

Dancing Salmon: Human-fish Relationships on the Northwest Coast

by

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B.A., University of Victoria, 1993
M.A., University of Victoria, 1995

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of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Abstract

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With its myriad of relationships, my study considers the Laich-Kwil-Tach enlivened world in which multiple beings bring meaning and understanding to life. Through exploration of Laich-Kwil-Tach ontology I engage with the theoretical concepts of animism, historical ecology and political ecology, in what I call relational ecology. Here, I examine the divide between the relational world and what Western ontology considers a natural resource; fish. Through an analysis of ethnographic texts I work to elucidate the 19th-century human-fish relationship and through collaboration with Laich-Kwil-Tach Elders, based on Vancouver Island on the Northwest Coast of North America, I seek to understand how the 19th-century enlivened world informs 21st-century Laich-Kwil-Tach ontology. In this ethnographic and ethnohistorical account of the relationship between Laich-Kwil-Tach people and fish I grapple with the question of how, within a framework of ontological difference, we can better understand foundations of Indigenous rights and find ways to respect and give agency to multiple forms of knowledge in practice. In the spirit of reconciliation, decolonization and a renewed understanding of ontological multiplicity we are challenged to create analytical frameworks that include both human and nonhuman interests and relationships. Doing so requires engagement with any number of ontological propositions and it requires a confrontation with hegemonic ontological assumptions inherent in the Western scientific, bureaucratic and legal paradigms. By accepting western-based science as one among many ways of producing knowledge, space is made for other forms of knowledge. In the process we are better able to respect Indigenous land and marine tenure systems, as well as the Indigenous right to maintain a long-standing and on-going relationship with other beings and all that this entails.

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G'ilakas'la everyone.

Dedication

To all those *ninogad* who chose to share their stories with me over the years. Many have left this world but not one is forgotten. I hope your words and your wisdom live on in some way through the story I tell here.

Chapter 1 “Dancing From the Salmon’s Country”: An Introduction

*G•īg•'xs'aisEla yūxdEnō'guas mē'mēōXoānak•asdē.
 Hā'laqas g•ā'g•āx'ālag•īlisēilōL qa'dōyōwē's lō'wa.
 HaiuXs'aisElag•ilitsEm nō'guas mē'mēōXoānak•asdē.
 Hā'laqais haixoanōmag•ailōLai hēiLg•ōtmē is lō'wa.
 LēLaxoya mā'yāLas aix•ts'umk•ēyaLēyaLēXdēs mē'mēōXoānak•asdē.*

Many salmon are coming ashore with me.
 They are coming ashore to you, the post of our heaven.
 They are dancing from the salmon’s country to the shore.
 I come to dance before you at the right-hand side of the world,
 overtowering, outshining, surpassing all;
 I, the salmon. (Boas 1897:475)

Subject to amendments to the conditions of this licence and subject to close times as may vary by the Director-General, Pacific Region, DFO in accordance with the Fishery (General) regulations, the Licence Holder may harvest during the periods further described in the Species, Quantity of Fish, Area(s) and Gear and the Terms and Conditions portions of this licence document. Subject to closures and other terms and conditions of this licence, the authority to fish each species set out on this licence will expire on the date specified or earlier if DFO, after consultation with the First Nation, has determined that the maximum quantity for this species has been reached. This licence is for a maximum quantity for the term of this licence, for management purposes only, and is without prejudice to maximum quantity in future years. Should the First Nation reach their maximum specified quantities and require more, DFO will enter into discussions with the First Nation on the fish species they require.

(Canada 2016a:1)

Dancing salmon. What a stark contrast to the description offered in the second quote that opens this chapter. Dancing salmon in the first quote exemplify an enlivened world, filled with sentient beings who have agency in the human world who willingly come to humans to support wellness among them; beings who are often kin and who have influence and effect among humans. Juxtapose this world with that exemplified in the second quote, in which a natural resource is ready for the taking, but only so long as it is according to strict guidelines, established by a scientific authority mobilized by the state. I explore this enlivened world and examine the divide between it and a world of “natural resources.” In the process, I consider how differently these two ontologies bring the world into being. In doing so, I seek to understand how the 19th-century enlivened world informs 21st-century Laich-Kwil-Tach ontology and how, within a framework of ontological difference, we can better understand foundations of Indigenous rights and seek ways to respect and give agency to multiple forms of knowledge in the grand practice.

The west coast of Canada, along rocky shores and deeply forested mountainsides of north-central Vancouver Island, throughout the waters of the northern Strait of Georgia, the treacherous Seymour Narrows and Yaculta Rapids and the winding waters of Johnstone Strait with its labyrinth of islands and channels, to the deep fjords that run eastward from Johnstone Strait, is home to Laich-Kwil-Tach people (Figure 1). Their territory encompasses more than 22,000 square kilometres and Johnstone Strait, the heart of their territory, is renowned for its fish abundance and fishing.

Now based in Campbell River on Vancouver Island, Laich-Kwil-Tach people are connected by kinship, language and practice to approximately 30 different neighbouring

groups. Collectively this group is often referred to as Kwakwaka'wakw (formerly Kwakiutl).

Laich-Kwil-Tach people are made up of several groups who share a common history, ancestor and language dialect, *Liq'wala*. This dialect is related to *Kwak'wala*, *Gutsala*, *Nak'wala* and *Tlatlasikwala*. In *Liq'wala*, the word *Laich-Kwil-Tach* refers to a large sea worm that cannot be easily killed. If it is cut up, the separate pieces survive and will swim away. The term therefore means “unkillable thing” (Curtis 1970 [1915]:308). Today there are three First Nations that consider themselves Laich-Kwil-Tach: We Wai Kai, Wei Wai Kum and Kwiakah.



Figure 1: Map of Laich-Kwil-Tach Lands

Wekai was the first ancestor of Laich-Kwil-Tach people. His story begins at *Tikya*, located at Read Bay, in Topaze Harbour (Boas 1969a:397). This story, which Boas referred to as the “ancestor legend” (Boas 2002:297), explains the origin of Laich-Kwil-Tach people and many of the rights and traditions practised today.

Wekai came down here from the sky and built himself a house at *Tikya*. He had three beautiful daughters who used to sit in front of the house, plaiting mats. Their faces were painted with red colour. One day, four young wolves ran up to them. The girls caught them and brought them into the house. They grew so fond of them that they took them into their beds at night. But the wolves raced around the house and so the sisters decided to let them loose again. They only kept the youngest wolf, whose fur had beautiful markings. Then the youngest girl dreamed of the wolves and in the morning said to her father, “I will take the young wolf back to his parents. Don't be afraid for me and don't weep for me. The wolves won't harm me.” She took the young wolf into her arms and carried him to the house of the wolves. Thereupon these gave her the wolf head ornament and a rattle which was so big that it had to be carried by two people. They told her, “Your father will now become a great chief.”

When the girl had returned, *Wekai* built a big house and decided to court the daughter of *Kunkunqulikya*, Thunderbird. He journeyed to his house and asked for the girl's hand. *Kunkunqulikya* said, “First let's match our strength so that I'll be able to see whether you are strong and powerful.” He told *Wekai* to sit down midway along the wall and then he made the waters of the sea rise higher and higher so that the house was completely filled. *Wekai* took a small piece of slate and pushed it against the ground and it grew with the rising water so that he was always sitting dry. So the Thunderbird saw that he had power and gave him his daughter. When *Wekai* returned, he painted the Thunderbird on his house.

Then he decided to take the daughter of the chief of the *Awikenoq* [*Wuikinuxv*] for his wife. Through this marriage he obtained the *hamats'a* dance. The chief told him to call his first child *Ts'E'mkoa*.

Then *Wekai* went to the *Bilqula* [*Bella Coola/Nuxalk*] to get a wife there. He found all the people assembled in one house. Their faces were scratched and they wept because their salmon weir had been destroyed. *Wekai* laughed at their sorrows. He broke a giant tree in two and built a salmon weir for them. So they rejoiced and their chief gave him his

daughter as a reward. He gave her many capes trimmed with abalone shells. Wekai grew angry that she wasn't given more and better things and he killed his wife

When he returned he purified and painted his house and gave a big feast. (Boas 2002:297-299)

These were the early days of *Wekai's* life on earth as a human. Within the story, there are several important elements that will be discussed at length later. The first is that both *Wekai* and his daughter appear to be *nawalak^w*, to have abilities beyond that of other humans, including the ability to travel between worlds. The second is the existence of *tlogwe*, a gift from the nonhuman world, which in this case was for her father, enabling him to become a great chief. Because of this power, *Wekai*, was able to travel to Thunderbird's world where in a battle of abilities he proved himself by staying above Thunderbird's rising water, a feat he repeats later to save his people, as noted in the next story. Finally, fish traps are important in this story and are discussed at length later. After building a fish trap to save his Nuxalk neighbours, *Wekai* denies their gift of gratitude in arguably a most disgraceful way. To atone, he returns home and "purifies" his house, likely meaning that he hosts a special potlatch to wash away any offense.

While this early period of *Wekai's* life is not widely known in the community today, his act of kindness that saved his people from sure death is known to almost everyone. This important period in Laich-Kwil-Tach history was the flood that threatened the lives of all Laich-Kwil-Tach people. *Wekai* was warned of the flood in his dreams and, knowing that he must prepare for the impending deluge, he made a cedar rope that was many metres long. He tied the rope to a rock on the mountain next to *Tikya*. Although there are many ways the story has been told, the general outline remains the same with some of the story of *Wekai's* travels being found in both this and the preceding

story. In all cases, *Wekai* knew of the imminent flood, he carved canoes, loaded them with supplies and tied them to the mountain. In this way, when the flood came, he saved many people from his village. The following version, from Billy Assu, was recorded by Phillip Drucker in his field notes (1953):

The first man came down at Topaze Harbor, *Wekai* was his name and *Tikya* was the name of the place. There is a mountain there named *Lakatisin* and after a long time the flood was to come. Expecting the flood “they” [*Wekai*] made cedar [bark] rope that stretched from the top of the mountain to the salt water. Then he fastened two canoes together and the flood came and it lasted a long time. *Wekai* cut some of the people loose [canoes] and these people landed elsewhere to start neighbouring Nations (i.e. *Kitimat*). Then the water started to recede and *Wekai* started to travel to other places. He went to *Knights Inlet* and met a woman there named *Lthantaq* who had wings on her back and claimed the river as her own. *Wekai* put stakes in the river which resulted in an argument which resulted in *Wekai* building a house at *Knights Inlet* and making grease every spring. After a while, *Wekai* called people from all over and he used his grease to buy slaves. Then *Wekai* lived at *Hwulk*, the *Nimpkish River*. Eventually, he married a woman from *Gilford Island* named *kehwukanux*. It was while living here that *Wekai* acquired coppers. Sometime later *Wekai* learned about *Bella Coola* which he traveled to by a trail from *Knights Inlet*. Along the *Bella Coola River*, he met a man named *Nuxhwults*, who was sad because his fish dam [fish weir] was broken. *Wekai* fixed the weir using hardwood stakes and in return, he was given one of *Nuxhwults*’ daughters, a cape with shining shells, named *milkestsala’yu*, and a hat. When *Wekai* returned to *Hwulk*, he gave these gifts away. Then *Wekai* travelled to the west coast of *Vancouver Island*, marrying there and acquiring wolf dances. Finally he travelled to *Rivers Inlet*, marrying again to obtain the *tsitseqa* dances [red cedar bark and *hamatsa* dances].

As the story states, following the flood, *Wekai* and his people spread out from *Tikya* and for a time lived at the mouth of the *Nimpkish River* (Boas 1966:41) and at the head of *Knights Inlet*, obtaining *Laich-Kwil-Tach* rights in each place. In more recent times, *Laich-Kwil-Tach* people exerted pressure on their neighbours to the south, and through

war and expansion, pushed southward into Discovery Passage, the former territory of the Island Komoks and Mainland Komoks-speaking peoples (Boas 1966:41).

Laich-Kwil-Tach people consider themselves fishers. This realization came to me in a treaty meeting many years ago when we were discussing fish. Any rights or treaty discussions around fish and marine resources are always contentious and this day was no different. In an effort to make treaty staff truly aware of how vital fish and marine resources are to the community, and therefore to a successful treaty, one Elder stood and said, “We are all fisherman. Even if you are a secretary in an office, you are still a fisherman.” To this there was great applause and from this grew my interest in how a relationship with what Western¹ thought classifies and manages as a “resource” could be so instrumental in informing an entire group’s identity and perception of their rights. From these meetings and through discussions for this research it is clear that Laich-Kwil-Tach people not only demand a right to access fish, but they demand the right to manage and be decision-makers over all that is fish, asserting that they are the caretakers and stewards, that they are responsible for the care and well-being of the marine world, exemplifying the ongoing significance of their relationship with fish. While it is an almost impossible challenge to meet these demands in treaty negotiations, such demands do create an opportunity for greater anthropological understanding and potentially open doors to more effective dialogue in decision making as we seek to decolonize marine science and resource management.

¹ Like Ingold (2000c:6) I recognize that terms such as Western, modern, neoliberal, Indigenous, etc. are problematic constructs that come from the “Western tradition” itself and are set in juxtaposition to the “other,” whoever that may be. Nevertheless I use these terms because I explore the categories that both create and inform these constructs and I consider avenues through which Western-informed thought can make room for other forms of knowledge.

I began my research by turning to 19th-century fishing. Interwoven with Laich-Kwil-Tach social and economic organization, property and resource rights, value systems and technology, fishing was a complex affair that was manifest in a reciprocal human-fish relationship. I contend that 19th-century Laich-Kwil-Tach people lived in a relational world, a world of multiple relationships with multiple beings. Exploring these relationships is important because they mutually constitute the person and his or her world (Balée and Erickson 2006:2; Ingold 1992:40; 2000c:3, 5). Relationships within this relational world can be studied at the intersection of animism, historical ecology and political ecology. I use this combination of approaches in my dissertation to examine the late 19th- and early 20th-century Laich-Kwil-Tach concepts of fish and the human-fish relationship in which human persons and fish persons have a responsibility of mutual care and respect (Berman 1992; 2000; Boas 1930; Langdon 2007; Losey 2010; Swanton 1909; Thornton 2008). Through the synergies and reciprocal influences of a world that is replete with these relationships, knowledge continually emerges. In this way, knowledge is an assemblage, built over time, through experience, informed by one's world, and as such, it is not a fixed object but is dynamic (Anderson 2015; Green 2009; Green 2015c:289) and coeval (Fabian 1983:30-31; Pels 2008:292). I also explore how the relationship is manifest today and its ongoing significance in contemporary British Columbia, as exemplified in the quotes at the beginning of this chapter, contrasting an enlivened world informed by relationships manifest in dancing salmon with the words of the current Aboriginal Fishery Licence that describes and limits the Laich-Kwil-Tach right to a fish resource.

Drawing on diverse sources—field research, contemporary interviews, oral history texts and archaeological fish traps—and working in collaboration with the Laich-Kwil-Tach community, I examine: 1. the reciprocal care and respect between fish and people (human-to-nonhuman); 2. how principles of Indigenous management are understood in terms of this relationship (human-to-landscape over time); and 3. the meaning and expression of this relationship today in a post-colonial Canadian society (human-to-human). Such an approach is timely as governments, courts and decision makers are under more pressure than ever to include Indigenous peoples in management practices and decision making.

Although I contend that a relationship with fish is a longstanding part of Indigenous life on the Northwest Coast, my study has a relatively shallow time depth. I use the rich set of 19th- and early 20th-century ethnographic writings of Franz Boas and George Hunt, to examine how the 19th-century human-fish relationship was represented. This body of materials represents some of the earliest ethnographic texts that pertain to Laich-Kwil-Tach people. I also consider how the earlier relationship is perceived today through interviews with Elders. This approach provides insight into the foundation upon which the contemporary relationship with fish is based (or at least that of the 19th century), and through attending to practice today, reveals ongoing aspects of this relationship and how they are manifest. This approach adds to our understanding of the contemporary connection and rights Laich-Kwil-Tach people have to this resource during a time when Indigenous people on the Northwest Coast struggle to exercise their rights as fishers and fish caretakers.

I also consider fish traps in light of knowledge gained through fish trap research with the Laich-Kwil-Tach Treaty Society. In collaboration with the Laich-Kwil-Tach, for the past decade I studied fish traps at multiple locations throughout their territory. We conducted intertidal surveys and research recording the location, number of features, type of feature, wooden stake data and radiocarbon dates from 99 stakes. From this data I developed maps and diagrams and regularly share the information with the community. The Laich-Kwil-Tach Treaty Society and the Laich-Kwil-Tach leadership have given me permission to use these data for this purpose and from it I take not only a better understanding of fish trap design and use in Laich-Kwil-Tach territory, but I have them in mind as I review the available oral texts and from them I take inspiration as I examine their place in the animated world.

Why Salmon?

Given the great diversity of life on the Northwest Coast there are many different human-nonhuman relationships that could be considered. However, Northwest Coast peoples hold fish, particularly salmon, in a special place and through examining the human-fish relationship it is possible to engage with the relational world (see Scott 2006 for a similar example of the bear among the Cree). So while I am interested in the relationship with all fish, for Laich-Kwil-Tach people, when one speaks of “fish” they generally mean salmon, particularly *sacəm* (chinook or spring; *Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*), *məlik* (sockeye; *O. nerka*), *g^waχnis* (chum; *O. keta*), *d^z’əzwan* (coho; *O. kisutch*) and *hənuzn* (pink; *O. gorbusha*). Following this local usage, unless otherwise specified, I too use the generic term “fish” to refer to the various salmon.

