doubt be Indian Reserves, generally established at Aboriginal village sites occupied in most cases since time immemorial. It may be, as was held at trial in *Delgamuukw*, that at greater distances from these locations, Aboriginal title gives way to Aboriginal rights and that both title and rights disappear completely at great distances from village centres.

This view construes First Nations' 'territory' (regardless of the ethnographic particulars of the Aboriginal peoples in question) to be an undefined area over which Native people travelled and foraged. Places that are used and occupied year-round such as villages and maintained graveyards are where Aboriginal title is to be found, if it is acknowledged at all. There may, in this view, be usufructuary rights to resources of particular importance over areas of a region, but these usufructuary rights would not be characterized as Aboriginal title.

Counter to this argument, Usher has summarized his characterization of the 'bundle of

rights' associated with customary property law in Canadian Aboriginal communities as "(1) use by the group itself, and the right to include or exclude others...; and (2) the right to permit others to utilise lands and resources. Excluded were the right to alienate or sell land to outsiders, to destroy or diminish land or resources, or to appropriate lands or resources for private gain without regard to reciprocal obligations" (1993:40). Such bundles of rights which formulate Aboriginal title have a proprietary nature as *profits à prendre*, where benefits from those rights accrue to the community as a whole, and may be considered as an aspect of Aboriginal title (Usher 1992). The general picture of land tenure theorized by Usher, and more particularly, the specific model of Coast Salish tenure I have described in chapters 7, 8 and 9, gives cause to substantially critique the notions behind tests four, five and six as unsophisticated and ethnocentric constructions of Aboriginal concepts of property and territory.

Test Seven

Lamer's seventh test sets out the requirement that continuity must be shown between the group claiming the right or title and their ancestors at the time of contact or sovereignty. This test partially originates out of the Australian *Mabo* ruling, and partially out of the principle of continuous use and occupancy in the British common law (Macklem 2001:76). From this test, he envisions claimants showing "substantial maintenance of the connection between the people and the land" to establish title (Lamer, CJ., *Delgamuukw* [1998] 1 C.N.L.R. 72). Though legal scholar John Borrows has critiqued this test because it relies too much on "pre-contact practices [and] restricts contemporary Aboriginal development" (1998:43), the terms of Aboriginal land claims are often framed

in the ancestral traditions that predate European sovereignty assertions.

Such assertions by Aboriginal people have not gone unchallenged. Some scholars have asserted in the face of this kind of evidence that contemporary territorial claims of First Nations are an artefact of modern-day political organizations and their goals. One such challenge in the Coast Salish context has been offered by Reid, who wrote about the Nooksack primarily from secondary sources, arguing that since larger social groupings than the local group (often referred to as 'tribes') do not represent self-identified groups from the previous century, "the idea of possessing territories as tribes may not have existed before the land claims cases of the 1920s and 1950s that forced the Coast Salish groups to establish 'territories'" (1987:16). Instead of territories, Reid argues that local communities claimed less clearly defined use rights along drainage systems (1987:16). Counter to this argument, I have set in chapters 7, 8 and 9 descriptions of local ideas of property and territory which have significant historical depth, and that are strongly tied to long-established foundations of a social organization. Indeed, the diverse contemporary political institutions which make Aboriginal title claims need to be understood in a historical context as developing from Coast Salish social organizations.

Though I have drawn primarily on the narratives of older people in this study, my long association in Coast Salish communities has exposed me to the deep interest and practice of these cultural traditions by younger generations, in spite of the significant challenges and barriers of vastly diminished resources, a widely privatized land base and a century of concerted attempts at cultural and linguistic assimilation. An ethnography such as this

one would meet the seventh test more fully when supplemented with a careful study of genealogy (Elias 1993:256) or additional detailed historical and archaeological evidence of land use and occupancy. Such studies would make explicit the cultural continuity between present-day practices and those of the time which the courts have argued gave rise to the existence of the right in the common law. Finding incontestable evidence to satisfy this test, however, could prove challenging, as the historic and ethnographic records are often scant in areas such as customary law, precise configuration of social groups and local tenure arrangements, areas which would surely be debated in the courts in a contest over Aboriginal title (Asch and Bell 1994).