In light of this dominance, salmon, not surprisingly, are regular figures within recorded 19th-century oral texts and some fish—sockeye, spring, coho, chum, halibut (*p̄ozyi*; *Hippoglossus stenopepis*) and eulachon (*ḏax^wən*; *Thaleichthys pacificus*)—each receive reverent treatment in the form of prayers, ceremonies and special attention (Berman 2000:62; Boas and Hunt 1902:303). In the contemporary context, salmon continue to command Laich-Kwil-Tach attention and are an ongoing concern in the community. In a world in which there is such diversity, why is salmon a dominant figure? It is possible that today we see salmon dominant through time because early visitors to the coast, who saw the great numbers of salmon, wrote of the phenomenon in early writings making salmon only appear dominant over other species. It is also possible that this set the stage for later anthropological interest in salmon, which is reflected in the ethnographic literature. At the same time, salmon fishing provided space for Indigenous peoples to participate in the economy in the early commercial industry, which may have increased salmon's dominance over other species within the Laich-Kwil-Tach (and other Indigenous peoples) community. In these ways, salmon may have come to overshadow all others in the written record and in the community's contemporary sense of identity. However, there are other reasons, as presented below, to support an inference that salmon figured differently from other beings in the Laich-Kwil-Tach world throughout at least the 19th century, but likely long before. In their position of import salmon is also the ultimate transformer, an ability vital for movement between worlds. As discussed in Chapter 5, the salmon takes many forms in each world and as such is a powerful and respected being, a power and respect that is reflected in oral stories, dance, masks, and practice.

Furst (1989:100) speculates that, because the small salmon begins to grow quickly when it leaves the river and enters the ocean, the ocean water is akin to the water of life. The water of life is a common feature of Kwakwaka'wakw oral traditions and is not limited to salmon. Humans often obtained it as a gift during a trip to the worlds of other beings, and when they returned home, they used it to resurrect or cure people in the human world. Although the water of life for humans seems to have been urine obtained from a nonhuman being (Furst 1989:95), for salmon it was the ocean. The ocean had a life-giving effect on salmon, ensuring their resurrection or rebirth and enabling them to return to their world in the Undersea Kingdom. For the salmon, both in its early days as a young salmon leaving its natal stream and in its last moments when its remains are cared for by respectful fishers, the ocean was the key to life and resurrection.

The salmon is further powerful in its ability to transform physically. It transforms from an egg to a young fresh water salmon, to a young salt water salmon, to a large salt water salmon. In this form, it disappears from the human-centric world for much of its adult life, re-appearing as a migrating salmon that changes from silver to red to white, who once again can live, if only for a short time, in fresh water. The physical features of some salmon change dramatically in this part of their life cycle, becoming almost fierce as they return to the human world. Then, in the 19th-century Laich-Kwil-Tach world at least, the salmon is reincarnated to return to its own world under the sea. Transformation is important in the Laich-Kwil-Tach world and like their winter ceremonial counterparts, who are often fierce as they enter the human world, the salmon, a being associated with summer, transforms into a fierce-*looking* creature (Cullon 2013). However, unlike their winter counterparts, they maintain their benevolent nature, bringing a generous gift to

deserving humans. Furthermore, throughout their lifecycle, the salmon have a dual role, alternating continually between prey and predator. This duality holds in the human world as well where people also alternate between being the predator of salmon in the summer, albeit with the salmon as willing partners, and the prey of nonhuman beings in the winter (Cullon 2013:19).

To add to their status as powerful beings, salmon face many obstacles during their migration including predators, powerful tides and currents, rushing rivers, waterfalls, and even traps and weirs which provide doorways to the human world. Their ability to transform physically and navigate these obstacles is a testament to their power.

To the 19th-century Laich-Kwil-Tach, salmon are beings who wear a salmon mask and in the salmon world, when they remove their mask, they are human. In their salmon form, they never die but pass through an endless cycle of birth, death and resurrection, requiring the ocean (their water of life) for their rebirth and return migration to their world.

Each year, as a gift to humans, salmon donned their salmon mask and began their migration. They were greeted reverently by fishermen as “Bringers of Life” (Furst 1989:99) and were offered prayers of thanks and respect. In Laich-Kwil-Tach waters, the salmon begin to arrive in June, starting with the sockeye, followed by spring and then coho; pink and chum arrive in early to mid-fall. In at least one location in Laich-Kwil-Tach territory, at Quadra Island, bluebacks (a local name for coho) are available in early January. This location on Quadra Island was won in war, and may have been of interest because of this early access to salmon (Barnett 1935; Duff n.d.-a; n.d.-b; n.d.-c). Consequently, for at least six months of the year, salmon were an available food source.

However, as fish runs were “highly localized” both in time and in space, it was necessary for people to come together and cooperate when fishing (Berman 2000:57). This was essential because a good season of preservation ensured a bountiful winter and a vigorous winter ceremonial.

Thus, although people relied on a diverse number of species, salmon held, and still hold, a special place in the Laich-Kwil-Tach world. As humans, we understand, live and experience our humanity through our relationships with other beings, both human and nonhuman, and it is by virtue of a relationship with salmon that they continue to dominate in the world of Laich-Kwil-Tach and other Northwest Coast peoples.

Us and Them: Creating Context

In the latter part of the 18th century, after “Enlightenment thought... [had] proclaimed the triumph of human reason over a recalcitrant nature” (Ingold 2000c:27) and at the height of British expansionism, European countries began to view themselves in light of the “other.” The view that the sociocultural world, like the natural world, was governed by uniform laws that operated equally in the past as in the present in an evolutionary process of simplicity to complexity was embraced by classic evolutionism (Descola 2009:153; Stocking 1987:170; Tylor 1871 [1920]-b). Europeans presented themselves as more “evolved” and “civilized” in contrast to the “primitive” and “savage” other, or those without culture. At the same time, the science of nature and the science of culture were created, a delineation that is still reflected in the structure of the academy today (Descola, et al. 2013:1), although contemporary interdisciplinary work challenges these boundaries.

Self-reflection within anthropology (and many other disciplines) at the end of the 20th century revealed many things, but of importance here is the exposé of the Western predilection for dualisms. Several well-known dualisms form the foundation of Cartesian-influenced thought: mind/matter, natural/supernatural, and the Latoureaan “Great Divide,” that of nature/culture (Fowles in Alberti, et al. 2011:906; Blaser 2009:17; 2013:17; 2016:549; Cruikshank 2005:11; Ingold 2000c; Latour 1993:11-12, 97-100; Viveiros de Castro 1996:183; 2004:482). Dualities of human-nonhuman and subject/object are underpinned by the latter (Lien and Law 2011:69). This “Great Divide”

accounts for the External Great Divide [between Us and the Other]: we are the only ones who differentiate absolutely between Nature and Culture, between Science and Society, whereas in our eyes all the others—whether they are Chinese or Amerindians, Azande or Barouya— cannot really separate what is knowledge from what is Society, what is sign from what is thing, what comes from Nature as it is from what their cultures require. (Latour 1993:99)

As a blend of Greek politics, French Cartesianism, and American parks (Latour 2004:5), Western thought grounds itself in the duality of nature and culture in which space is “homogenous... and infinitely extended” (Casey 1996:20). Within this duality the natural is ruled by the laws of biology and physics or by observable spatial relations ruled by natural laws (Casey 1996:19, 33), while all social relations happen within the framework of human society.

Our entrenchment in this binary and our assumption of nature as a discrete domain that others perceive and categorise in similar ways caused (and often still causes) us to characterise Western thought as scientific and superior (Latour 1993:118; 2004) and non-Western thought as non-scientific and therefore not just inferior, but faulty or mistaken (Alberti and Marshall 2009:344; Scott 1996:69), and even destroyable (Blaser

2016:550).² The nature/culture dichotomy is far from universally perceived, yet our duality is too often used as a template according to which the rest of the world is analysed (Descola 2009:147; Escobar 2016:29).

For too long social science and other disciplines have avoided the possibility that the Western tradition is one of many ontologies. Critique revealed that dualistic assumptions about nature and culture, which helped lay the foundation for colonialism, had disastrous consequences on our relationships with non-Western peoples and the environment (Fowles in Alberti, et al. 2011:898). Too often Western hegemony denied “some of the most basic premises of the Native life world” (Harris 2005a:106) and ignored or erased Indigenous world views (Porr and Bell 2012:181). In this elucidation, Western knowledge is no longer sacrosanct (Helander-Renvall 2010:45) and we acknowledge the role of colonialism in designing the “traditional” (Heckenberger 2005:xiii) and maintaining unequal power relations and structures in which non-Western knowledge is denied (Barrett 2013:187; Heckenberger 2005; Porr and Bell 2012:181).

Many non-Western people, animists included, do not envision or experience a world of Western dualisms (Brightman, et al. 2012:17; Hornborg 2006a:21; Ingold 2000b; Ingold 2004). In these other ways of being and knowing, the dualistic boundaries—indeed the categories of nature and culture—do not exist, exposing the continuity between what Western thought describes as the social and natural domains (Latour 2004:43). These differences make it difficult for non-Western knowledge to be taken seriously by the more dominant paradigm that is informed and formed by Western ontology.

² This ‘we’ is produced through the dichotomies of Western intellectual heritage that influences scholarly thought and processes but that also influences how the world is experienced generally.

My Epistemology of Ontology

In this study I engage with the implications of a relational world in a contemporary context. In my examination, I view epistemology and ontology as categories (Mimica 2010:208) of yet another Western duality: an epistemological/ontological divide. The separation of ontology and epistemology as a binary has great impact on how the world is experienced and understood. For centuries, Western thought assumed that what exists (ontology) is a universal phenomenon that is understood (or mistakenly so) through variable epistemologies. Approached this way, “nature” can be substituted for “ontology” and “culture” can be substituted for “epistemology”; in other words, Western ontology assumes the existence of nature as a universally experienced object that is understood, as “epistemology,” in various ways through culture. Here then difference or “conflict is epistemological” (Blaser 2016:549). Here in a world of divisions, of the separate and separable, humans are discrete from nonhumans, setting apart the natural world from the “civilised.” Here, in this space between nature and culture we define “objective properties of nature” to create social categories that affect our categories and construction of the human and nonhuman world (Descola, et al. 2013:38). In this way the world is made up of objects with which human subjects live, and in this scenario either “culture is the product of nature” or “nature... comes into existence [through]... the signs and symbols that culture attaches to it” (Descola, et al. 2013:28).

For many people, the world is not divided or experienced in such ways. Instead a world of relationships is experienced as a world in which all of its constituents—human, nonhuman and what Western thought might classify as the material—collaboratively and reciprocally bring one another into being. In this way, the world consists of subjects with

whom human persons live and of which human subjects are a part. There is an immersion within and an engagement with a lived world rather than a world in which humans are separate and discrete from the rest of the world (Descola, et al. 2013:65).

The epistemological/ontological divide is exposed in many anthropological writings about the relational world; for example, it is described as epistemology (Bird-David 1999; 2006; Blaser 2009; Escobar 2008), ontology (Alberti and Marshall 2009; Blaser 2013; Brown and Walker 2008; Ingold 2004; Ingold 2006; Viveiros de Castro 1999) and sometimes both (Alberti and Bray 2009; Blaser, et al. 2010; Clammer, et al. 2004; Poirier 2004; Porr and Bell 2012). Bird-David (1999) refers to animism as a “relational epistemology,” a way of knowing the world specifically by focusing on relatedness, while others refer to it as a “relational ontology,” a way of being in the world in which one is sensitive and responsive to a dynamic environment (Ingold 2006:10). Meanwhile, Bird-David (1999:S87) argues that animism “is not ontology alone, and moreover, we cannot describe it as just an ontology.” Thus, from the perspective of Western ontology, the relational world is at times categorised as either epistemology or ontology, or even both (e.g. Bird-David 1999:S87; 2006:34). Perhaps the confusion arises because the categories of epistemology and ontology are misunderstood and therefore misused; but I think there is more to consider. Like the nature/culture duality, the epistemology/ontology duality is not universal. Specifically, for animists, the dualities do not exist: who we are and how we exist is the way of knowing, and to know is to exist. In other words, being is knowing and knowing is being—a fusion of ontology and epistemology. What Western scholarship divides into these categories are so connected among animists that they are indissoluble. A Kluane Elder nicely exemplifies my point

when she said, “it’s not really ‘knowledge’ at all, it’s more a way of life” (Nadasdy 2003b:63).

Thinking of epistemology/ontology as a Western dyad that does not exist among animists aids in understanding why “Indigenous knowledge” is often perceived by non-Indigenous people as a “cultural object that is fixed” to a particular people, land and time (Green 2009:2) and is frequently misunderstood as facts about things. As an object based on Eurocentric concepts of “indigenous,” and articulated in discussions of development, conservation and property, it is treated as an alternative, even an appendage, to Western scientific practice. It is reduced to a series of “facts” that are stripped of their meaning by extracting them from the context in which they are lived and gain meaning (Green 2015a:235; Huntington and Watson 2012:59; Nadasdy 2003b:62), and from the processes that enable one to know (Green 2009:3; 2015a:235). The result is an object that sits in juxtaposition (or opposition) to science (Green 2015b:351) rather than as a place that is hospitable to different ways of conceptualizing the world (Green 2009:3-4). Treating knowledge as an object forces it to stand alone, outside of the context in which it is lived, outside of ontology, imposing the Western duality of epistemology/ontology. In this regard, the limits of Western social theory are exposed, limits that are connected to a reliance on an historical matrix that exposes this subjective duality (Escobar 2016:29) and in the process we miss opportunities to co-create knowledge (Green 2015b:351).

To exemplify, I was once told by a Laich-Kwil-Tach hunter that British Columbia’s regulation allowing hunting of only bull Roosevelt elk (*Cervus elaphus roosevelti*) is problematic because it results in the loss of males in the herd. This hunter told me that this loss affects the social structure of the herd because the older males are no longer

available to teach the young elk social skills or to help manage the rest of the herd. Such concerns are not found in the current management regime and are treated as an epistemic mistake, as irrelevant and are generally disregarded. My example exposes how the concept of “truth” or “real” take precedence over “experienced” and “lived” knowledge, which can be relegated to belief by policy-makers, environmental scientists, etc. In this way science is used to manage more than data; it is used to manage people and is political, determining “not only the truth but also who is criminal and who is not” (Anderson, et al. 2013; Green 2015b; Green and Green 2013:16; Latour 2004) for if the hunting (or fishing) regulations are violated, one is at risk of being charged. If we remain in this Western scientific hegemony in which “autonomous subjects” remain in a universe of self-contained objects, we will continue to disqualify other forms of knowledge, particularly those formed in a relational world, and in doing so the dominant social theory will continue to silence “much of what brings life into being” (Escobar 2016:29). Instead, I seek to study the 19th-century Laich-Kwil-Tach relational world and its contemporary expression, not as an exotic contrast to Western ontology but as a way to attend to difference and to explore how it can be respected and have agency in the contemporary context.

Before going forward, I must comment on my use of the term “ontology” for the remainder of my dissertation. As one part of what I contend is a Western duality I struggle with its use. I do, however, acknowledge that one’s knowledge of the world is entangled with how one experiences the world. For this reason, that is how I intend to use ontology—as knowledge gained through experience in the world. Defined this way, if we can accept that knowledge is informed by and entangled with ontology, then as such we

can move away from concepts of fact or truth and instead grapple with ways to communicate and share knowledge in a postcolonial approach to living in and with a shared world. In doing so we move away from a framework in which there is an ongoing struggle to prove particular fragments of knowledge. Instead we move beyond colonial heritage “towards a symmetrical relationship characterised by an interest in the intellectual propositions that undergird different ontologies. Thus, the dialogue is deeply invested in understanding the ways in which different conceptualisations of the world are possible, and how different ‘things’ emerge” (Green 2009:2). However, in examining Laich-Kwil-Tach ontology, I risk two things: 1. essentializing it or setting it up as the authentic; and 2. contrasting it in juxtaposition to Western ontology in which ontology is relegated to belief rather than one’s real experience. I do not intend to do either and as I grapple with these concerns I consider how the Laich-Kwil-Tach community will read this dissertation and have worked to represent Laich-Kwil-Tach people and knowledge as dynamic, coeval and valuable. Nevertheless, I fear that much of what I write can be read as essentialized and/or as a contrast between “us” and “them.” However, like Ingold (Ingold 2000c:6-7), I recognise that this dissertation exercise is Western and that as such it is almost impossible to escape these “anxieties of modernity.”

As I outline in Chapter 2, the mutual affect or impact of a lived relational world is beginning to be recognized on the Northwest Coast (Deur and Turner 2005b; Thornton, et al. 2015; Thornton 2015). Until recently, these studies focused largely on plant life and the role of traditional management practices like anthropogenic burning, with little work conducted on fish, or on the reciprocal influence between humans and nonhumans (Langdon 2003; 2006a; 2006b; 2007). I seek to contribute to this growing dialogue by

attending to the relationship between human persons and fish persons, particularly salmon. I consider their mutual construction and show that the relationship with fish transcends time, is manifest today in practice and must inform decision making and public policy. Finally, I argue that a study that considers the connection between Northwest Coast peoples and fish, and other corresponding relationships with other fish-beings and sentient fishing implements, presents an opportunity to reconsider and reframe anthropological tropes that not only have informed anthropological theory, but that have contributed to the current state of public policy and decision making on the Northwest Coast, and is essential to ongoing efforts of self-determination and of decolonization.

Chapter Summary

Following the previous introduction, through the human-fish relationship I examine the 19th-century Laich-Kwil-Tach world and the implications of the relational world in the 21st-century context. I begin in Chapter 2 by providing some theoretical context using the current literature to ground my research in what I have called relational ecology, a way to examine the synergy and reciprocal influences of a holistic world in which the biological, social and physical are enmeshed and not categorized. Then in Chapter 3, based in relational ecology, I provide the context for how I came to examine the Laich-Kwil-Tach human-fish relationship and my methodology for this research.

Before beginning my examination of the 19th-century Laich-Kwil-Tach relational world in Chapter 5, in Chapter 4 I develop the context of my study by providing a brief synopsis of the colonial history on the Northwest Coast. While not meant to be an exhaustive and detailed history, it is meant to provide enough background on colonial

policy and history to aid the reader in understanding some of the later discussion about the colonial impact on Northwest Coast ontologies.

In Chapters 5 and 6, I examine the 19th-century Laich-Kwil-Tach relational world. By digging deep into some of the early ethnographic literature I rely heavily on oral texts and stories to help understand a world in which humans and salmon are part of a reciprocal relationship, a partnership that contributes to the overall well being of the fish, the humans and the world they share. Here I also consider the power of the salmon and its ability to transform and be present in various forms in various worlds. As such, the salmon is *nawalak*^w, a powerful being indeed. Flowing from Chapter 5, in Chapter 6 I consider the 19th-century sentience of all that is fish: fish hooks, fish nets and importantly, the fish trap, or as I have come to see them, trap doorways between worlds.

In Chapters 7 and 8 I fast forward to the 21st century. Here I review my meetings with the Elders and their understanding of the human-fish relationship in the contemporary world. Here I consider their teachings, the ongoing care and respect of fish and how their knowledge is silenced in the modern context. In Chapter 8 I turn to practice as revitalization and consider the place of salmon in the contemporary ceremonial, including the 21st-century First Salmon Ceremony.

From the sections on the contemporary relationship with salmon flow Chapters 9 and 10, in which I first consider the modern fishery, the role Laich-Kwil-Tach people played in its creation and the role they continue to play. It is here that I provide details of my experience on the seine boat, the “*Western Brave*” with Brian Assu and his crew. Then I turn to A-Tlegay, the community’s fishery organization and their role in providing

fish and marine resources to the community as well as their contributions to the science and research program conducted by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO).

Finally in Chapter 11, I bring together the old and the new and argue for space at the table for multiple ontologies in the contemporary decision-making process. I consider our concepts of knowledge and our inherent tendency to privilege one over another and in this way I suggest that knowledge is greatly contextual and that a better management system could be created through inclusivity in which knowledge holders share a mutual respect that is further respected by decision makers. In this way there are opportunities to better respect Indigenous knowledge and rights and to envision a world in which rights extend beyond the concept of human to other beings with whom we share the world.

Chapter 2 Relational Ecology and its Implications

We have come to meet alive, Swimmer. Do not feel wrong about what I have done to you, friend Swimmer, for that is the reason why you come that I may spear you, that I may eat you, Supernatural One, you, Long-Life-Giver, you, Swimmer. Now protect us, (me) and my wife, that we may keep well, that nothing may be difficult for us that we wish to get from you, Rich-Maker-Woman. Now call after you your father and your mother and uncles and aunts and elder brothers and sisters to come to me also, you, Swimmers, you Satiator. ("Prayer to the Salmon" in Boas 1930:206-207)

Relational Ecology

Fish (particularly salmon) on the Northwest Coast have often been characterized as a resource of natural abundance that was effectively exploited by local Indigenous people (Ames 1994:211; Coupland 1998:44; Drucker 1955:35; Fladmark 1975:50-53; Mitchell and Donald 1988:301; Suttles 1960:296; 1968:58, 63). Within our dominant nature/culture binary, rarely was it considered that Northwest Coast peoples could have contributed to the construction of a landscape that was understood by Europeans as a “wilderness” (Cronon 1995:88; Lien and Law 2011). In this characterisation, preservation technology enabled people to intensify their use of anadromous fish, contributing to what became known as the “Northwest Coast Culture Complex” (Coupland 1998:44; Coupland, et al. 2010:189; Fladmark 1975; Matson and Coupland 1995:303; Testart, et al. 1982:523). Missing from many of these analyses of fishing and its contribution to the “Northwest Coast Culture Complex” is the relationship between sentient fish and humans and their reciprocal state of being.

My approach addresses this gap and is informed by three concepts: 1. a renewed concept of animism, which accepts the existence of agency and intentionality in nonhuman persons (Alberti, et al. 2011; Alberti and Marshall 2009; Betts, et al. 2015;

Bird-David 1999; 2006; Blaser 2004; 2014; Brightman, et al. 2012; Descola 1992; 2013; 2013; 1996; 2000a; 2000b; Ingold 2000c; 2006; Kohn 2013; Losey, et al. 2011; Povinelli 1995; Thom 2017; Viveiros de Castro 1998; 1999; Willerslev 2004; 2007); 2. historical ecology with its focus on human-landscape entanglements over long periods of time (Armstrong, et al. 2017; Balée and Erickson 2006; Biersack 1999; Crumley 1999; Fisher and Feinman 2005; Hastrup 2013; Ingold 1992; 2012; Rival 2006; Stahl 2002); and 3. political ecology with its focus on factors that shape power relations and their entanglement with landscape (Blaikie 1999; 2008; Blaikie and Brookfield 1987; Blaser and Escobar 2016; Escobar 1998; 2008; 2016; Gezon and Paulson 2005; Green 2009; 2015b; Green and Green 2013; Verran 2013; Walker 2005; Watts and Peet 2004). In this way I seek to examine an enlivened world of multiple beings who are entangled with one another and with the landscape, but upon whom the colonial experience continues to have influence.

Collectively, these three theoretical approaches reveal a human-to-human-to-nonhuman-to-landscape web of relationality in a world of sentient beings who interact in and with their world in a reciprocal and constant state of becoming. In a world replete with relationships, relational ecology provides an avenue to examine the synergy and reciprocal influences of a holistic world, a world in which there is not a separation of the biological, social and cultural.

In my study, a relational ecology approach assumes that the human-fish relationship informs and is informed by practice and technology, and that new opportunities for understanding are possible if the human-nonhuman relationship and its consequences are taken seriously. Such an approach holds promise not only for a broader

recognition of Indigenous rights and title, but also for a socially relevant environmental science in which Indigenous ontology contributes to public policy and decision making.

“Relational ecology” is a term that is becoming more widely used across many disciplines. Here I use it to bring together the relational aspects of animism with the ecological aspects of historical and political ecology to explore the interrelationships that are ever present in the world by situating human practice within its knowable contexts (Betts, et al. 2015:92; Descola, et al. 2013:86). Together animism, historical ecology and political ecology draw attention to dynamic relationships among and between sentient beings who are entangled within the landscape, of which humans are only one thread. Understanding that how we live in and perceive our landscape is bound within its construction (Ingold 2000a:217) reveals a potential synergism among these three usually disparate paradigms and provides an opportunity to view their contributions as complementary. For Descola (2013:5, 86) an “ecology of relationships” assumes continuity between the natural and social worlds while also reflecting on environmental and biological contexts. The challenge with Descola’s approach is that the social and the natural remain discrete entities that may or may not be connected depending on one’s ontology. Descola himself acknowledges the challenge saying “efforts of mediation can only be in vain since they ultimately amount to stitching very coarsely the two sections of the world that our dualist cosmology had separated, the ostensible scar left by the suture emphasizing the dissociation rather than dissolving it” (Descola, et al. 2013:29). Such separation, based on the assumption of a universal object of a separate and discrete nature, poses a challenge for the relational world. In my relational ecology I want to take other understandings of the world seriously and move beyond “regarding them as diverse

cultural constructions of reality, alternative to the Western one” (Ingold 2000b:40). I want to seek the connections within a lived and enlivened world, in which humans are immersed (Ingold 2000b:42) in an “indivisible totality” (Ingold 2000c:19) in an attempt to understand the mutual relationships between humans and their world and how these relationships are formative in the mutual and ongoing constitution of person (human and nonhuman) and the lived world (Ingold 1992:40). I renounce anthropocentrism (Descola, et al. 2013:5) and acknowledge that the dualism of nature and culture is ontologically based and that it is only one of multiple ways of “tracing the continuities and discontinuities in the fabric of the world,” none of which is more or less reasonable or arbitrary than any other (Descola, et al. 2013:30).

As I use this approach in my research, I seek to view the 19th-century Laich-Kwil-Tach life world (which includes all living beings, including those that Western ontology classifies as non-living) holistically. I examine the human-fish relationship, first by studying the relationship as it is represented in late-19th- and early-20th-century oral and ethnographic texts that pertain to Laich-Kwil-Tach people and then through a consideration of how this relationship is expressed or understood today. I also attempt to give greater traction to this examination by considering the challenges of understanding and respecting knowledge grown from the relational world and how its holders can become participants within the modern “resource management” regime.

As an example of how relational ecology is informed by animism, historical ecology and political ecology, I turn to the fish trap. Within my examination of the Laich-Kwil-Tach human-fish relationship I contend that fish traps are an “environmental alteration” (Peacock 1998:13) that were part of the human-fish relationship. Fish traps

provided a doorway to the human world in a way that respected the personhood and self-determination of fish, while also effectively providing for human persons. This kind of relationship informs the contemporary rights of both Indigenous persons and the fish persons (Losey 2010). This last piece, informed by political ecology, assists in framing the context of the final part of my research question: “How are principles of Indigenous management understood and communicated in terms of this relationship?” Laich-Kwiltach people today struggle to have a voice in fisheries management and argue that their right to be part of the decision-making process is rooted in their long history as fishers and fish caretakers; essentially it is grounded in the human-fish relationship. Addressing my final question will include addressing the loss of autonomy over fish and its consequences upon the human-fish relationship.

Theoretical Context

Before I situate my position within the three paradigms that inform my relational ecology and argue its value in the present study and within anthropological knowledge construction, I must comment on my use of the term “landscape.” The definition of landscape is messy and is frequently used as a contrast to the term environment. Landscape is often viewed as an entity in a reciprocal relationship with people (and other nonhuman persons), while the environment is a place void of humans (albeit one that can be affected by us) (Balée 1998:15-16). In this way it represents the dualism of “culture” vs. “nature.” It is important to note that the notion of landscape among social scientists is often different from those with whom we work, and in fact, for many, it may not be a category at all. For this reason, my use of the term landscape remains vague; I use it more as a way to discuss the phenomena of interactions. In these terms it can be a constructed

place, a constructed ecological occurrence, an experience or it can be manifest in practice. My ultimate objective is to understand the reciprocal interaction between people and fish; what neoliberal, capitalist thought might see as a resource, but what Laich-Kwil-Tach people see as something different. As a forum for discussion I use the term landscape, but not as a unit of analysis or as an object of study. Instead it is the relational phenomena upon which the interaction between human persons and nonhuman persons may be written and read over time.

Anthropological Animism of Old: Its Beginning

Animism is one of the earliest anthropological concepts and as such, it has a long history within the discipline. The anthropological concept of animism is credited to E.B. Tylor and his influential two-volume book, *Primitive Culture* (1871 [1920]-a and b). An important figure in Victorian anthropology and the first professor of anthropology at the University of Oxford, Tylor produced an influential narrative of cultural evolution in which culture is conceptualized as a unitary phenomenon. He placed European civilisation at the most advanced stage, and savagery and barbarianism at the first and middle stages of an evolutionary progression toward a civilised society (Tylor 1871 [1920]-a:27). Central to Tylor's theory of cultural development was religion. He claimed that, at a minimum, religion should be defined as the belief in spiritual beings (Tylor 1871 [1920]-a:424). He considered animism to be this most basic form of religion and argued that it was at the root of all religious belief (Tylor 1871 [1920]-a:426). In keeping with Enlightenment thought, Tylor believed there was a general human condition, or "psychic unity," that explained this basic religious belief and he turned to psychology for inspiration. He argued that dreams and visions created the concept of souls that exist in

“ethereal images” of humans (Tylor 1871 [1920]-a:450) and that it was common among humans to conceive of things external to humans as animated (Tylor 1871 [1920]-a:477-478). He posited two phenomena within animism: 1. souls of individual creatures, capable of existence beyond death or the destruction of the body; and 2. spirits, including powerful deities (Tylor 1871 [1920]-a:426). He argued that the first was limited to the savage and barbarian stages of culture while the second was limited to peasants of civilised people among whom animism remained as an “ancestral relic” or “survival” (Tylor 1871 [1920]-b:357). He characterized animism of the first stages as “unmoral” (Tylor 1871 [1920]-b:361) with a child-like natural philosophy, while the higher faiths of civilisation, in which remnants of animism survived, were based on “the law of righteousness and holiness, the inspiration of duty and love” (Tylor 1871 [1920]-b:361).

At the root of Tylor’s animism is the Western ontological binary of nature/culture. Animism, like the people who practised it, was seen as primitive (nature) and separate from Western notions of civilisation (culture). Additionally, in this Western duality the presence of human-like subjectivity (Brightman, et al. 2012:2), “reflective consciousness, intentionality,” the ability to communicate (Descola 2013:132) and the “capacity to occupy a point of view” (Viveiros de Castro 2004:470) is limited to human personhood.

In the period following Tylor and for much of the 20th century, animism continued to be seen as primitive (Alberti and Bray 2009:337; Durkheim 1915 [1965]), as “evidence of thinking that was averse to logic and incapable of distinguishing reality from dreams and myth” (Descola 2013:132) and even as a “failed epistemology” (Bird-David 1999:S67). Animists, it was suggested, lack the ability to reason logically, disregard empirical evidence and postulate the mystical to explain the world (Descola 2009:146).

In contrast, some suggested that animism reveals a desire to make sense of the world and to explain nature (Descola 2009:148), while others stuck with the argument that it is simply human nature to anthropomorphize and to interpret the world according to recognizable categories (Descola 2009:146-148). Some argued that animistic relations are symbolic, reflecting the relations between humans and the moral state of the community (Descola 2009:149), or figures of speech, metaphors or wordplay (Descola 2013:132; Wilkinson 2017). Others envisioned animism as a spiritual essence that can retain a magical or religious hold over people (Mauss 1967:10). Finally, some continued to argue that there is an underlying psychological and unconscious predisposition to animate objects. This argument is still postulated (and refuted) today (see Descola 2013; Guthrie 2000; Ingold 2006:11).

Within these terms, anthropologists often treated animism as metaphor, an equivalent to European fables that portray animals as human-like (Descola 2009:146; Ingold 2004:28; Rasmussen 2011:166; Willerslev 2007-18). Eventually, some anthropologists feared animism drew attention to what Western thought defines as “an apparently irrational aspect of the life of archaic societies” (Descola 1992:114; 2009:146). This fear, as well as animism’s place as an analytic category within unilinear evolution, (Clammer 2004:85; Haber 2009:418; Wilkinson 2017), led anthropologists to almost entirely abandon the term by the mid-20th century.

Anthropological Animism Anew: Its Rebirth

Due to animism’s original association with unilinear evolution, the suggestion that it is “selectively indigenous” and often ahistorical, some argue that we should continue to eschew its use (e.g. Wilkinson 2017:289, 291). For some, an examination of the relational

world turns a lens onto the neoliberal relationship with the “natural world” in which resources are treated as a commodity (Harvey 2006; Wilkinson 2017:297). I, however, approach this differently. I do not argue that animists live in better harmony with the “natural world,” for this is part of an essentialized notion of Indigeneity. I do argue that the relationships that exist in an enlivened world and the corresponding responsibilities framed by those relationships problematize the “relationship among science, state and public” (Green and Green 2013:15) which must be addressed if our intentions for decolonisation are serious. Here, animism is important. Many have been part of animism’s revival (for example, Anderson 2000; Bird-David 1990; Bird-David 1999; Bird-David 2006; Clammer 2004; Descola 1992; Descola 2009; Hallowell 1960 [2002]; Ingold 2000c; Ingold 2004; Ingold 2006; Vitebsky 2005; Viveiros de Castro 1998; 2004; 2015; Willerslev 2004; 2007; 2011; Willerslev and Ulturgasheva 2012). This revival is part of an ontological turn occurring across the humanities and sciences (Alberti and Bray 2009:337; Alberti, et al. 2011:896) in which a new-found interest in animism is part of an “anti-essentialist move away from rigid binary oppositions typical of modernity” (Haber 2009:418). Decades after its initial publication, Irving Hallowell’s 1960 paper on Anishinaabe (formerly Ojibwe) ontology contributed to animism’s rebirth in anthropology. Hallowell observed that the Anishinaabe sense of personhood included animals, wind, particular stones, etc., all of which Cartesian thought considers “natural.” He called these entities “other-than-human persons” and argued that for many non-Western peoples the concept of person transcends the Western category of human and that the social relations between human persons and other-than-human persons is of “cardinal significance” (Hallowell 1960 [2002]:22). In other words, “there are many

kinds of reified person-objects which are other than human but [who] have the same ontological status” (Hallowell 1960 [2002]:24).

Hallowell’s work was eventually seen as pivotal in prompting anthropologists to consider how Western knowledge positions animism as a “mistaken” ontology, understood as belief or religion. Although he consigned animism to belief and although he maintained Western epistemological hegemony, Hallowell’s work contributed to the process of its reconsideration. Reconsideration was furthered in the 1980s when anthropological concepts of the person were challenged by anthropologists like Loius Dumont, Marilyn Strathern and Nancy Munn (Dumont 1965; 1983; Munn 1986; Smith 2012; Strathern 1988:12-13). Eventually animism became less constrained by Western person concepts (Bird-David 1999:S71) and a space was created in which animism could be recognized as a valid epistemic system rather than as an illogical blunder. It became possible to imagine that animals and objects are not just anthropomorphized but are recognised as beings with complete personhood (Ingold 2004:34). More recently, perhaps the three most influential people in the revival of animism are Philippe Descola, Eduardo Viveiros de Castro and Nurit Bird-David (Fausto 2007; Peterson 2011:167). After conducting fieldwork primarily with the Achuar people of Upper Amazonia (Peru and Ecuador; (Fausto 2007:499), Descola defined animism as “the belief that natural beings possess their own spiritual principles and that it is therefore possible for humans to establish with these entities personal relations” (Descola 1992:114). He later offered another definition: an anthropocentrism in which “humans and non-humans are seen as possessing identical interiorities and different physicalities” (Descola 2009:151; 2013:144). Descola’s work focusses on the presence of alternative modes of relations. He

recognises four ways to objectify nature, which he classifies as ontologies: 1. animism; 2. naturalism; 3. totemism; and 4. analogism (Descola 2009:151-152; 2013:121; see also Latour 2009:2; Viveiros de Castro 1998:473). These modes of relations meant that “the ‘nature versus culture’ divide no longer constituted an inevitable background” for study, but could be acknowledged as one of four ontologies for understanding the world (Latour 2009:1). Descola distinguishes animism from naturalism, arguing that naturalists recognize similarities between entities on the basis of physical traits (exterior) and distinguish them on the basis of mental or spiritual (interior) characteristics. Animists recognize that all entities share a similar interior, but differ by virtue of their exterior (Latour 2009:1). Although of lesser interest here, to this he contrasts totemism, in which the exterior and interior are similar, and analogism, in which both exterior and interior are different (Latour 2009:2).