Tests Eight and Nine

The eighth test requires that claims be specific to the First Nation making the claim, not to Aboriginal people generally and the ninth test requires that this claim be exclusive to that First Nation. These tests emphasize the importance of clearly explaining principles of kin-based social organization, and principles and social norms which formulate local land tenure systems. Fortunately, the courts have provided a useful and subtle ethnographic model of Aboriginal land tenure which has significance when held in the light of Coast Salish land tenure practice. The model purposes that territories may be held exclusively, or that they may be shared exclusively amongst amicable but separate First Nations groups (Lamer CJ., *Delgaummukw v. R* [1997] 3 S.C.R. 1010, at para. 158).

> ... the requirement of exclusive occupancy and the possibility of joint title could be reconciled by recognizing that joint title could arise from shared exclusivity. The meaning of shared exclusivity is well known to the common law. Exclusive possession is the right to exclude others. Shared exclusive possession is the right to exclude others except those with whom

possession is shared.

In the same and concurring reasons for judgement, Justice Gérard La Forest (*ibid*, at para. 196) expanded on Lamer's distinction between sharing access to territory and joint occupancy of shared territory:

> Some would also argue that specificity requires exclusive occupation and use of the land by the Aboriginal group in question. The way I see it, exclusivity means that an Aboriginal group must show that a claimed territory is indeed its ancestral territory and not the territory of an unconnected Aboriginal society. On the other hand, I recognize the possibility that two or more Aboriginal groups may have occupied the same territory and used the land communally as part of their traditional way of life. In cases where two or more groups have accommodated each other in this way, I would not preclude a finding of joint occupancy. The result may be different, however, in cases where one dominant Aboriginal group has merely permitted other groups to use the territory or where definite boundaries were established and maintained between two Aboriginal groups in the same territory.

It is significant that the cultural importance of sharing in Aboriginal communities has been acknowledged by the judiciary as a plausible and indeed possibly defining element of Aboriginal title. In Coast Salish cultural contexts, I have argued that the moral ideal of sharing the products of descent or residence group properties and sharing access to resources within broader territories must be clearly understood in the context of Aboriginal property relations. As I have argued, this moral ideal of sharing must not be mistaken for there not being property, as there are also clear rules and limits for exclusion of people from exclusively owned resource areas or territories. I have further detailed in the ethnography, how certain portions of territories are, in places, jointly and amicably shared between members of different communities, a practice which has been largely lost in traditions of ethnographic mapping, and thus not well understood in the literature. Though the contemporary maps of overlapping Coast Salish territories may appear at first

to undermine any claims to exclusive title, these principles of land tenure provide insight into Coast Salish understandings that address aspects of tests 8 and 9.

Test Ten

The tenth test places "those activities that developed solely as a result of European culture outside of the protection of the Canadian Constitution," and has thus "...relegated Aboriginal peoples to the backwaters of social development, deprived them of protection for practices that grew through intercultural exchange, and minimized the impact of Aboriginal rights on non-Aboriginal people" (Borrows 1998:45). Though this test developed out of Lamer's vision that Aboriginal rights stem from the practices, customs and traditions of the people who were here before European sovereignty, this particular test flies in the face of the previous *Sparrow* ruling which recognized that Aboriginal rights have to be interpreted flexibly so as to permit their evolution over time. I have shown that Coast Salish relationships to land, although often profoundly guided and constrained by the power of western configurations of space – at times even being expressed in terms which resonate in western world views – , are deeply embedded in distinctly Coast Salish phenomenological and ontological orders. Though Coast Salish people are largely Christian today, their particular Christianity, like that in other Northwest Coast communities (Kan 1999), often expresses spiritual senses steeped distinctly in Coast Salish socio-cultural orders, rooted in ancient connections to local places.

Test Eleven

The eleventh test concerns itself with the form in which oral historical and anthropological evidence may be submitted to the court. Though this ethnography is certainly not intended to be an affidavit of the people I have worked with for a land claims case, I have approached the narrative practices with a sensitivity to 'getting the words right', carefully transcribing and translating my consultants' words, attributing them to the individuals who spoke them, and providing interpretive contexts for the narrative acts in which they were given.