Viveiros de Castro (1998:469), an anthropologist who worked with the Araweté people of Southeast Amazonia (Brazil) (Fausto 2007:499), characterizes animism as an extension of the attributes of humanity to other beings. He contrasts this with perspectivism, common in South America (but also found in other areas of the world: for example, Siberia [Anderson 2000:253; Vitbesky 2005; Willerslev 2004, 2007]; North America [Langdon 2006, 2007; Scott 1996, 2006]; and Asia [Pedersen 2001]), which postulates that the world is inhabited by different sorts of subjects or persons (human and nonhuman) and each apprehends their reality from a distinct point of view (Viveiros de Castro 1998:469). It is based on the understanding that all beings share a spiritual unity and that at one time they existed together in an “original state of undifferentiation” (Viveiros de Castro 1998:471), making humanity a condition (Hornborg 2006b:317;

Tsintjilonis 2004:430). In perspectivism humans see humans as humans, animals as animals, spirits as spirits; but animals and spirits see humans as animals or prey (Hornborg 2006b:317-318; Viveiros de Castro 1998:470). At the same time, animals and spirits see themselves as humans and they live in a human way in their own human-like worlds. Being anthropomorphic in their own world, they live in houses, see their food in human terms, have a social structure similar to humans and don a mask that gives them their physical appearance when they travel to the human world (Viveiros de Castro 1998:470; 2004:466). The different exterior in the form of the mask or clothing determines the perspective from which “humans, animals and spirits see both themselves and one another” (Viveiros de Castro 1998:469; 2004:465). Descola (2013:134) adds that the mask or “form taken by bodies covers more than just their physical conformation; it includes the entire package of biological equipment that makes it possible for a species to occupy a particular habitat and thereby develop the distinctive mode of life by which we immediately identify it.”

Viveiros de Castro recognises his form of perspectivism as “reminiscent” of but separate from Descola’s animism (Viveiros de Castro 1998:472; Viveiros de Castro 2015) and even a “corollary of animism” (cited in Descola 2013:143). Descola argues that perspectivism is a “deeper exploration of the local contrasts” of animism (Latour 2009:2) that “expresses the idea that any being that occupies a referential point of view, being in the position of subject, sees itself as a member of the human species” (Descola 2013:139). He goes on to argue that “perspectivism ingeniously exploits the possibility opened up by the difference in physicalities upon which animism is founded” (Descola 2013:143). In Viveiros de Castro’s view, Descola’s animism is the human attribution of

human faculties upon animals resulting in human and nonhuman persons with agency, while perspectivism results in a world in which the animal sees itself, others of its kind and its world, as human while it sees human persons as nonhuman persons (Viveiros de Castro 1998:474). As a person it has agency and intentionality and from the internal perspective of each species, its world is decidedly human.

Nurit Bird-David (1999) was also important in the rebirth of animism within anthropology. She argues that animism is an epistemology, a way of knowing the world, specifically by focusing on relatedness (Bird-David 1999:S69). Her “relational epistemology” posits that animating forces in nonhumans arise through relationships and ongoing engagement with the world we inhabit (Bird-David 1999). Because there is relatedness with and between things and an awareness of the webs of relationships between human persons and what is around them, the world is relational rather than objective (Bird-David 1999:S77). Knowledge is developed through being-in-the-world and relating to what is in it, while being aware of the relationships it offers. Awareness of relationships results in a “we-ness” rather than an “us and other” objectivity (Bird-David 1999:S78; Helander-Renvall 2010:47). This view repositions animism as something that arises out of an ongoing engagement between humans and the world we inhabit rather than as a set of beliefs, and begins to dissolve the categories of sacred and profane that are embedded in historical studies of religion (Groleau 2009:398; see Durkheim 1915 [1965]; Tylor 1871 [1920]-a and b).

Along similar lines, Ingold (2006; 2012) argues that animism is a condition of being in and alive to a world with heightened sensitivity, responsiveness, perception and action (see also Alberti and Bray 2009; Alberti, et al. 2011; Alberti and Marshall 2009;

Holbraad 2009; Poirier 2008; Porr and Bell 2012; Rival 2012; Zedeno 2009). From a Western perspective, in this world one attends to all kinds of person-like or thing-like beings and raises the material world “to the status of things that, similarly to organisms, both grow and are growing” (Ingold 2000c; Ingold 2012:431). To this I would add that these entities are part of a constant reciprocal process of becoming within relational networks. Following Poirier, “in a relational ontology, relations (between humans and between human and nonhuman agents) are an intrinsic and dynamic part of local ways of being in the world. . . . In Indigenous understandings and experiences of the world, the agency of non-humans is a fact of life; it is a real and true phenomenon” (2008:77) that is intimately experienced (Londoño Sulkin 2005:22). Understood in these terms, person-like and thing-like beings do not just exist in a ready-made world; they move through the world and affect its formation (Ingold 2006:9). They have agency by virtue of their beingness and through their interactions with human persons (Carlson and McHalsie 2010:64). In this way the world is an entanglement in which all sentient beings are connected in a relationship of “interagentivity” (Ingold 2000c:47).

Viveiros de Castro (1998:472) suggests that perspectivism is “reminiscent” of animism, but like Descola, I agree that perspectivism is a variant of animism (Latour 2009:2). As such, it sheds light and understanding on the worldwide variability of animism. I also understand the distinction between relational ontologies and relational epistemologies to be a duality with which we should dispense if we are to understand the presence of and relationship between human and nonhuman persons within the overall framework of animism. For these reasons, I suggest that we reinvigorate the term animism in a way that it coalesces with political and historical ecology.

Contemporary Anthropological Thought on Animism

Definitions for animism abound but none are problem free and all affect the way in which it is interpreted. To this end, I agree with Haber (2009) that social science's current engagement with multiple ontologies including animism enables dialogue with local theories; accepts the existence of non-material aspects of the world; accepts sociality between beings; and rejects the "Western humanistic stance on who gets to be a person (Wilkinson 2017:293). However, it is critical to consider how social science envisions and employs animism. Although some anthropologists have begun to employ definitions that fit the animists' world (e.g. Poirier 2008:51), even in the enlightened position noted by Haber, we too often define animism as the *endowment* or *extension* of human qualities onto natural beings (Brightman, et al. 2012:14; Descola 1992:114; Viveiros de Castro 1998:469), the *imputation* of life onto inert objects (Ingold 2006:9), or even *imagined* social relations (Guthrie 2000:106) (although this last definition is widely criticised in academic literatures). Others equate animism with the supernatural (for example Lohmann 2003). Animism, however, is not the endowment or extension of human qualities onto a natural being, an assumption that reflects our nature/culture and epistemology/ontology dualities. Instead I define animism as the *existence* of agency and intentionality in nonhuman persons. The distinction is important. In the first standard definition one assumes that agency and intentionality is granted to or placed upon a nonhuman person by a human person, suggesting that the qualities do not actually exist but are present only because the human person perceives or believes them to exist and when expressed as such, we are forced to reconcile (or not) the belief with our own (Viveiros de Castro 2015:25-26). Interpreting animism as an endowment of qualities

(Descola 1992:114), as anthropogenesis to facilitate treating nonhumans like humans (Descola 2009:154), or as a “conception” of the world (Viveiros de Castro 1998:469) reflects the kinds of dualities described earlier. It exposes a confidence in the notion that only humans really have intention and that nonhumans are represented as though they are persons with intention (Ingold 2004:51). This clearly reflects our divisions between nature and culture and between knowing and being. Once again our notion of truth is based in Western tradition and suggests that animists must be mistaken; animism is only a perception based on how animists socialise their world.

Contrary to these positions on animism, I argue that if we hope to understand animism, we must accept that the worlds that it brings into being are real; we must recognise that what we “know” reflects our ontology in which personhood is attributed only to humans. It is not enough to believe that animists believe (Povinelli 1995:506). Approaching animism as the *existence* of agency and intentionality in nonhuman persons assumes that these qualities do exist and are shared among various beings. Every being emerges with a form; it is by virtue of one’s perspective that one is capable or incapable of recognising it. My definition is also broad enough to ensure that the wide variability among animists and the important distinctions within the animism debate are not lost. From here, animism opens “doors to more pluralistic understandings of and approaches to the world, celebrating, rather than problematizing, multiplicity” (Alberti and Bray 2009:338). In fact, when we work among people who do not divide nature and culture, it is “scientifically risky” to continue to use the Western notion of separation (Descola 2009:147) and can result in explanations that are congruent with our dualisms. If we continue to project “categorical abstractions derived from Western thought,” that are

reflections of “*our* ontology, we perpetuate Western hegemony. Greater understanding may be sought through an analysis of the outlook of the people themselves” (Hallowell 1960 [2002]:21). This means recognising a myriad of social relationships and opening oneself to alternative ways of knowing and being. Among animists, things are entangled within the web of life, and shifting our focus from the thing as an object to the thing as a subject entwined within that web of life can bring our focus to how subjects are caught up in the currents of its original life world (Brown and Walker 2008:297; Ingold 2007:1).

The separation of object/subject is also of concern in what has been called the “material turn” (Ingold 2012:438). This approach to materials recognizes their role in a world that is continually emergent through an entanglement with all beings, including in this case, the material. Regardless of whether or not the material is subject or object, it is part of and affected by world making. Thus, it is greater than simply recognising agency. The goal is to restore “the generative fluxes of the world... in which they came into being.... This view, that things are in life rather than life is in things” (Ingold 2007:12), can help us move beyond conventional interpretations and definitions of person materials and release us from the notion that matter is inert. These kinds of understandings are important in order for us to begin to meaningfully acknowledge and respect the other ontologies and their corresponding rights.

Political and Historical Ecology: Before the Divergence of Ecologies

Both historical and political ecologies grew from the cultural ecology of the 1950s and 1960s (Balée 2006:76; Ingold 1992:39; Kottak 1999:23; Moran 1990:4; Scoones 1999:484). Coined by Julian Steward, “cultural ecology” was known for its systems theory, cybernetics and concepts of adaptation and homeostasis (Biersack 1999:6;

Headland 1997:606; Kottak 1999:23; Moran 1990:4; Scoones 1999:480; Walker 2005:74; Watts and Peet 2004:20). Cultural ecology focused primarily on peoples classified within anthropology as foragers or hunter-gatherers, horticulturalists and pastoralists, and lacked a focus on people in city and state contexts. In this paradigm, culture was viewed in functional terms and as human adaptation to the social and physical environment (Steward 1955:5). Because humans adapted to their environment, agency in landscape construction was not considered (Balée 2006:76, 79). Steward (1955:36) argued that while a range of responses are possible, ecological adaptations generally led to different “levels of sociocultural integration” (Steward 1955:6). He argued that the “cultural core”—a culture’s “essential features” such as practices of patrilineality, matrilocality, exomgamy, etc.—“resulted from ecological adaptations which, under the recurrent conditions of environment and subsistence technology, could vary only within minor limits” (Steward 1955:122). In hindsight, these two concepts are paradoxical. On the one hand culture prescribes how the environment is exploited, while on the other the environment prescribes the limits of culture (Ingold 1992:44). Work in cultural ecology and the notion of culture as an adaptation to the environment led to studies that focused on issues like caloric measures (Moran 1990:24; Rappaport 1967:74; Whitehead 1998:30), number of working hours (Headland 1997:607) and economic zones (Binford 1982:7). Most models were ahistorical and did not consider sociopolitical relationships among groups. Nor was the human and nonhuman role in constructing the landscape recognized. In part, this is because foraging people were viewed as a template from which the rest of us evolved, still immersed in nature, not yet having overcome it through cultivation (Seed 1995:30). As such, they were not considered to have the

capacity to affect the environment (Headland 1997:607). Finally, agency within an animated world was not considered.

From Steward's cultural ecology came Roy Rappaport's book, *Pigs for the Ancestors* (1967). This work supported Steward's adaptation/homeostasis model emphasizing how ritual mediates critical relationships between people and the environment; but, unlike Steward, Rappaport rejected culture as a unit of analysis and adopted an ecosystem approach. Rappaport (1967:225) defined ecosystem as "a demarcated portion of the biosphere that includes living organisms and nonliving substances interacting to produce a systematic exchange of materials among the living components and between the living components and the nonliving substances." In his view, ritual was a regulating mechanism in the ecosystem (Rappaport 1967:4) that allowed humans to adapt to the environment (Biersack 1999:6).

Eventually these ecological approaches were criticized for reductionism, environmental determinism, functionalism and for a disregard of issues of power and inequality (Balée 1998:3; Biersack 1999:6; Fabian and Rappaport 1982:205-207; Moran 1990:3; Paulson, et al. 2005:20). From the critique came a divergence and historical ecology and political ecology emerged.

The Divergence: Historical Ecology

Historical ecology is currently an interdisciplinary approach to understanding the human-landscape entanglement over long periods of time (Armstrong, et al. 2017; Hastrop 2013:1-2; Ingold 1992:40; 2012:428; Rival 2006:S79) and indeed, recent interest in historical ecology has demonstrated the "futility of any ahistorical" ecology (Heckenberger 2005:19). The approach in its early days, sometimes referred to as the

“standard model” (Balée and Erickson 2006:4; Biersack 1999:5; Stahl 2002:39), maintained the “culture as adaptation” concept and held that the environment and its physical constraints are hegemonic over living entities (Balée and Erickson 2006:4; Erickson 2008; Stahl 2002:39), a notion derived from the Cartesian nature/culture divide. Like cultural ecology, it focused on small, non-urban communities (Moran 1990:13). In this approach the environment is not subject to long-term modification by humans, except where the change is one of perceived degradation or disruption of a pristine environment (Balée and Erickson 2006:4; Erickson 2008; Fisher and Feinman 2005:63; Moran 1990:19; Stahl 2002:41).

By the 1990s, in reaction to a “theoretically renovated anthropology” emerging at the end of the 20th century (Viveiros de Castro 1996:183), a renewed historical ecology rejected the standard model, arguing that it oversimplifies and neglects historical processes (Stahl 1996:105). Re-reading archaeological and ethnographic evidence and the emergence of new information exposed the notion of the pristine environment as a myth (Blaikie and Brookfield 1987; Denevan 1992; 2011) and opened dialogue on the idea that human agency is not necessarily deleterious, but can often be credited for constructing and maintaining resources (Denevan 1992; 2011). This approach has the potential to provide different conservation benchmarks that include temporal, spatial and anthropogenic considerations with the ability to inform policy development (Crumley 1994:12; Fairhead and Leach 1996:26).

Unlike the standard model of historical ecology, the new historical ecology accepts that humans have “interceded in material and measurable ways” in the biotic world and that the changes they have produced are reflected in human culture (Balée and Erickson

2006:1). Its advocates argue that it is a “powerful perspective for understanding the complex historical relationship between human beings and the biosphere” (Balée and Erickson 2006:1) over space and through time (Balée 2006:75; Erickson 2008). A central concern of this new historical ecology is landscape. Here, landscape, a term borrowed from historical geography (Balée 2006:75), is a “multidimensional physical entity that has both spatial and temporal characteristics and has been modified by human activity such that human intentions and actions can be inferred, if not read as material culture, from it” (Balée and Erickson 2006:1; Crumley 1999:6). This conception of landscape stems from the geographer, Carl Sauer’s, work, *The Morphology of Landscape*. Originally published in 1925, Sauer (1969:325) acknowledges the anthropogenic landscape and recognizes that objects exist in a relationship. He contends that any attempt to understand the landscape as an unrelated space has no scientific value (Sauer 1969:321) because it is within the human-environment interrelationship that both culture and landscape grow (Sauer 1969:325). Sauer calls his concept the “morphologic approach”: an understanding that change is directed and not simply realized (Sauer 1969:349).

The Divergence: Political Ecology

As environmental issues became more conspicuous, and in response to the historic turn in academia, social science turned its attention to politics and how relations of power and difference among human groups influence the biophysical environment (Gezon and Paulson 2005:1) and “how environmental and political forces interact to mediate social and environmental change”(Bryant 1992:12). Political ecology postulates that an ecological crisis is explained through its political context and focuses attention on

broader historical processes (Latour 2004:246) like colossal depopulation, missionisation, territory usurpation, colonialism, forced education, capitalism, globalization, rights, neoliberalism, etc. Political ecology emerged in response to the neglect of these kinds of political dimensions within cultural ecology (Vayda and Walters 1999:167-168; Watts and Peet 2004:6). Generally, political ecology “combines the concerns of ecology and a broadly defined political economy... [and] encompasses the constantly shifting dialectic between society and land-based resources, and also... [between] classes and groups within society itself” (Blaikie and Brookfield 1987:17). The term was adopted when Eric Wolf (1972) used it in the title of his short article, *Ownership and Political Ecology*. Although he did not use the term in his paper, Wolf set the stage for political ecology to recognize the dialectical relationship between local life and the larger “man-made environment” (1972:202) and the role social and political history have in environmental change (Wolf 1972:204-205). At the same time, social scientists increasingly turned to studies of markets, social inequality, and power on peasant societies, and it became critical of Rappaport’s *Pigs for the Ancestors* for disregarding the effect of power dynamics within colonialism and capitalism (Paulson, et al. 2005:20; Watts and Peet 2004:8). Political ecology was also a response to an increased interest in understanding the human response to natural and human-made disasters, spurred by events like the nuclear arms race, the Cold War and the oil crisis (Walker 2005:74; Watts and Peet 2004:7). Political ecology, conceived of as a way to explore the relationship between political economy and ecology and as a way to connect the social and physical sciences, was, like historical ecology, embraced and influenced by many disciplines (Walker 2005:74). Its focus is on factors that shape power relations and on links between local

landscapes and international processes, expanding the scope of political ecology beyond small-scale societies to a focus on states, capitalist markets, social inequality, political conflict, etc. (Paulson, et al. 2005:23; Watts and Peet 2004:3). In this approach, the early shift, like historical ecology, focused on environmental degradation and disruption (Blaikie and Brookfield 1987:3; Paulson, et al. 2005:23; Watts and Peet 2004:6); but by naming political economy as a source of “maladaptation,” it challenged the dominant interpretations of the causes of environmental degradation as well as the practise of addressing it (Gezon and Paulson 2005:2; Walker 2005:74). In this way, political ecology plays a role in exposing and challenging the uncritical use of culturally situated knowledge, discourse and practice, including those of physical and social sciences, in social-environmental issues (Latour 2004:226; Neumann 2011:845; Paulson, et al. 2005:28). While much of modern science focuses on immediate causes of perceived ecological problems, political ecology considers structural factors and global forces as systems of power that undermine local authority and rights (Hornborg 2005:198). In this sense, global is not a place, just as modernity is not a time. They are processes that abstract, encompass and disempower the local (Hornborg 2005:197) through mechanisms that undermine Indigenous rights, territoriality and knowledge. The end result is that local, often impoverished people are held responsible for perceived environmental problems, while their contribution to aspects of the landscape that are positively perceived are rarely recognized. Political ecology also strives to recognize the role of the social and external power dynamics (Gezon and Paulson 2005:7; Watts and Peet 2004:6). In this sense, landscape is conceived of as the dynamic, physical expression of power that has material consequences in the lives of people (Neumann 2011:848).