This brief examination of the tests required of Aboriginal claimants to prove Aboriginal title may be partially but fruitfully addressed through the kind of theoretically grounded exploration of senses of place that I have undertaken. Such a perspective can, it is hoped, help move dialogues in western legal arenas away from the ethnocentric biases, often seen in law and policy, towards a more just and balanced perspective on Aboriginal relationships to the land.

Conclusion

There is an urgency for developing and disseminating cross-cultural understandings of local acts of dwelling, and the relationships to place that being-in-the-land entails. The urgency is reinforced by social, economic and political inequalities, which have emerged in Aboriginal communities, as a result of colonialism, and are perpetuated through the powerful institutions and the political and economic structures which support them. These inequalities are being challenged through powerful counter-discourses like

Aboriginal land claims. Cruikshank has argued that while land claims are "self-evidently about reallocating land and political power, they are also rooted in broader issues of restructuring everyday, commonsense, taken for granted categories and practices" (Cruikshank 1998:163). This study has attempted to present a framework for understanding these categories and practices in terms of Coast Salish senses of place, as a partial means to reconciliation and resolution of the inequalities.

However, the project of settling land claims and the establishing of new relationships between Aboriginal people and governments is not done in the social frame of the everyday dwelling of Aboriginal people on the land. The primary relationship that governments are seeking in these negotiations is founded on establishing legal and economic 'certainty' with respect to limiting the scope of constitutional rights and title held by Aboriginal peoples (Woolford 2002). To be able to maintain the kinds of experiences of dwelling that formulate Coast Salish senses of place far into the future, these goals of certainty will have to be constructed in ways that are alive and attentive to the relationships with place expressed in the Coast Salish discourses explored in this study.

Though land claims are frequently negotiated on the basis of resolving which lands will be owned by the First Nation and which will not be, the Island Hul'qumi'num people I have worked with have argued, as has been reported in the context of a Yukon Aboriginal community (Nadasdy 2003), the inconceivability of lands with which they will no longer have a relationship. The mandate of the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group is to negotiate in

order to 'get to 100 percent' of the traditional territory by entrenching, in a constitutionally protected treaty, Island Hul'qumi'num visions of social order on the land. This, Hul'qumi'num Chief Negotiator Robert Morales (2003) has suggested to me, may be achievable by securing a form of title analogous to fee-simple to portions of Hul'qumi'num territory, and defining governance relations which allow for the exercising of certain jurisdictions, co-management, revenue sharing or other prerogatives and authorities over those parts for which they are not the conventional land owner. The challenge of these negotiations is to open the social, legal and political doors for a future of continued dwelling in the land by Coast Salish people, experiencing the wisdom, powers and social order of their ancestors in ways that continue to generate Coast Salish senses of and relationships to place.

Appendix A
Ethics Certificate

McGill University
Research Ethics Board I

Certificate of Ethical Acceptability of Research Involving Humans

Project Title: **Coast Salish Senses of Place**

Applicant: Brian Thom *Department:* Anthropology

Academic Status: Ph.D. Student *Supervisor:* Colin Scott

This project was approved on April 11, 2000 by Full Review.

Departmental Review: (for research projects that are carried out by undergraduate and graduate students as part of their course work):

(Department Chair) (Signature)

The signatures below indicate that the project as described in this application is acceptable on ethical grounds.

1. G. W. Wenzel, REB-1 Chair (Geography)
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Appendix B

Island *Hul'q'umi'num'* Practical Writing System Orthographic Key

Throughout this study I have used the practical orthography adopted in 2004 by most Island *Hul'q'umi'num'*-speaking communities to represent Salishan languages words spoken by the people I have worked with. For terms quoted from other published and unpublished works, I have re-written Salishan languages terms using this practical orthography. For terms in non-Salish languages, and terms in Salishan languages that are in wide usage (the term Stó:lō, for instance), or published Salishan languages terms for which there was no clear orthographic key from which to derive a spelling, I have left the term in the original orthography.

Below is a key to the Island *Hul'q'umi'num'* practical orthography. A technical and plain-language description for each sound is given, followed by the corresponding symbols in the conventional Northwest Coast phonetic orthography (an Americanist linguists' variant of the IPA), and in the practical orthography developed by linguist Randy Bouchard and the late Christopher Paul in the 1970s, which was used in Rozen's 1985 study of Island place names.