More recently, political ecology has been criticized for overemphasizing politics and overlooking ecology, an approach that can represent the landscape as a passive object that is transformed through human agency (Peterson 2000:324; Vayda and Walters 1999:168; Walker 2005:73). This comes noticeably close to anthropogenic determination. Vayda and Walters (1999:168) go so far as to suggest that political ecology began as a reaction to the “ecology without politics” of the 1950s and 1960s, but that an overreaction resulted in a “politics without ecology.” Although I do not agree with this assessment, it does signal a need to re-evaluate the approach.

Coming Together

The ability to have a spiritual connection with a resource is recognized in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (Nations 2008). Article 25 states: “Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinctive spiritual relationship with their traditionally owned... resources...” (Nations 2008:10). Although “spiritual” can be considered a Western concept, it is from this premise that my research grows. So far I have considered the relationship between anthropologists and animists. I have argued that as anthropologists we must continue to strive to better understand and represent to one another what animism is, where it happens and what it means on the ground on its own terms, and not examine it in contrast to Western understandings of the world. I have also discussed historical and political ecologies and their recognition of relationality between humans, power dynamics and the landscape. Historical and political ecologies, at the most basic level, are about historic context: the history of the human-landscape interrelationship and the social and cultural dimensions behind it. Cast this way, it is not surprising that they emerged as part of late 20th century

social science, a time of deep critical reflection, when anthropology's colonial roots were exposed and acknowledged (Asad 1998; Dirks, et al. 1994; Fabian 1983; Pels 2008; Stocking 1987). Both historical and political ecology recognize the constructed landscape, even if the apparent driving force is different. Interestingly, while both approaches consider the human-landscape interrelationship, historical ecology is interested in landscape construction, and therefore is an oft-used lens for archaeologists, while political ecology, with a focus on the social impact within the human-landscape relationship, a lens employed by some anthropologists who often attend to degradation and negative relationships.

Relational ecology brings these pieces together and makes space for the dialectical relationship with the lived world, resulting in a mutual constitution of the person and the world (Ingold 1992:40) that is “manifest in the landscape” (Balée and Erickson 2006:2). Viewed in these terms, landscapes and life worlds are constructed, often with intention, and provide opportunities to interpret the interrelationship between human persons, nonhuman persons and their physical world over time. The notions of “dialectical relationship” and “interrelationship” are important within the concept of landscape, for in this space landscape is a “multiscalar, diachronic, and holistic” object (Crumley 1994:9; Hastrup 2013:1; Rival 2006S80). Relational ecology recognizes that one's world is constructed directly and indirectly by human ingenuity, nonhuman agency and power dynamics, and that knowledge is better constructed within a program that does not separate these forces but considers them equally in an entangled web of relationships. Escobar (1999) seems to agree. He advocates an “antiessential political ecology” but defines the entanglement as the biological, social and cultural (Escobar 1999:3). In this

way conceptualizing landscape as either biocentric or anthropocentric is avoided (Escobar 1999:3) and the complexity of relationships is explored. Relational ecology as I apply it strives to remove boundaries and emphasizes the interrelationships among the social of an enlivened world, the historical of a lived world and the power dynamics of an integrated world. By acknowledging coalescence of animism (the entangled human-nonhuman approach), political ecology (the entangled sociopolitical-human approach) and historical ecology (the entangled human-landscape approach) an opportunity exists to consider their synergistic implications and how they inform and reframe understandings of historical and contemporary issues. Recognition of these relationships reveals the synergy of the human-to-human-to-nonhuman-to-landscape tetrad and their reciprocal influences upon which ontological knowledge can be constructed.

Expressions of Relational Ecology on the Northwest Coast

A relational ecology that explores relationships within the lived world over time has the potential to reframe dominant narratives on the Northwest Coast. Since the arrival of Europeans, the Northwest Coast of North America has been cast as a beautiful wilderness. The estimated population of the Northwest Coast at the time of contact was 200,000—more than 40 people per 100 square kilometres—a density greater than many other parts of Indigenous North America, including some areas in which agriculture was practiced (Donald 2003:298). It is likely that this number is lower than pre-contact populations due to the earlier arrival of European diseases. By 1881, the Indigenous population had fallen to just over 25,000 people (Galois and Harris 1994:38). This low population contributed to colonial narratives that the Northwest Coast was a place of wild abundance and not one shaped by the Indigenous people who dwelled there. Until

recently, few believed that the people themselves could have contributed to the construction of a landscape that was understood as a wilderness, untamed and vacant until English possession, a concept deeply rooted in Western concepts of the world (Seed 1995). It is ironic that while Northwest Coast scholarship long assumed that an environment of natural abundance played an important role in shaping what is known as the Northwest Coast Culture Complex (Matson and Coupland 1995:8)—the anomaly of hunter gatherers who developed a complex society—the role of humans in constructing this landscape to produce this abundance was largely overlooked. The effect was a usurpation of Indigenous lands and eventually the creation of an Indian Reserve policy and legal system that denied Aboriginal rights and title, marginalizing Indigenous people (see Fisher 1992; Harris 2002; Tennant 1990). Perhaps, like elsewhere in the Americas (Balée and Erickson 2006; Erickson 2000; 2008; 2010; Heckenberger 2005), a consideration of the dialectical relationships, how the landscape and the people were mutually constituted, will change this narrative.

Northwest Coast scholarship in the past decade has witnessed “an increasing number of researchers [who] now understand that people of this region actively manipulated both terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems to increase natural biodiversity and abundance” (Caldwell, et al. 2012:220; Deur and Turner 2005a:22; Groesbeck, et al. 2014; Lepofsky, et al. 2015; Neudorf, et al. 2017; Thornton, et al. 2015:189). For many years, plant cultivation, mariculturalism and the overall capacity of Indigenous populations to influence the landscape was overlooked. It is now evident that patches of “natural” or “undisturbed” habitat are rare (Bjorkman and Vellend 2010:1560), and that Indigenous people, like elsewhere, actively engaged in their world in a reciprocally

influential way. Consequently it is becoming apparent that natural abundance was overstated (Deur and Turner 2005a:5; Haggen, et al. 2006:2), and that the Indigenous role in constructing their world was made invisible within the colonial project (McDonald 2005:241; see Balée and Erickson 2006; Erickson 2000; 2008; 2010; Heckenberger 2005 for Amazonian research engaged with these issues). In a relational Northwest Coast world, “wilderness” cannot exist and abundance is no longer “natural” but is part of a myriad of relationships that collectively influence each other and the world. This way of framing the Northwest Coast has implications on our anthropological tropes and on our understanding of Aboriginal rights. Several examples that follow exemplify my point.

On the Northwest Coast approximately 300 plant species were used for food, medicine, ceremonial and/or material purposes (Deur and Turner 2005a:17) and more than 100 were harvested from specific places in substantial amounts for food (Deur and Turner 2005b:331). Studies of the use of these plants reveal that “multiple, complementary methods of cultivation” were used, including weeding, transplanting, pruning, tilling, sowing and burning (Deur and Turner 2005b:331; Doolittle 2001) as people actively influenced their world (Lutz 1995; McDonald 2005:271; Turner 2005:147; Turner and Peacock 2005:103). Although not ubiquitous, some examples of plant cultivation on the Northwest Coast sit quietly in ethnographic writings. For example: Haida, Nuxalk, Nuuchahnulth and Kwakwaka’wakw estuary gardens of Pacific silverweed (*Potentilla anserina*, ssp. *pacifica*) and Spring bank clover (*Trifolium wormskjoldii*) were owned and managed by women (Boas 1966:24-28; Boas and Hunt 1921b:186-189; Deur 2002:144); berry bushes were pruned, transplanted and maintained (Boas and Hunt 1921b:209-222); and orchards of crabapples (*Malus fusca*) were planted

(Boas and Hunt 1921a:1345-1348). Like in many other places around the world, anthropogenic burning played an important role in landscape construction and maintenance (Bjorkman and Vellend 2010:1564; Lepofsky, et al. 2005a:220; Turner 1999:200), creating “mosaics of productive communities” and increasing diversity of species (Turner and Peacock 2005:134). Numerous documents from the 19th century record both an open landscape and/or the use of fire to clear it (e.g. Mayne 1862:40, 80, 153, 174, 394). In May 1792, Captain Vancouver travelled through Puget Sound. He described Protection Island, now a National Wildlife Refuge as “enchantingly beautiful as the most elegantly finished pleasure grounds in Europe... [with] an extensive lawn covered with luxuriant grass... [and] a coppice of pine trees and shrubs... [a] delightful meadow... that would have puzzled the most ingenious designer of pleasure grounds to have arranged more agreeably” (Vancouver 1984:513-514). In addressing the landscape around the area he notes, “I could not possibly believe that any uncultivated country had ever been discovered exhibiting so rich a picture” (Vancouver 1984:515). A half century later, George Simpson, a Hudson Bay man, describes what is now Victoria as “a very Elysium” (George Simpson, June 20, 1844 in Lamb 1943:117), and only two decades later Captain G.H. Richards (2012:57) comments on the smoke about the Strait of Georgia coming from fires on burning islands lit by Indigenous people. These early visitors witnessed large areas of open landscape, meadows and open forests, all evidence of management and cultivation practices, but colonial bias occluded connecting even these colonial era observations with dominant anthropological understanding (Seed 1995). Currently, research on southern Vancouver Island and Salt Spring Island have found that these open prairies are shrinking, and that the “composition, density, and size

distribution of trees and proportions of habitat type” are changing, likely due to the cessation of anthropogenic burning (Bjorkman and Vellend 2010:1564-1565). As a result, ecosystems that support cultivated plant foods like camas, valued for its edible starchy tuber, are shrinking in their distribution (Bjorkman and Vellend 2010).

Clam gardens, or *loxiwé*, another example of landscape construction on the Northwest Coast, were built in the intertidal zone and reveal a ubiquitous and complex harvesting technology that stand as a physical manifestation of past human activity and management (Caldwell, et al. 2011; 2012; Groesbeck, et al. 2014; Lepofsky, et al. 2015; Neudorf, et al. 2017). An example of a constructed landscape these culturally modified beaches range in size from very small to about one kilometre in length. Hundreds of clam gardens are documented on the Northwest Coast from Orcas Island in the south (Williams 2006:53) to Wrangell, Alaska in the north, but like plant cultivation, this form of cultivation was long overlooked and went unrecorded by early anthropologists and archaeologists.

A clam garden is built by moving rocks off the beach and placing them at the extreme low tide line, creating a wall at the base of the beach. In time, the beach inside the wall fills with sand and shellhash. The use and maintenance of the clam garden did several things: 1. building rock walls lessened beach slope, increasing the area in which clams best grow and decreasing the time the beach is dry at low tide; 2. anthropogenic transplanting and harvesting maintained clam density, lessening competition and increasing growth rates; 3. digging aerated the beach, increasing production; 4. removing rocks rid the beach of competitor species (e.g. barnacles) and tending rid the beach of predator species (e.g. starfish); 5. removing rocks opened the beach to allow clam siphons

to more easily reach the beach surface; 6. adding gravel to a beach improved the clam growing matrix; 7. rock walls increased water retention and captured clam larvae, increasing the occurrence of “re-seeding”; and 8. water retained on the beach resulted in warmer water temperatures in spring and summer promoting phytoplankton growth, triggering bivalve spawning events and enhancing bivalve growth (Grosbeck, et al. 2014:7-8; Grosbeck, et al. 2011-32). In terms of food production the result was a greater than 200% increase in little neck clams (*Leukoma staminea*) and a 400% increase in butter clams (*Saxidomus giganteus*) (Grosbeck, et al. 2014:7). Construction of clam gardens thus dramatically altered the foreshore in many regions of the Northwest Coast, shaping distinctly Northwest Coast land tenure systems with substantive effects on the lives of clams and on human well-being. Furthermore, the labour required to build and maintain hundreds, and possibly thousands, of clam gardens is significant, and their ongoing use for at least 1700 years (Neudorf, et al. 2017:1) reveals that they are an important aspect of the Northwest Coast landscape.

Landscape construction on the Northwest Coast also involved fish traps and weirs (Byram 2002; Caldwell, et al. 2011; 2012; Cullon and Pratt Forthcoming 2018; Elder, et al. 2014; Eldridge and Acheson 1992; Greene 2005; 2010; 2015; Haggan, et al. 2006; Jones 2002; Langdon 2006a; 2007; Menzies and Butler 2007; Mobley and McCallum 2001; Moss 2013; Moss and Erlandson 1998; Pomeroy 1976; Smith 2011; White 2006; 2011). An old technology effective for procuring a large number of fish in a short time, fish traps and weirs—placed in estuaries, along beaches, in streams and rivers, in narrow ocean channels, or anywhere fish can be procured—are another “environmental alteration” (Peacock 1998:13). Fish traps and weirs are constructed in water and funnel or direct fish

to a barrier where they must hold or move into an enclosure from which they can be easily harvested (adapted from Connaway 2007:5). Traps and weirs were effective fishing technologies in part because of the deep understanding people had concerning fish movement and because of their thorough understanding of tidal and river currents in each locale (Stewart 1977:99). Evidence of these fishing structures is found throughout the Northwest Coast. They appear to vary in size, both in the individual physical structure of the weir or trap system and in the overall area they cover. For example, a small, individual weir may be found in a stream or numerous, large weirs and traps may be found in a large estuary. Although traps and weirs likely targeted numerous species of fish, in terms of salmon, fish bone records from the past 7500 years reveal remarkable consistency in use (Campbell and Butler 2010:1), suggesting that a stable and persistent salmon fishery existed throughout this time.

Clam gardens, estuary gardens and fish traps represent hundreds of kilometres of intentionally altered coastline. From an ecological perspective, clam, fish and plant cultivation, which seem to have undergone a concomitant intensification (Lepofsky, et al. 2005b:223), represent a substantive human investment in understanding, manipulating, and managing the landscape. They signal the presence of a social management structure required to administer labour, ownership, use, access, ritual, returns, preservation, conservation, enhancement, monitoring and protection. However, often missing in the analysis of these technologies and practices on the Northwest Coast is the relational aspect of all beings who were involved (cf. Langdon 2006a; 2006b; 2007; Losey 2010). With a focus on management and conservation as strategies, the relationships, reciprocity and commitments that informed action and influenced the construction of the world is

elided. Some authors refer to the connections between knowing/being/managing as “relational sustainability” (Langdon 2007; Scott 2006) or “sentient ecology” (Anderson 2000:130): a logic of engagement through which non-Western people interpret the world and from which they design behaviours in order to maintain the conditions of the world upon which they are dependent. Often informed by animist ways of knowing and being, interaction with the world must seek to maintain the conditions upon which human persons are dependent. Relational sustainability functions in a world in which all persons, human and nonhuman, have a similar essence and with whom one has an ongoing reciprocal relationship. The result is a relationship based on a “cumulation of knowledge grounded in the interpretation of empirical events through the mythic charter, thus generating a new logic of engagement” (Langdon 2007:235-236). Important in relational sustainability is the relationship between human persons and nonhuman persons, and it is this relationship that separates relational sustainability from Western notions of sustainable management. However, its focus on maintaining conditions of the world keep it one step removed from my intention to understand the ongoing reciprocal nature of a mutually constituted world.

Thornton argues that a way to expand our understanding of the relationships involved is to frame action within the concept of “cultivation,” which highlights social-ecological relationships that represent a “foundational way of sensing, responding, and being alive in the world” (Thornton, et al. 2015:196-197). Although “cultivation” is entangled with the origin of the concept of culture as an object and has deep roots in colonialism (Seed 1995), like Thornton, my study seeks to contribute to the discussion of the construction of the Northwest Coast landscape by delving into the world of

relationships, specifically between human persons and fish persons and the consequences of a lived and enlivened world. In this way my research questions encourage me to seek a broader picture of the human-fish relationship's influence in the world, the impact of colonialism on this relationship, how the relationship is expressed presently, and its meaning in a Canadian society that purports to value a post-colonial relationship with Indigenous peoples. Furthermore, as we continue to deconstruct Western notions of wilderness, agriculture and resource management, relational ecology has implications in policy-making on the Northwest Coast and beyond.

Recognition of the reciprocal nature of a relational world is also important for the recognition of Indigenous rights. Deeply rooted in English law is the idea that planting a garden created a boundary between the wild and the cultivated and as such represented a sign of possession (Seed 1995:29). English explorers and settlers to the Northwest Coast (and other regions of the world) applied their ontological values of cultivation and concepts of wilderness to the lands they encountered and as a result read the lands as unoccupied. The Rousseauian idea of a pre-existing pristine environment continues to be a colonial holdout (Cronon 1995:88; Larsen 2006:314), while the assumption that humans are inherently environmental demolishers and destroyers of wilderness creates the illusion of Western scientific innocence (Heatherington 2012:166; Latour 2004:18) and superiority. If Indigenous peoples are depicted as simple dwellers in a rich environment, or worse, as spoilers of a pristine environment (Krech 1999; 2005), their history and relationships are denied, continued abrogation of their rights is justified (Hayashida 2005:57) and exclusionary practices in environmental management are

continued, an act Heatherington (2012) describes as “fortress conservation.” I return to this discussion in Chapter 11.

Relational ecology holds that all peoples and their nonhuman counterparts have the histories of their landscape enfolded within them, and within their landscape are the histories of all its beings. To sever this link denies the history that made them (Ingold 1992:51). Maintaining the link between and among the various beings and parts of the lived and enlivened world and seeking to expose and possibly understand their reciprocal responsibilities, meaning and influences creates an opportunity to examine a world that is neither wholly social nor wholly natural. Instead, such a world is an entanglement of what Western categories separate into the political, the historical and the social, but where humans and nonhumans interact in and with their world in a reciprocal and constant state of becoming. In the effort to understand the effects of these interactions we begin to realize the presence and significance of constructed landscapes like clam gardens, fish traps and anthropogenic fields and forests, and the relationships that undergird them. We can then re-evaluate our anthropological concepts and understandings of the Northwest Coast through the lens of a lived and enlivened world, and contribute to a socially relevant environmental science in which it is possible to envisage new futures where Indigenous rights and title have meaning and traction.

Chapter 3 Understanding Fish as Nonhuman Persons

“We are all fisherman. Even if you are a secretary in an office, you are still a fisherman.” (Alberta Billy c. 2009)

The Path Taken

According to its advocates, collaborative research is an important ethical and theoretical issue (Campbell and Lassiter 2010:377; Fluehr-Lobban 2008:175; Lassiter 2005:x; Rappaport 2008:1). Although definitions are numerous (Peacock 2008), for this study I adopted a practise of collaboration between myself and my Laich-Kwil-Tach partners who worked directly with me on this work in an effort to respect their interests and to provide a voice in the project, research design, research process and representations. Actively integrating partners as collaborators into the entire research process has the capacity to build relationships that can shift anthropology from description, analysis and categorization to a postcolonial enterprise of epistemic relativism (Nakata and David 2010:431) that respects and recognizes our collaborators’ ideologies, thus empowering (Kovach 2009:82; Medicine 1998:255-256; Smith and Wobst 2005:17), or at least not disempowering (Smith and Jackson 2006:341) those with whom we work.

Although I did not realize it, the foundation for this research was laid almost two decades ago when I began working in the Laich-Kwil-Tach community. Working collaboratively on countless projects with the community helped to both shape the design of my research and more importantly, to define the questions it sought to consider. Like all of our work, this collaboration is structured around relationships between individuals in the Laich-Kwil-Tach community and myself that have grown over time.

In 1995, as a recent graduate in anthropology I moved to Alert Bay, north of Laich-Kwil-Tach territory. I spent close to a year living and working in this small community. Through the U'mista Cultural Centre I engaged the community in a genealogy project that culminated in a database containing over 10,000 names and a great amount of detail on Kwakwaka'wakw family histories. This first extended period in the community gave me a great opportunity to learn from knowledgeable Elders, dancers, singers, cultural experts and world-renowned carvers who welcomed me into their communities and homes. This first experience also allowed me a glimpse into what was once a vibrant and thriving fishery, as Alert Bay was once one of the largest commercial fishing communities on the coast. By the mid-1990s the commercial industry was in a dire condition due to fish stock collapse and the resulting changes to licencing by the DFO meant to reduce the fishing fleet; however, many people still maintained their boats and the marina was full of gillnetters, trollers and seiners. Furthermore, the canneries in this once-thriving cannery town, by then in a serious state of disrepair, sat in silent testimony to the once vibrant industry. People also spoke of fishing and what once was, as well as their new reality as they struggled to retrain and find employment that allowed them to remain in their home community.

After Alert Bay I worked with other First Nations including in 1997 when I began to work with the Laich-Kwil-Tach community through their treaty office in Campbell River. My research role enabled me to spend a great deal of time both with Elders and community members and in various archives. This was also the year that the Supreme Court of Canada rendered its decision in the *Delgamuukw* case between *Delgamuukw* (Earl Muldoe), with the Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en people, and the Province of British

Columbia. The Supreme Court found that Aboriginal Title constituted an ancestral right that “encompasses the right to exclusive use and occupation of the land” and it laid out a three-part test for title:

- i. The aboriginal group must establish that it occupied the lands in question at the time of sovereignty;
- ii. If present occupation is relied upon as proof of occupation pre-sovereignty, then there must be a continuity between present and pre-sovereignty occupation; and
- iii. At sovereignty occupation must have been exclusive. (Supreme Court of Canada 1997:9-11)

Although it would be another 17 years before the Supreme Court of Canada actually made a declaration of Aboriginal title in the *Tsilhqot'in Nation v. British Columbia* case (Supreme Court of Canada 2014), the fact that in 1997 the courts recognized the legal principles underlying the existence of Aboriginal title in Canada resulted in a shift in British Columbia in terms of how First Nations viewed their rights and in terms of how the Province conducted business on Crown land. With a defined “test for title,” First Nations moved forward in their efforts to meet the test in hopes of gaining more traction on their rights and gaining greater involvement and control in decision-making over their lands and resources. The result was a period in British Columbia that saw many First Nations, including the Laich-Kwil-Tach, begin extensive documentation of their history and land use with a focus on meeting the test for title as laid out in *Delgamuukw*.

So in 1997 when I began working with the Laich-Kwil-Tach community, a central focus of my work was on rights and title research. Together we compiled an extensive traditional use database that holds information on several thousand sites, which is supported by a library of archival records, audiotapes and videotapes. The community continues to support this library in the form of the Laich-Kwil-Tach Research Centre (LRC), and it is through the LRC that much of this current study was done. The products of this doctoral research will be housed there.

In addition to my role in documenting Laich-Kwil-Tach rights and title, since 1997 I have also provided research support for treaty negotiations, I have been the liaison between Laich-Kwil-Tach leadership, archaeologists and the Provincial Archaeology Branch, and I have conducted or supported ongoing archaeological and heritage research in Laich-Kwil-Tach territories. An important part of the last of these roles has been to conduct fish trap research on the beaches, in the estuaries and along the rivers, supporting not only the Laich-Kwil-Tach effort to have their fishing rights acknowledged but also contributing to the wider body of fish trap studies on the Northwest Coast.

When I began working with Laich-Kwil-Tach people I realized quickly that fishing is not only vital to the community's well-being; it is an important part of their identity and, as this study reveals, the very fundamentals of being in the world. Through research, countless community meetings and numerous negotiation meetings, this fact continually rings true. When fish or fishing is on an agenda, one is sure to have a lively meeting. For example, each Christmas the LRC hosts a luncheon for the community Elders. In 2016, when the Collections Manager, Shirley Johnson, and I discussed the agenda, I suggested that we invite A-Tlegay, the community's fisheries organization, to present. I had

recently completed my interviews with A-Tlegay and had learned of the projects and studies in which this organization participates or manages.³ I suggested to the Shirley that the community did not likely know of this amazing work and that the luncheon would be an opportunity to share it. Consequently we invited Jim Meldrum, an A-Tlegay biologist, and John Duncan, an A-Tlegay guardian, to attend the luncheon and present on their work. The more than 80 Elders at the luncheon recognized that A-Tlegay's work is important and benefits the community, but given that fish was the topic of discussion, the conversation was particularly lively. A-Tlegay is funded largely by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, and they gather baseline data that contributes to decision making but A-Tlegay does not have decision-making authority. Consequently, the questions and demands from the Elders that day proved challenging for presenters and luncheon organizers alike, as so much control of the relationship with fish rests not in the community but in the hands of the state. I closed the discussion with the comment that, "I should know better than to bring fish to the Christmas luncheon," at which everyone laughed. The lesson learned, once again, is that people are passionate about fish, their right to access it, their right to manage it and that their connection with fish and the marine world contributes significantly to who they are as a people.

It is experiences like these in the Laich-Kwil-Tach community and in the larger Kwakwaka'wakw community that led to the current research questions. When I returned to university in 2011 to pursue doctoral studies I knew that fish, and the relationship people have with fish, would somehow inform my research. When I encountered current

³ See Chapter 10 for further information about A-Tlegay and the results of my interviews there.

anthropological thinking on animism and the relationship between human and nonhuman persons the direction of my research developed further.

Finally, because of my long-standing relationship with the community and because my previous research was done in collaboration with individuals therein, I wanted to ensure that this study was also collaborative and was of benefit to the community. The formal mechanism of collaboration was a committee of four people established through the LRC, including a representative from each Laich-Kwil-Tach group and Shirley Johnson, the LRC Collections Manager and good friend. My committee first included Don Assu, Ollie Henderson, Sophia Hansen and Mike Dick, although Sophia and Mike, mother and son, shared a position with Mike attending most of the meetings. After Don's illness and passing, Daniel Billy agreed to sit on my community committee. Shirley was instrumental as a committee member. She is very familiar with the community and was central in identifying who should be on my community committee and I relied on her support in organizing many of the interviews with community consultants. Finally, Shirley was integral in compiling brief biographies of those people interviewed that are included in Appendix A.

In addition to collaborating with community consultants and my committee, I also presented my research plan and findings at an Elders' luncheon and at community meetings. Although not an ideal forum for deep collaboration, these venues ensure that the community knows of my study, its purpose, its outcome and provides an opportunity to comment, potentially opening the door to further discussion and collaboration. Furthermore, the luncheon process is a recognized form of communication within the community and has been an effective way to communicate this study's results.

Research Methodology

My study draws on principles of relational ecology to examine the Laich-Kwil-Tach human-fish relationship over time. My four research questions were intended to illuminate this relationship by asking: 1. how is the human-fish relationship represented in late 19th- and early 20th-century ethnographies and oral/written texts and in current Elders' knowledge; 2. how are principles of Indigenous management understood in terms of this relationship; 3. how do fish traps embody this relationship; and 4. what is the ongoing manifestation of this relationship?

To address these questions I applied several anthropological methods and I used several data sources.

In addressing questions 1 and 2, I considered the following sources:

- Oral texts (e.g. prayers, fish origin stories, stories of overfishing and its consequence, stories of disrespect to the fish and its consequence)
- Contemporary interviews (to record knowledge learned from current Elders' grandparents, e.g. stream stewardship, fish behaviour to identify specific runs, fish care and respect during fishing, cleaning, processing, consuming, etc., evidence of relational sustainability as per Langdon (2007), or management practices informed by a relational world).
- Participant observation in fish processing, big house activities, First Salmon Ceremony, opening of the commercial fishing.
- Ethnographic writings (materials about fishing, processing and respect, the First Salmon Ceremony).
- Collaboration with community research partners/community committee (to review my interpretation of the data and to identify additional themes and patterns).

Sources for question 3 included:

- Archaeological fish trap data collected during my previous work with the Laich-Kwil-Tach community

- Collaboration with community research partners/community committee (to review my interpretation of the data and to identify additional themes and patterns)

And to address question 4, I included:

- Contemporary interviews (to determine the level of responsibility felt toward fish and their management; to reveal any disconnect between fishers and fish, with an eye to how a relational world informs the contemporary relationship)
- Collaboration with community research partners/community committee (to review my interpretation of the data and to identify additional themes and patterns)

Ethnographic Data Collection Process

Archival and Ethnographic Text Research

The earliest available ethnographic texts pertinent to my study are from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Available stories, songs, legends, prayers, etc. contribute to the other data included in this research. These data help reveal how the 19th-century relationship between humans and fish was represented by anthropologists.

Published and unpublished sources were sought through libraries and archives, including the LRC. While ethnographically detailed information about various Kwakwaka'wakw groups, territories, social structure, etc. might be useful as background material, this aspect of my research focused on oral stories, legends, songs and prayers, predominately recorded by George Hunt and Franz Boas in the late 19th and early 20th centuries (for example Boas 1910; 1930; 1969 [1935]; 1932; Boas and Hunt 1902; Hunt and Boas 1906). When possible, copies of the materials were obtained and included as PDF files for use in the data analysis process outlined below. Using grounded theory and a coding process (see below), these sources were analyzed both independently to identify important themes and concepts, and in concert with the other data to identify common

themes and patterns. Qualitative analysis software, NVivo 11, helped manage these data sets. My interpretation of the texts was discussed during the collaborative process with my community committee.

Participant Observation

Participant observation is a strategic method that puts one “where the action is” (Bernard 2011:257) in order to learn “explicit and tacit aspects” of another’s life (DeWalt and DeWalt 2002:1). Although I did not live in the community, participant observation was important during fishing season. I attended “fish days” when people processed fish for the season; I worked with families who were hosting a feast during which fish and other marine foods were important and during which I was attentive to the human-fish relationship in terms of regalia, dances and speaking; I spent two days on a commercial fish boat with the current We Wai Kai Chief and his crew; I visited fish traps with two Elders from my community committee; I volunteered at the First Salmon Ceremony; and I visited operating smokehouses. During this process I wrote field notes and took photographs. In my field notes I recorded how people speak about fish, how the fish are treated, how the fish are cleaned and prepared during processing, what parts of the fish are used, the kind of teachings that occur between the older generation, the younger generation and myself, how fish is distributed at the potlatch or feast, where and how the fish is obtained, etc. My field notes and photographs later helped to interpret the information gleaned from interviews and the written record and were part of the collaborative interpretive process.

Interviews

Community interviews followed two basic formats: 1. collaboration with my community committee; and 2. individual interviews with local *ninogad* (knowledgeable people).

Collaboration with my community committee followed a schedule as planned at the outset of my research process:

- **Introduction:** I presented my study as outlined in my research proposal, including the interview guide. I asked for their thoughts, advice and input on the project and I worked with my committee to further develop my research questions and the interview guide. I sought their input on who in the community should be interviewed and with whom I should work during fishing season. I audio recorded our meetings and I compiled a partial transcript.
- **Project Review:** I presented my proposed data analysis methodology and my intentions to collaborate with the community. We discussed important concepts in the fish-human relationship and how this can be translated into indices used in data analysis. This dialogue helped to further develop the list of indices that I used in my analysis process.
- **Interpretation Discussion:** After I conducted a number of community interviews and had developed my initial interpretation, I returned to my community committee for their review, input, advice and direction. Although I had planned to provide my community committee with interview transcripts, the transcripts proved too lengthy and would not likely have been completely reviewed. Instead I updated my committee on the work and my interpretations, always remaining

open to other areas of discussion. At each meeting my committee supported my interpretations and offered stories and highlights to help exemplify my interpretations. Many of these contributions were also shared in one-on-one interviews and are included in Chapter 7. During all discussions I was attentive to how people expressed their relationship with fish, how their expression of this relationship changed or remained stable through the course of this work, and how the relationship was expressed in terms of their relationship with the state in its fisheries policies and regulations. Through this series of meetings I updated my community committee on my research progress and interpretations and obtained their feedback and support to help further my efforts to highlight the human-fish relationship in a way that is meaningful to the community.

- **Fish Trap Discussion and Visit:** This meeting was conducted in two parts. First we had a discussion about fish traps focusing on information gleaned from interviews, ethnographic texts and archaeological fieldwork. In 2006, 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2016 I worked with the community to document archaeological fish traps in their territories. Between official projects we continued to document fish traps and I worked with neighbouring Nations to document fish traps in neighbouring territories. Each of these data sets informed my interpretation of the fish traps and were used to prepare me for this conversation with my community committee. For the second part of the meeting we went to the Campbell River estuary to visit the local fish trap site. I recorded this visit by taking photographs and making notes as we discussed the trap features. In the process I hoped to create an interpretation of the fish trap data that is inclusive of the Elders’

experience, practice, and knowledge and to understand and make interpretive space for a relational world (Colwell-Chanthaphonh and Ferguson 2006:49; Escobar 2008:131; Fowles 2010:457; Nicholas 2005:85; 2008:1666; Smith and Jackson 2008:177). While this part of my research did not contribute to my understanding of the relational aspects of fish traps, it did exemplify how fish traps are interpreted by Laich-Kwil-Tach Elders as representative of past fishing knowledge, understanding and management as well as a physical testament to their rights as fishers and fish caretakers today.

- **Community Committee Honorarium:** Each community committee member was given an honorarium of \$25 an hour for our meetings. Funds for all honoraria were provided by the Canadian Anthropological Association, Richard F. Salisbury Scholarship.

Individual interviews were a significant component of this research and I conducted both unstructured and semi-structured interviews with 19 community members and two non-community members who work within the community's organizations. Designed to encourage people to "express themselves in their own terms, and at their own pace" (Bernard 2011:156-157) while also sometimes guiding the conversation using a series of open-ended questions (Bernard 2011:191, 199) interviews were conducted in English at the LRC and in people's homes. My questions were reviewed and refined by my community committee prior to commencing interviews. With permission from the community consultant, meetings were audio recorded in an MP3 format using an iPad or MacBook Pro and notes were taken. The consultant had the opportunity to stop recording

at any time during the interview. The project was explained to the consultant, the consent form was read and discussed and formal consent as per the University of Victoria ethics approval process.⁴ Everyone consented to the interview. In each case, people consented to the interview as well as to their information being held by the LRC and myself for future research purposes. Each person also consented to use of their information and name in the text of this dissertation and in other disseminated work. Following the interview the audio was transcribed and given to the consultant. Translation from Liq'wala to English usually occurred in the meeting but at times I also consulted with fluent speakers in the community. Occasionally, a short follow up question was addressed through a phone call, or alternatively over email or texting, but these latter modes of communication were generally limited to understanding the translation of a particular word. Generally, interviews were completed in the following way:

Initial Contact: Contact was made in a number of ways. One important way was for Shirley at the LRC to set up a meeting. However, I also contacted people via phone, email, text, Facebook and in the community at various gatherings. When first approached I explained my research and asked for permission to come and visit, following which we set up a meeting. Interviews begin with a short, informal discussion about my research so that the person understood to what they were agreeing when they signed the consent form. Then a longer conversation followed, guided by the interview guide. The meeting was audio recorded and notes were taken. In some cases the meeting was held over a series of visits. To facilitate discussion, I always had materials like photos and excerpts from the written record on hand. Following each meeting the interview was transcribed

⁴ UVic Ethics Protocol 14-269.

<http://www.uvic.ca/research/conduct/home/regapproval/humanethics/index.php>

and delivered to the consultant for his/her review. At the same time a follow-up visit was arranged.

Follow Up: This meeting took place following the consultant's review of his/her interview transcript. In this way, the consultant had an opportunity to ensure he or she felt accurately represented both in the information shared and in my interpretation of that information, which was discussed in this follow-up meeting. Each of these meetings was recorded and a copy was given to the consultant.

Consultant Honorarium: Like my community committee, each community consultant was given an honorarium of \$25 an hour for our meetings.