Island *Hul'q'umi'num'*	**Description of Sound**	**IPA Symbol**	**Rozen Orthography**
'	The apostrophe represents a glottal stop: a catch in the throat as in the English expression "uh-uh". In combination with a sonorant consonant, l, m, n, w, or y, the apostrophe represents glottalization of the sonorant. Note that the apostrophe also represents ejective articulation of certain consonants, as described for ch', kw', p', q', qw', t', tl', ts' and tth' below. Each of these combinations of characters represents a single sound.	ʔ	7
a	**a** represents a low vowel, pronounced much like the **a** in the English word "father".	a, ɑ, ɒ	o
aa	**aa** is pronounced like the *Hul'q'umi'num'* **a**, but it is held longer.	aː, ɑː, ɒː	oo
ch	**ch** represents a voiceless post-alveolar affricate, similar to the English **ch**.	č	ch
ch'	**ch'** represents a voiceless post-alveolar ejective affricate. It is pronounced like **ch**, but it is glottalized, so it is made with a popping sound.	č̓	ch'
e	**e** represents a range of mid-front unrounded vowels. In most contexts, **e** is pronounced like the vowels in the English words "met" or "mate". When it is at the end of a word, or followed by q, q', x, or glottal stop, **e** is pronounced like the vowel in the English word "mat".	**e, ɛ, æ**	a, i
ee	**ee** is pronounced like the *Hul'q'umi'num'* **e**, but it is held longer.	**eː, ɛː, æː**	aa, ii
h	**h** represents a voiceless glottal fricative, similar to the English **h**.	h	h

Island ***Hul'q'umi'num'***	**Description of Sound**	**IPA Symbol**	**Rozen Orthography**
hw	**hw** represents a labialized voiceless velar fricative. It is pronounced much like the **wh** in the English word "which" for speakers who pronounce "which" differently from "witch".	x^w	xw
i	**i** represents a high front unrounded vowel, similar to the vowel sound in the English word "peel".	i, ɪ	i
ii	**ii** is similar to the *Hul'q'umi'num'* **i**, but it is held longer.	i:	ii
k	**k** represents a voiceless velar plosive, similar to the English **k**. It only occurs in borrowed words in *Hul'q'umi'num'*.	k	k
kw	**kw** represents a labialized voiceless velar plosive, similar to the **qu** in the English word "quick".	k^w	kw
kw'	**kw'** represents a labialized voiceless velar ejective. It is pronounced like **kw**, but it is glottalized, so it is made with a popping sound.	k'^w	kw'
l	**l** represents a voiced alveolar lateral approximant, similar to the **l** in the English word "long".	l	l
lh	**lh** represents a voiceless alveolar lateral fricative, similar to the **thl** sound in the English word "athlete".	ɬ	lh
m	**m** represents a bilabial nasal, similar to the English **m**.	m	m
n	**n** represents an alveolar nasal, similar to the English **n**.	n	n
o	**o** represents a mid back rounded vowel, similar to the vowel sound in the English word "boat". This sound occurs at the end of words or syllables in *Hul'q'umi'num'*, followed by a glottal stop.	əw	ew
ou	**ou** represents a high back rounded vowel, similar to the **oo** in the English word "boot" (but without the **w** sound at the end). *Hul'q'umi'num'* words with this sound have been borrowed from English, French, or Chinook Jargon.	u, o	u
oo	**oo** is pronounced like the *Hul'q'umi'num'* **ou**, but it is held longer.	u:, o:	uu
p	**p** represents a voiceless bilabial plosive, similar to the English **p**.	p	p
p'	**p'** represents a voiceless bilabial ejective. It is pronounced like **p**, but it is glottalized, so it is made with a popping sound.	p̓	p'
q	**q** represents a voiceless uvular plosive. It is pronounced somewhat like the English **k** sound, but the tongue is pulled further back. The back of the tongue touches the soft palate near the uvula.	q	k̲
qw	**qw** represents a labialized voiceless uvular plosive. It is pronounced like the *Hul'q'umi'num'* **q**, but with the lips rounded as when making the **w** sound.	q^w	k̲w
q'	**q'** represents a voiceless uvular ejective. It is pronounced like the *Hul'q'umi'num'* **q**, but it is glottalized, so it is made with a popping sound.	q̓	k̲'
qw'	**qw'** represents a labialized voiceless uvular ejective. It is pronounced like the *Hul'q'umi'num'* **qw**, but it is glottalized, so it is made with a popping sound.	q'^w	k̲w'