Fish Trap Archaeological Data

The material remains of fish traps are considered in my study because I hypothesize that how people understood their relationship with fish influenced the design and use of fish traps, and thus shaped the material remains available for study (Losey 2010:18). The fish trap archaeological data comes from a data set compiled through work with the Laich-Kwil-Tach Treaty Society. These data are the result of several seasons of intertidal surveys and research and include maps and diagrams, locations, numbers of features, type of feature, wooden stake data (including diameter, species analysis, number of stakes in a feature) and radiocarbon dates from 99 stakes. The Laich-Kwil-Tach Treaty Society and the Laich-Kwil-Tach leadership have given me permission to use these data for this purpose.

These data helped address that part of my research that questions how the material record, specifically fish traps, embodies the human-fish relationship. Specifically I

considered how the fish traps converge with a relational world as revealed through the other aspects of my study.

Data Filing and Analysis

A copy of all field notes as well as digital files of all photos, interview transcripts and audio recordings are deposited at the LRC. Each consultant also received a copy of his/her interview transcription and audio recording. All digital recordings, photos and transcripts are also saved on my personal server, in a password protected format, as per the permission I received from each of the consultants.

I began the data analysis process using NVivo 11 for Windows to aid my analysis of interview transcriptions and ethnographic texts. Coding during this process was carried out in two ways. I developed some coding criteria prior to reviewing the data. These predefined codes were developed from my research questions and in consultation with my community committee. DeWalt and DeWalt (2002:166) call this process “indexing.” Using a grounded theory approach (Charmaz 2006), I also developed codes for general themes and concepts that emerge directly from peoples’ narratives, the texts and the literature. DeWalt and DeWalt (2002:166) call this “coding.” It is a process of extracting and interpreting ideas and themes found within the data. Indexing and coding was meant to organize and compare the data according to conceptual content, allowing me to identify relationships among different emerging themes (Bolanos 2011:50) and enabling me to bring similar lines of evidence together from otherwise disparate data sources. While I was successful in using NVivo to help organize the large and diverse body of source material (interviews and ethnographic texts) into meaningful parts, I did not use the software to its full analytic capacity.

Indexing and Coding

Through the data, as I came to better understand the issues and as I became more familiar with salmon management ideals/values, salmon processing, legends and stories, responsibilities associated with fishing, etc. I developed indices and codes (*Appendix B: Indices Used For Coding and Data Analysis*).

Through this indexing system I began to recognise patterns and relationships that helped me to better understand the information (DeWalt and DeWalt 2002:172-173). To identify themes, I read my field notes, research notes, interview transcripts, pertinent literature, oral stories, ethnographic texts and other associated materials and identified recurring ideas and patterns. For the written oral texts I used NVivo 11 to aid the reduction of the data to central concepts while ensuring the ability to return to the original texts in order to further build my argument and answer my research questions in a rich and effective form. However, I found the problems with NVivo 11, particularly its inability to manage large, sometimes poor quality PDF files, challenging and limiting. For this reason I did not use the software to code all of the literature and interview transcripts, nor did I use it to aid in any analysis. Instead I used it in its most basic form, to catalogue or file particular concepts while for my interview transcripts I simply created a word document with codes forming subtitles and gathered like material under each heading. The result is that this research is strictly qualitative with my interpretations supported by excerpts from interviews and the written oral texts.

As I developed indices and worked through the coding process, I remained conscious of the fact that my categories might be very different from those of the community. This is where collaboration with my community committee and community

consultants became key. Our ongoing discussions and the collaboration process was important during the review and throughout analysis of the data.

Analysis focused on the four components of my research question: the 19th-century Laich-Kwil-Tach human-fish relationship; how principles of Indigenous management are understood in terms of this relationship; the visible presence of the relationship within the archaeological record of fish traps; and the ongoing manifestation of this relationship. I turn shortly to address these questions but first provide a brief context to the Laich-Kwil-Tach fishery and the history of colonisation and settlement.

Chapter 4 Setting the Scene: A Colonial History Synopsis

I pointed out to them the advantages they would derive from having lands so set apart, which would virtually give them the control of their fisheries.... (O'Reilly 1886)

While some studies take the view that Indigenous tradition is lost as a result of the colonial experience, others have argued that the concept of loss is entrenched in concepts of indigeneity and authenticity (Clifford 2001; Fabian 1983; Geschiere 2009; Lutz 2012; Raibmon 2005:9; Tennant 1990). In this study, while I examine 19th-century texts to attend to the human-fish relationship at that time and how it informs today's relationship, I do not wish to suggest that it has been lost or to create a static picture of the relationship. Most certainly the relationship has changed, affected by many things, not least of which is the colonial experience. I am also certain that while the relationship has changed, it was not usurped. Nevertheless, the colonial experience is part of this story and because I reference its various parts and impacts throughout this dissertation, in this chapter I provide a very brief synopsis of some of the key events that influenced the Laich-Kwil-Tach human-fish relationship.

Ships from Europe first arrived on the Northwest Coast in the latter part of the 18th century. Arriving with (or just before) them were devastating diseases, and over the span of about 100 years, 80% of Indigenous people on the Northwest Coast died (Boyd 1999:3). This period also witnessed the rise and fall of the maritime fur trade and colonialism, with its concomitant settlers, became well entrenched.

Unbeknownst to its Indigenous titleholders, Britain declared Vancouver Island a British colony through Charter of Grant in 1849 and awarded its lands and management to the Hudson's Bay Company (Gough 2012:6-7). The award required the "advancement

of colonization and encouragement of trade and commerce," with a primary condition that within five years the company establish "a settlement or settlements of resident colonists" (Mackie 1992:6). To accommodate the requirements, James Douglas, Chief Factor, and later Governor, began negotiating treaties with Vancouver Island's First Nations. These negotiations were guided by instructions from Archibald Barclay, Secretary of the Hudson's Bay Company in London, who stated that "the right of fishing and hunting will be continued" (HBCA 1849). To this end, the ongoing Aboriginal right to fish was stated in the agreement with those Nations that signed, although the official text stating such was added later (see Lutz 2008:79, 338). While no Douglas Treaties were signed with Laich-Kwil-Tach people, the treaties are important as they mark a time of change, when Vancouver Island became known throughout the world and as more and more settlers began to arrive. Less than a decade later, in 1858, Britain declared British Columbia a Crown colony and the two colonies operated side by side for eight years, until 1866 when they joined to form British Columbia.

By 1867, the Dominion of Canada was created and British Columbia joined this confederation in 1871. As per the Terms of Union, the Canadian government was responsible for relations with First Nations and designed the Department of Indian Affairs. In the short 30 years between 1849 and 1879 numerous laws were passed that eventually had increasing effect on Indigenous peoples in the province: the 1849 declaration that British Law applied; the 1876 *Indian Act*; and the 1877 extension of the *Fisheries Act* (Lutz 2008:25). Furthermore, by 1882 the province was divided into multiple agencies and a federal Indian Agent was appointed in each (Lutz 2008:19).

While their specific mandate was to report on “progress,” they also wielded great control in the communities and were “agents of acculturation” (Fisher 1992:206).

By the 1870s, the relationship between Northwest Coast peoples and fish was recognized in colonial policy, at least in terms of how fish is important to human well-being. Consequently, access to fish by Indigenous people was considered in the formation of colonial policy. For example, “fishing stations” were used by colonial officials to identify the location of Indian Reserve lands, but in the process the same policy resulted in limited access to fish and small parcels of land. It quickly became policy that, while Indigenous coastal fishers required their fishing stations, because they were not farmers they were denied large tracts of land (Walkem 1875). Subsequently, reserve allocation was premised on access to marine resources and, as a result, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries approximately half of the 1536 Indian reserves in British Columbia were allocated to secure Indigenous access to fish or its processing (Harris 2004:17). As the quote at the beginning of this chapter notes, this right of access was often explained to First Nations people who were led to believe that their right to fish was maintained (Harris 2005b:274; O’Reilly, Oct. 30, 1886 in Canada 1879-1886). By the late 1880s, this conflation of land with fishing rights led to a dispute between the Department of Indian Affairs and the Department of Marine and Fisheries over the right to assign exclusive fisheries (Harris 2005b:284). Eventually, with Indian Reserves in place, 97 percent of the provincial land-base became a public space, available for industrial use (Larsen 2006:314; Willems-Braun 1997:11), while Indigenous people were limited in access and use—even on Indian Reserves—and were forced to modify and redefine their resource use and management processes (McDonald 2005:268-269). Such a realigning of the land

usurped Indigenous people's ability to manage their land but, in spite of obstacles, they became active and successful participants in the provincial economy (Lutz 2012:279). Such is the case for Laich-Kwil-Tach people who, as I will show later, became deeply involved in the fishing economy.

Canada's and British Columbia's colonial policy towards Indigenous people continues to have an impact. While entire books are dedicated to this subject (e.g. see Cole 1990; Harris 2002; Harris 2008; Newell 1993; Tennant 1990), here I point out a few policies and laws that pertain directly to the Indigenous fisher. In the late-19th century and to the mid-20th century Indigenous people in British Columbia faced serious legal challenges that dramatically sought to alter their lives and the way they experienced the world. In 1876 the *Indian Act* was passed, introducing the only legislation in Canada that affects a certain segment of the Canadian population from their birth to their death, subjugating Indigenous peoples completely. Shortly thereafter, the residential school system was implemented and the government began removing children from their home and sending them to residential or industrial day schools, thereby separating families, forcing language loss and imposing "proper moral restraints,"

Secular education is a good thing among white men, but among Indians the first object is to make them better men, and, if possible, good Christian men by applying proper moral restraints, and appealing to the instinct for worship which is to be found in all nations.... When the school is on the reserve the child lives with its parents, who are savages; he is surrounded by savages, and though he may learn to read and write his habits, and training and mode of thought are Indian. He is simply a savage who can read and write. It has been strongly impressed on myself, as the head of the Department, that the Indian children should be withdrawn as much as possible from the parental influence, and the only way to do that would be to put them in central training industrial schools where they will acquire the habits and modes of thought of white men; so that, after keeping them a number of years away from parental influence until their education is finished, they will be able to

go back to their band with the habits of mind, the education, and the industry which they have learned at these schools. (Macdonald in Canada 1883:1107-1108)

While language and culture loss are commonly recognized consequences of the residential school system, rarely considered is how the system was designed to attack ways of being and thinking as Macdonald's words clearly indicate.

Further control over Indigenous people was exerted in an 1884 amendment to the *Indian Act* when Section 140 was added, making the potlatch illegal. Amendments to Section 140 followed to make it stronger and more enforceable. Then in 1927 a law that prohibited anyone from accepting funds that would support land claims was added to the *Act*, making it impossible for First Nations to oppose the legislation or any infringements on rights (Harris 2002:260; Tennant 1990:112). An additional effect of this section of the *Act* was that people understood it to mean that they could not assemble in a gathering of more than three people.⁵

Throughout this early period, Canada also enacted laws that severally impacted Indigenous fishing rights and limited Indigenous access to lands and resources. At the dawn of a commercial fishing industry and with the establishment of Indian Reserves, the Department of Marine and Fisheries "equated Indian fisheries strictly with subsistence harvesting: 'Indians shall, at all times, have liberty to fish for the purpose of providing food for themselves and not for sale, barter or traffic, by any means other than driftnets... or spearing'" (Order in Council, Nov. 26, 1888 in Newell 1993:62). This separation of fishing for food from fishing for other purposes had an impact on Indigenous trade

⁵ Although this law (Canada *Indian Act*, Sec. 141) was expressly about suppressing land claims it is associated with the potlatch ban "in Indian memories... and the combination of the two produces the still common belief... that any gathering was illegal without the permission of a missionary, Indian Agent, or police official" (Tennant 1990:112). Indeed this understanding still exists and is still commonly referred to.

networks and prohibited Indigenous people from utilizing the fishery for profit outside of the canning industry. In other words, their wage labour in the fishery was controlled by the industry. It also began a process in which Indigenous people “saw their fisheries reallocated to non-Native fishers and those who had capital” (Harris 2005b:266) and, like so many other colonized resources, it became “encumbered with laws and use rights that enormously complicate its reallocation” (Harris 2002:201). Significantly for this study, Indigenous fish traps and weirs were banned in the late 19th and early 20th centuries (McDonald 1985) with the first regulation implemented in 1894 (Newell 1993:89). Not long thereafter Fisheries officers destroyed traps at many key fishing locations (Harris 2008:42, 120, 169; Newell 1993:90, 93). Traps were only allowed under licence and “only whites were eligible” (Harris 2008:155). Furthermore, in the early part of the 20th century, the coast was divided into districts and fisheries regulations were established for each, all under the control of the Department of Marine and Fish. As per these regulations, until 1923, the north coast Skeena fishery, strongly influenced by cannery owners who opposed the Indigenous fishery, prohibited the use of gas-powered boats by Indigenous people in the commercial fishery (Tennant 1990:73). Far south of the Skeena fishery, Cape Mudge and Campbell River were in the Vancouver Island District so Laich-Kwil-Tach people were not affected by the ban (Newell 1993:109). The government’s separation of industrial fish from food/social/ceremonial fish continues today.

While for much of the 20th century the fishing industry was highly profitable for many Indigenous fishers the last few decades saw a shift, beginning with the DFO’s Davis Plan. By the 1960s alarm was raised regarding the size and sustainability of the British Columbia fishing fleet and its impact on fish (Grafton and Nelson 2005:4). As

part of a fleet reduction plan, in 1969, the DFO implemented the Davis Plan, named after the Minister of Fisheries at the time. The plan created two kinds of licences, A and B, the first for full-time fishers, the second for part-time fishers with an expiry of ten years in an effort to encourage part-time fishers to leave the industry (Grafton and Nelson 2005:4). At the same time, a class AI licence was created for Indigenous fishers, with a cost of \$10 instead of \$200. The plan also included vessel buyback, in which the government purchased vessels from exiting fishers and in which no larger vessels could be added to the fleet without combining the licencing of two smaller vessels. Thus, there was a net loss in the number of vessels (and arguably those employed in the industry) but not in the capacity to fish. In large part, the Davis Plan did not appear to have serious consequences on Laich-Kwil-Tach fishers.

The next change in DFO policy that did have a serious impact on Laich-Kwil-Tach fishers came in the 1990s. This Pacific Salmon Revitalization Strategy, called the Mifflin Plan after the Fisheries Minister, Fred Mifflin, included a licence buyback plan, a licence cost increase, a licence-gear determination (a seine-only licence for example) and fishing location restrictions by gear type and licence. The result was a fleet size reduction by more than half (Grafton and Nelson 2005:9-10). This reduction had a serious impact on First Nation communities and fishers where there was already low per capita income (Canada and British Columbia 1996:7, 10) and high unemployment rates. For example, Alert Bay, home to Namgis people and many others from several Kwakwaka'wakw communities, suffered staggering employment losses. Here, as a result of the Mifflin plan 14 licences were removed from the fleet, but 11 of those were from First Nation run boats so 79% of the jobs lost in the community were those held by First Nations people

(Ommer 2007:49). Although not as heavily impacted, Laich-Kwil-Tach fishers also suffered greatly after Mifflin. A review of the Statistics Canada Census Subdivisions (Canada 2000/2001 a, b, c; Canada 2005 a, b, c) for the Cape Mudge, Quinsam (We Wai Kai) and Campbell River (Wei Wai Kum) Indian Reserves reveals the consequences in the five-year period following Mifflin. In 1996, 97 people from these three communities reported on their census form that they were employed the previous year in fishing, trapping or forestry. This accounted for 32% of employment in the communities. In 2001, 78 people from the three communities were employed in the same industries, but with the population increase this accounted for only 21% of employment, an overall 34% reduction. Moreover, it appears that fishing accounts for these numbers more so than forestry because in 1996, 16 people were reportedly in forestry. Unfortunately, because Statistics Canada combined these fields in 2001 it is impossible to know how forestry skewed the later results. Furthermore, the overall unemployment rate in this five-year period increased for those living on the Campbell River Reserve but it fell for those living on the Cape Mudge and Quinsam Reserves. Nevertheless, both communities remain well below the national employment rate. Unfortunately, neither the 1996 nor the 2001 BC Census for these communities provides disaggregated income data at the subdivision level, but based on my experience in the communities, it is likely that the income figures followed the above noted trends.

For those who remained in the fishery, it became evermore costly. According to one Laich-Kwil-Tach fisher, to remain in the fishery he had to buy a \$400,000 licence following the Mifflin Plan reforms. Many could not afford this, and financing was difficult for on-reserve fishers whose homes could not be used as collateral (Canada and

British Columbia 1996:15). As a result many Indigenous commercial fishers, skippers and crew alike, were forced out of the industry. Today's fishers worry that the younger generation will not learn to fish because of such limited opportunities. One Laich-Kwil-Tach fisher said,

I told Canadian Fish, I know lots of guys that fish for that company and I said, "you know that company is doomed." They just looked at me but towards the end of the meeting they finally realized I was right, it is doomed. I said, "who is going to go fishing for them?" And I said, "I'm the youngest old-timer around. [EC-027]

Laich-Kwil-Tach people have fished and relied on fish for their well-being since time immemorial. As the fishery transitioned through the 19th and 20th centuries, so did Laich-Kwil-Tach fishers, in spite of the laws and policies implemented by Canada and British Columbia over the past two centuries. In the following chapters I consider the Laich-Kwil-Tach 19th century relational world and examine a world in which there is a mutual respect and care between humans and salmon. This relationship and its concomitant responsibilities have contributed greatly to the ongoing strength of the contemporary Laich-Kwil-Tach fishery and their participation in moving their right as resource managers forward.

Chapter 5 The Laich-Kwil-Tach 19th-Century Relational World

The salmon came to search for a dancer.
 He came and put his supernatural power into him.
 You have supernatural power. Therefore the chief of the salmon came
 from beyond the ocean. The people praise you, for they cannot carry the
 weight of your wealth. (Boas 1897:475)

The Context of the 19th-Century Ethnographic Texts

Franz Boas and George Hunt: Kwakwaka'wakw Oral Tradition Recorders

Before considering some Kwakwaka'wakw oral traditions, I first provide a brief overview of the two men who gathered most of those that I considered in my research. Together Franz Boas and George Hunt worked to record and publish numerous Kwakwaka'wakw oral traditions, many of which addressed activities related to the summer resource procurement season and the summer ceremonial.