Island *Hul'q'umi'num'*	Description of Sound	IPA Symbol	Rozen Orthography
s	**s** represents a voiceless alveolar fricative, similar to the **s** in the English word "side" (but never as in "these").	s	s
sh	**sh** represents a voiceless post-alveolar fricative, similar to the English **sh**.	š	sh
t	**t** represents a voiceless alveolar plosive, similar to the English **t**.	t	t
t'	**t'** represents a voiceless alveolar ejective. It is pronounced like **t**, but it is glottalized, so it is made with a popping sound.	t̓	t'
th	**th** represents a voiceless dental fricative, similar to the **th** in the English word "thin" (but never as in "then").	θ	th
tl'	**tl'** represents a voiceless alveolar lateral ejective affricate. This is a clicking sound made by holding the tongue as for an **l** sound and releasing the side or sides of the tongue.	ƛ̓	tl'
ts	**ts** represents a voiceless alveolar affricate. It is pronounced as a single sound, similar to the **ts** in the English word "cats".	c	ts
ts'	**ts'** represents a voiceless alveolar ejective affricate. It is pronounced like the *Hul'q'umi'num'* **ts**, but it is glottalized, so it is made with a popping sound.	c̓	ts'
tth	**tth** represents a voiceless alveolar plosive with dental release. It is pronounced as a single sound, similar to the **t** plus **th** in the English phrase "cut thin".	tᶿ	tth
tth'	**tth'** represents a voiceless alveolar ejective with dental release. It is pronounced like the *Hul'q'umi'num'* **tth**, but it is glottalized, so it is made with a popping sound.	t̓ᶿ	th'
u	**u** represents a range of mid central vowel sounds. It is generally pronounced much like the **u** in the English word "bucket".	ə, ʌ, ʊ, ɨ, ɤ, ɛ, ɪ	e
w	**w** represents a voiced labio-velar approximant, similar to the **w** in the English word "will".	w	w
x	**x** represents a voiceless uvular fricative. It is pronounced with the back of the tongue near the back of the roof of the mouth.	χ	x
xw	**xw** represents a labialized voiceless uvular fricative. It is pronounced like the *Hul'q'umi'num'* **x**, but with the lips rounded as when making the **w** sound.	χʷ	xw
y	**y** represents a voiced palatal approximant, similar to the y in the English word "yes".	y	y

Appendix C
Biographical Notes on Island Hul'qumi'num Consultants
Compiled and Edited by Lea Joe and Brian Thom

Alphonse, Dennis (*Loxe'*) – The late Dennis Alphonse, former Chief of the Cowichan Tribes, was known for his forward-looking political vision, and his accomplishments in creating economic development opportunities for his community. Dennis was involved as a young leader in the early days of the Union of BC Chiefs and Native Indian Brotherhood. He was an important leader and elder, consulted by community members for his cultural and spiritual knowledge. Dennis was born in 1933.

Alphonse, Philomena (*Qw'ustanulwut*) – Philomena is a very active member of the Cowichan community. She has been Cowichan Chief, served on council, and continues to be co-chair of the Cowichan Elders. She has spent years along with her late husband Dennis Alphonse, participating in committees and boards and helping form and direct several programs and committees in the Cowichan area. Philomena was born in 1934.

Charlie, Arvid (*Luschiim*) – Arvid Charlie is a traditional speaker for the longhouse. He is a cultural leader, with extensive knowledge of family histories, community histories, ethnobotany, toponomy, and culturally significant places. His linguistic skill in *Hul'q'umi'num'* has contributed substantially to the language revitalization efforts of the community. For many terms, he has stood as an elected councillor for Cowichan Tribes, and is an active staff member in its natural and heritage resource management work. The son of Simon Charlie, Arvid was born in 1942.

Charlie, Dennis (*Xuyqwumut*) – Dennis Charlie is a very knowledgeable Penelakut elder, having lived in Tsussie for much of his life. In his younger years, his articulate voice as elected Chief assisted his community in dealing with Indian Affairs. He has been deeply involved in the cultural lives of people in the Coast Salish world, and is often sought after in the practice of sacred rituals and ceremonies. Dennis was born in 1927.

Charlie, Simon (*Hwanumetse'*) – Simon Charlie is a master carver, and has trained several generations of First Nations artists in reviving Coast Salish artistic traditions. He is a widely respected Cowichan elder, knowledgeable about the oral histories and traditions of the communities. The importance of Simon's work in has been recognized in his having received the Orders of British Columbia and Canada. He is the founder of the Simon Charlie Society, whose mandate is to renew Coast Salish culture and the *Hul'q'umi'num'* language. In his younger days, he worked as a labourer and a farmer, and has lived off the land. Simon was born in 1918.

Crocker, Jerome (*Sul'qwelhultun*) – Jerome Crocker is an active harvester, exercising his fishing and hunting rights in the Gulf Islands and other areas of Hul'qumi'num territory. Jerome enjoys working with children and is employed with the school district part time teaching the Hul'qumi'num language. He has also worked in landscaping. He currently resides on the Cowichan reserve with his wife and four children. Jerome was born in

1964.

Edwards, Henry (*Stimut*) – Henry Edwards is a knowledgeable elder who worked much of his life as a fisherman. Originally from Penelakut but now living in Kulleet Bay, Henry actively participates in the longhouse, and is sought out as an advisor on cultural matter. Henry was born in 1919.

Edwards, Roy (*Si'emtuletsu*) – Roy is a soft-spoken elder from the Penelakut community, currently resides in his wife Christine's community in Kulleet Bay. Roy and his wife lived as fisher folks in their younger days, working hard and living off the land. Now active in the cultural activities in the summer and winter, Roy's skills as a speaker and mastery of *Hul'q'umi'num'* is often called upon in cultural matters. He is an accomplished and much sought-after designer and builder of Salish racing canoes. Roy was born in 1932.

Guerin, Robert (*Tth'u'ts'ul'tun*) – Robert Guerin lives in his father's community at Musqueam and maintains active connections with Penelakut through his mother's family. Through his passionate interests in culture and history, Bob has become known as an expert in Coast Salish genealogy and family history. Bob has worked a fisheries manager for Musqueam, and as a researcher for numerous title and rights assertion projects. Robert was born in 1941.

Harris, George (*Hwulqeletse'*) – George is a politically active member of the Chemainus First Nations community. He is a councillor, the Public Works Manager, and the co-chair of the Hul'qumi'num Elders Advisory Board. Outside of the office, George participates in community cultural activities, soccer and canoe paddling. In his younger days George was an active fisherman and canoe skipper. George was born in 1945.

Harris, Irene (*Ts'umqwat*) – Irene Harris is an active elder from the Chemainus First Nations community. Irene was active in establishing the rights of First Nations people, participating in several protests in support of recognizing the rights and bettering the lives of First Nations people, and helped begin several community-service programs. She is a leader in cultural and religious life. She is a vocal participant of several committees and boards and loves to watch her grandchildren participate in sports and other recreational activities. Irene was born in 1929.

James, Florence (*Thiyaas*) – Florence is an exceptional, energetic woman, having extensive knowledge in the *Hul'q'umi'num'* language, culture, history, geography, and ethnobotany. Florence is active in language revitalization efforts, and has taught *Hul'q'umi'num'* in several schools, and acted in the capacity of translator in parts of this study. Florence is a member of the Penelakut community. Florence was born in 1947.

James, Rose (*Siemtunaat*) – A part of the Penelakut community, the late Rose James was an active leader and community elder. Rose served as elected Chief of the Penelakut Tribe, and was well respected in the long house. Her cultural knowledge and expertise

was frequently called on throughout the Coast Salish world, and she travelled frequently to help people when called upon. Rose was born in 1917.

Joe, Abraham C. (*Xwutth'inthut*) – Abraham C. Joe is an elder member of the Shaker church and lives on the Cowichan reserve. He has long been involved in political life, having served on Cowichan council, occupying many positions in the Cowichan community government and a key member of the land claims committee which formed on the mid-Island in the 1970s. Abraham generously shared his knowledge of culture and history and travels broadly being called on as an elder member of the Shaker church. Abraham was born in 1925.

Louie, Marjorie – (*Tayts'aat*) Marjorie was raised in the Saanich area and married the late Alfred Louie, moving to the Chemainus area during her adult life. In her younger years, Marjorie experienced a subsistence lifestyle of hunting, fishing, and gathering food. She is culturally active, and participates in Chemainus political life through several elders' committees. Marjorie was born in 1917.

Mitchell, Mabel (*Ti'yaqtunaat*) – Mabel is a language teacher from the Chemainus First Nations community, and acted in the capacity of translator for much of this study. Along with being an eloquant native linguist, she carries many Coast Salish cultural traditions. Mabel was born in 1939.

Modeste, Fred (*Qwul'tsustum*) – Fred worked in his youth as a longshoreman, and later was a business leader, owning and operating, with his wife, a Cowichan sweater manufacturing company. Their influential company brought the fashionable and high-quality Cowichan knit style to the world market. Fred was born in 1928.

Modeste, Ross (*Hwitsum*) – Ross Modeste, a veteran of the second world war, is a statesman elder with a long history being involved in the Cowichan and provincial First Nations political life. Ross was born in 1924.

Norris, Frank (*Yustelets'e*) – Frank is a member of the Halalt community, who had a founding involvement with the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group. He has an active interest and knowledge of the history of the Halalt people, and works in his home community managing lands, natural resources and as a part of the Halalt treaty tream. Frank was born in 1940.

Page, Dave (*Qwa'siye*) – The late Dave Page was a knowledgeable elder who shared his experiences about the history, language and culture of the Hul'qumi'num people. Dave worked much of his life in the forest industry with McMillian-Bloedel. Dave was a Cowichan member, born in 1923.

Peters, Ruby (*Stiit'tumaat'ulwut*) – Ruby Peters is a skilled linguist and language teacher, who has worked for over twenty years in collaboration with university-based academics, participating as a translator for some of the texts in this study. She is an artful story-teller

and is knowledgeable about the oral histories and traditions of her Cowichan community. Ruby is highly involved in Coast Salish cultural life, being a *thi'thu'* [ritualist] and a family leader. Ruby was born in 1932.

Seymour, George (*Squt'xulenuhw*) – George is a member of the Chemainus community who has pursed his skills speaking *Hul'q'umi'num'*. He is an active participant in Coast Salish cultural and ritual life. He is a carver, and plays soccer. George was born in 1953.

Seymour, Peter (*Puqhlenuhw*) – Peter Seymour is a charismatic leader in the Chemainus community, having served for several years as Chief. He is actively involved in cultural activities related to the bighouse. He is a canoe builder and the captain of a successful Salish canoe paddling club. Peter was born in 1949.

Seymour, Willie (*Qwulthutstun*) – Willie Seymour is a widely recognized longhouse speaker, whose skills, connections and experiences are frequently drawn on by the local and national Aboriginal political leadership. He is knowledgeable with cultural teachings, related to the bighouse, and to hereditary ritual practices. Willie was born in 1949.

Smith, Angus (*Shhwuw wul't'hw*) – Angus Smith is a knowledgeable elder with many teachings and history of the Cowichan people. Currently, Angus is known as a casket builder and is a ritual specialist who deals with the recently deceased and found ancient human remains. Angus was born in 1919.

Thomas, Rick (*Puhuluqtun*) – Richard Thomas is hereditary Chief of the Lyackson First Nation. In this capacity, he is the steward and authority for Valdes Island. He is also a very active leader and supportive Board of Directors member of the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group. He enjoys fishing for food and passing on cultural teachings to his grandchildren. Rick was born in 1952.

Thorne, Abner (*Tth'ut'xumqun*) – Abner Thorne spent much of his life before retirement as a commercial fisherman. His knowledge of Island Hul'qumi'num history is widely respected in the community, being called on by both Cowichan and Halalt communities to provide his expert advice. Abner was born in 1926.

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