George Hunt was an important person in the collection of information about Kwakwaka'wakw people. The son of a British Hudson Bay Company man and a high-ranking, Tlingit, *Gaanax.ádi* clanswoman from *Taant'akwáan* (Tongass) (Berman 1994:483, 484), Hunt came to work closely with Franz Boas, a pioneer in the early years of anthropology. Hunt was born at Fort Rupert on Vancouver Island, the primary home of the Kwakiutl people. Hunt spoke English, Tlingit and likely Kwak'wala fluently and he spent many years collecting and translating oral traditions for Boas. Even though Boas suggests Kwak'wala, the language of the Kwakiutl people, was Hunt's first language, there are instances in which Boas questioned Hunt's orthographic rendering of the language. For example, in the *Ethnology of the Kwakiutl*, a publication resulting from years of Hunt-Boas collaboration, Boas laments that Hunt's

phonetic rendering of the material is not quite what it should be. The writer [Hunt] is so inconsistent in the use of accents and quantities that for all the records made in later years I have dispensed entirely with accents.... The difference between voiced sounds and fortes is not always recognized by Mr. Hunt.... Whenever I call Mr. Hunt's attention to these sounds he distinguishes them clearly, and I have sent him long vocabularies with doubtful sounds which he has corrected, and these corrections are undoubtedly valid.... These errors appear throughout the whole period, although they are much more frequent in the early years than in the later ones. (Boas and Hunt 1921a:1467)

These mistakes in transcription, however, do not necessarily bring into question Hunt's fluency in Kwak'wala. Kwak'wala is a difficult language to transcribe, and it is not uncommon for speakers to transcribe the same word differently on different occasions. Furthermore, Kwak'wala is an oral language, Hunt learned it orally and it is not unreasonable to expect inconsistencies in his transcriptions. In fact, if one reads Hunt's English writing, a language in which there are spelling conventions and another language of fluency for Hunt, there are great inconsistencies in his spelling. If Hunt was not consistent in English, one should not expect consistency in Kwak'wala.

Hunt's early training in the big house and his marriage to a high-ranking woman suggest that he was fully a member of the Kwakiutl community. By the age of nine, he was called to attend the feasts of chiefs, in large part because his birth was seen as a call for peace between Kwakiutl (and likely the Kwakwaka'wakw in general) and Tongas Tlingit people (Berman 1994:485). From then on, "Hunt became a regular and interested witness to the myth, songs, jokes, oratory, and potlatch... not to mention to the structure of the chiefs' feast itself and to the place of such genres within it" (Berman 1994:486). After marriage, Hunt was able to begin his potlatch career, albeit in his chiefly sons' names (Berman 1994:487), further elevating his family's standing.

Franz Boas was a Prussian born anthropologist who eventually moved to the United States. He first visited British Columbia in September 1886 (Cole 1999:100). By October of the same year he found himself in Kwakwaka'wakw territory when he travelled to Newhitti on Vancouver Island. He did not travel to Fort Rupert, nor did he meet George Hunt at this time. This trip did, however, fuel Boas' interest in the people of the Northwest Coast. Boas and Hunt met two years later in Victoria when in 1888 Boas returned to the coast to prepare an ethnological map of British Columbia (Cole 1999:110-111). In 1889 they began to collaborate more closely, this time in Alert Bay (Cole 1999:118). A few years later, in 1893, Hunt and a delegation of 17 Kwakwaka'wakw people travelled to Chicago for the World's Fair (Cole 1999:155). During this visit, Boas taught Hunt how to write Kwak'wala phonetically, laying the foundation for thousands of pages of material that Hunt would gather and compile in the coming decades (Cole 1999:156).

Following the 1893 collaboration, Boas began to supply Hunt with lists of research questions to which Hunt responded, often using himself and his wife as informants (Berman 1994:488). In this way, the line between informant and anthropologist was blurred; was Hunt Boas' informant or was Hunt the anthropologist? As the informant, Hunt saw himself as an expert in Kwakwaka'wakw life. But as the anthropologist, he was living in a continual state of participant observation. Regardless of his role, Hunt became very good at his job. He was known to always have a notebook on hand in which he recorded his observations, a habit that possibly began as a teen, (Berman 1994:490). Hunt consulted with his Elders, his wife, friends and family in his efforts as an anthropologist, and he very often asked the same questions at different times to ensure accuracy

(Berman 1994:488-489). These factors no doubt led to Boas' comment that the work of a fluent speaker who was part of the community led to better ethnographic material than the work of someone "who had to work through an interpreter" (Jacknis 1999:221).

Hunt however, was not formally trained as an anthropologist but was an observant member of his community. Thus, there are arguably some problems with the materials he collected. One area of potential problem, especially when relying on oral traditions to comprehend the Kwakwaka'wakw world, is that when he recognized the same story from different people, rather than fully recording each version, he combined them into a single account (Berman 1994:489). Hunt felt that by asking people about the same story and combining the versions, he was getting the full story (Berman 1994:489). Another potential problem was that Hunt rarely took notes from dictation. He made notes about the story or custom and later wrote it fully in his own words. Thus "the bulk of the texts in Boas's collection are Hunt's written compositions" (Berman 1994:491). To complicate matters, in the published versions of the stories, Boas often attributed each story to a person from a particular place, creating an ambiguity in which the reader is left to assume that the words are those of that person, rather than Hunt's re-writing of the story (Berman 1994:491). Another possible problem was that of Hunt's understanding and fluency of the language as discussed above. Recognition of these facts tells us that "careful historical scrutiny of the ethnographic archive is essential before we can begin to draw any sound conclusions from it" (Wickwire 2001:431).⁶ Nevertheless, for the purposes of my research, I believe that the Boas-Hunt Kwak'waka texts and ethnographic materials

⁶ See Berman 1994 for a complete discussion of the problems and inconsistencies in the Boas-Hunt texts.

are sufficient for developing a context that helps inform the 19th-century relationship between human persons and fish persons.

One of the challenges with using the Boas-Hunt materials is determining what parts to use, as the volume of materials is large. After much contemplation and reviewing of materials, I decided that, for this study, I would focus my efforts on those more common, easily available materials (i.e. those online editions and those that are commonly available in public or university libraries). By using the commonly available literature, others can easily find and read more about the stories I choose to inform and exemplify my findings. A complete “mining” of the Boas-Hunt materials for all references to the relationship in a quantitative way was not necessary and for this reason a sample of the Boas-Hunt materials served my research purpose. I do, however, acknowledge that a fuller probing of the materials might yield further or contradictory insight.

Finally, in considering the Boas-Hunt materials, I am most interested in the texts the duo collected. About these, (albeit for the Tsimshian texts) Boas writes,

The present collection contains a series of tales all of which are considered by the Tsimshian as myths, and I have used the term in this sense. The Tsimshian distinguish clearly between two types of stories—the myth (*ada'ox*) and the tale (*ma'lEslc*). The latter is entirely historical in character, although from our point of view it may contain supernatural elements. The incidents narrated in the former are believed to have happened during the time when animals appeared in the form of human beings. While ordinarily the distinction between the two types of tales is quite clear, there are some cases where the interpretation might be doubtful. In the myth animals appear as actors, and very often incidents are mentioned which describe the origin of some feature of the present world; but incidents of a similar character are not by any means absent from the tales. This is particularly true in those cases in which animals appear as individual protectors and in which a supposed revelation is used to explain certain customs of the people. Nevertheless the fact that incidents of such a tale are an individual experience relating to the present period set it off clearly in the mind of the Tsimshian from mythological tales. (Boas 1916:565)

Boas then compares this assessment with other areas of the Northwest Coast, explaining,

Similar distinctions are made by all the other tribes of the North Pacific coast. I mention here only the terms *nu'yam* of the Kwakiutl... which designate myths in the sense here given as opposed to tales belonging to the present period. It should be remembered that in the mind of the Indian it is not the religious, ritualistic, or explanatory character of a tale that makes it a myth, but the fact that it pertains to a period when the world was different from what it is now. It seems to my mind advantageous to adopt this objective definition of myth as felt by the natives, rather than any of the many definitions based on a subjective standpoint. If it should be objected that by doing so I extend my inquiry over and beyond the domain of myths, as defined by various groups of investigators, I may point out that I am discussing tales which at the present time form a unit in the mind of the Tsimshian, and that this justifies their treatment as an objective unit. (Boas 1916:565)

Boas' notes on considering the perspective of knowledge holders when interpreting meaning in the many texts he and Hunt collected are important in the context of this study. Although Boas describes the texts as belief and myth, he acknowledges that many of the texts are not simply stories told for pleasure, but are rather texts that explain the lived world. I do not intend to use these texts as mythical or sacred stories because it perpetuates a belief/knowledge divide which would make it difficult to engage with the critical thinking that informed these texts (Green 2015a:234). Instead I consider how these texts reflect the knowledge of the period, and it is within this reflection that I seek to explore the 19th-century human-fish relationship.

Salmon Origin, Forms and Relationships in 19th-Century Ethnography

Bringing Fish to the Human World

Wise-One was the name of the father of three children. The first one was called Head-Winter-Dancer; the middle one was called Winter-Dancer; and the youngest one, Last-Winter-Dancer. Then the father said

that he would make salmon out of the bark of red pine. He made salmon out of the bark, and threw them into the water. They jumped once, and then he looked at them. What should he see (but) a great many codfish. Then he took the bark of the alder and made salmon out of it. He threw them into the water. They jumped once. Then he just went to look at them, and what should he see (but) a great many red cod. Then he made salmon out of cedarbark, and threw them into the water. They jumped once, and he went to look at them. What should he see (but) a great many halibut. Therefore halibut are white on one side.

Then Wise-One spoke to his children. (He said to them,) "Let us go to our chief and steal his salmon." Then he asked his children to try to get some alder-bark for dyeing cedar bark red." Then his sons got (the alder-bark) of which he had spoken. Then his sons dyed cedar-bark red. When the red cedar-bark was finished, they launched their canoe and steered out to sea. Then Wise-One called the attention of his sons to the right anal fin of the salmon, (saying) that they should take only it. Then they arrived at the beach of the chief. They just sat in the canoe on the beach. Then Chief-of-the-World, the slave of the chief, came out. The slave saw the canoe on the beach. Then he told his master. The chief said to his slave, "Let our younger brothers come. Call them here." Then the slave called Wise-One and his sons. They came and sat down in the house. Chief-of-the-World put pure copper nuggets (stones) on the fire. As soon as they were hot, he took tongs and put the stones into a tall box. Then he took crabs and put them on the stones. What should it be (but) a great many frogs! Then Wise-One spoke to the chief: "Your younger brothers don't eat that kind of (food)." Then the chief asked his slave to cook clover-root. The slave took the clover-root and put it on the stones. What should it be (but) a great many snakes! Then Wise-One spoke again: " Your younger brothers don't eat that kind of (food)."

Then the chief asked his slave to go and look at the salmon-trap. The slave started at once. It was not long before he came back, bringing two salmon in his hands. Then they roasted the two salmon. The chief stood on the floor and swept the place in front of the strangers. As soon as they had done so, they laid the salmon on their backs. Then the chief spoke: " Take care of the bones! Don't steal a single piece of the bones." Then the visitors ate. As soon as they had finished eating, the chief stood on the floor and counted the bones. Last-Winter-Dancer had not joined his father and his elder brothers when they were eating. He just sat on a box, wearing his ring of red cedar-bark. Then the chief said, "You have stolen my salmon." Then he searched on the bodies of his visitors, looking for the bone. He rolled his visitors about on the floor. Then the chief went towards Last-Winter-Dancer, who was sitting on the box, pulled him down, and searched on his body. He did not find the bone. The chief just called the attention of the visitors (to it), because he

knew that they had obtained the bone by theft. (He said) " Don't ill-use my salmon."

Then Wise-One asked the chief, "What is that basket up there ? "Wise-One wished for the basket. "Do you want that?" said the chief, on his part. Then the chief took it and untied the cover. Behold ! snow was in it. Then it began to snow. Then he gave the basket to Wise-One. The strangers started and came home to our world. Then they discovered their house. They said, "Yo, yo!" Four times they said "Yo, yo!" Then Last-Winter-Dancer took the anal fin of the salmon and threw it into the water. As soon as the anal fin was in the water, a great many salmon jumped there. Then he caused the salmon to ascend the rivers. Then Last-Winter-Dancer took the basket and untied it. Then a heavy snowfall set in. They had obtained as supernatural gifts the copper, the snakes, the frogs, and the salmon. That is the way they made the salmon come. Thus the story ends. (Boas and Hunt 1905a:390-392)

This story of Wise-One and his sons is of interest to this study as it explains not only how rockfish, red cod (likely red snapper), halibut and salmon came to the human world but it also embodies much of the relationship between salmon-persons and human persons. First, as Wise-One recognized that salmon were badly needed by humans, he attempted through supernatural means to bring them to the human world. Instead, he succeeded in bringing three other forms of fish that are important, but he did not succeed with the salmon.

When Wise-One realized that he was unable to make a likeness of salmon and bring them in this way to the human world, he decided they must be taken directly from the "Chief-of-the-World." Because this was a dangerous venture, Wise-One and his sons prepared red cedar bark, knowing it has the ability to ward off malevolent beings. Once prepared, they travelled to sea, seeking Chief-of-the-World. Upon their arrival, they were greeted by Chief-of-the-World as "younger brothers," expressing a kinship between the human and salmon persons. As his guests, Chief-of-the-World served them food. They were first given what appeared to be crab, but regaining the human perspective, possibly

with the help of the red cedar bark, Wise-One realized the meal was of frogs cooked on copper nuggets. This note of copper and frogs, as well as the location of this other world out at sea, suggest that the Chief-of-the-World is actually *Kumugwe*, discussed later in this chapter. Thus, *Kumugwe* and humans from the human world were known to share a kinship or brotherhood of sorts.

Then Chief-of-the-World served roasted clover-roots, which again, from the human perspective was recognized as snakes. At this point, Chief-of-the-World, forced by proper protocol to feed his guests, realized that he must feed them human food. In this way, Wise-One and his sons were served salmon and through trickery, plus protection from the red cedar bark, they successfully stole the salmon's fin, enabling them to bring salmon home to the human world, and also giving them the gifts, or *tlogwe*, of copper, frogs and snakes.

In a lengthy 'Nakwaxda'xw⁷ story (Boas and Hunt 1905a:322-349) recorded by Hunt, *Ō^Emeäl*,⁸ whose younger brothers were deer and the "myth" people,⁹ wished to bring salmon to the world. Although a 'Nakwaxda'xw story, it is possible that this is also a Laich-Kwil-Tach story, as there is a large painting depicting the heroine of the story, *Mä'isila*, in the dining room at *Tsawkwkluten* Lodge, a lodge owned and operated by the We Wai Kai Nation on Quadra Island. In the 'Nakwaxda'xw version *Ō^Emeäl* needed a river so he had the myth people dig a long stretch and then *Ō^Emeäl* carried water in his mouth, filling the stretch of land dug to create the river. The story takes place in a time

⁷ A Kwakwaka'wakw group.

⁸ Herein I use Boas and Hunt's orthography to refer to the main characters in the texts. I do not translate the texts into a contemporary orthography. For a key to the different orthographies see Appendix F.

⁹ Meaning those persons who were all of similar form but whose actions and personality help identify who they would later become in the animal kingdom.

when humans and nonhumans were undifferentiated, when “as far as one can tell, their appearance was human, and only a few clues, such as their names and their strange behavior, indicated what they were to change into” (Descola 2013:131-132). $\bar{O}^E meäl$ was then directed to search for a twin among the graves to take for a wife. This he did, and with the help of the other graves, who as sentient beings gave him direction, he found the grave of a twin (Boas and Hunt 1905a:324). Gathering the twin’s bones he sprinkled them with the “water of life” and immediately the twin woman was resurrected. She called herself Salmon-Maker, *Mä’isila*. Once married, $\bar{O}^E meäl$ begged *Mä’isila* to make the salmon come to his river. Although *Mä’isila* replied that she could not, $\bar{O}^E meäl$ still had his brothers build a salmon weir, but it was in vain because the salmon did not come. Without the salmon, everyone was hungry so *Mä’isila* took pity on $\bar{O}^E meäl$ ’s younger brothers and made them a large spring salmon by placing her finger in a kettle of water, thus feeding them, but they were instructed to place all the bones in the fire (Boas and Hunt 1905a:326), another way that some groups managed salmon bones rather than returning them to the ocean. $\bar{O}^E meäl$ did not participate in this feast, nor was he aware of it. Thus he continued to beg his wife to “cause the salmon to come” and giving in, she brought two more salmon, and greedily, $\bar{O}^E meäl$ ate the biggest share (Boas and Hunt 1905a:328). $\bar{O}^E meäl$ continued to beg *Mä’isila* to bring salmon to the river, but she warned him that if she “should do so, the river would dry up, for it would be full of salmon” (Boas and Hunt 1905a:328). Eventually giving in to $\bar{O}^E meäl$, *Mä’isila* entered the river but only allowed the water to touch the bottom of her feet. At this, the “salmon came jumping” and the salmon traps filled with salmon (Boas and Hunt 1905a:328). In a later turn of events, to which I will turn shortly, *Mä’isila* and the salmon left the human

world and $\bar{O}^E meäl$ became determined to recover them, saying “let us go and make war on Salmon-Maker, that salmon may come to this our river” on “this side of the ocean” (Boas and Hunt 1905a:346), suggesting that they must travel to the undersea world to get the salmon, a trip of four days. When they arrived, they killed four boys in *Mä'isila's* world who immediately became salmon. The human-world people roasted these salmon and when they were returned to the water, they once again were resurrected, but here the distinction between the salmon in salmon-form and salmon in human-form is vague, for when the reincarnated salmon jumped, their blankets were visible (Boas and Hunt 1905a:347). Knowing that the children were salmon, $\bar{O}^E meäl$ kidnapped four and paddled hard for the human world, with *Mä'isila* and the other salmon people in close pursuit. As they reached the human world $\bar{O}^E meäl$ directed his younger brother, Deer, to do the fools dance upon the salmon canoes, which capsized them, sending the salmon people into the water. At once the “spring salmon, steel-head salmon, sockeye salmon, silver salmon, humpback salmon, dog salmon, trout, herring, olachen, and sardines” began to jump in the water and $\bar{O}^E meäl$ pointed to each of the rivers and directed the fish to them. The story ends with “therefore there are salmon in all these rivers” (Boas and Hunt 1905a:349).

Finally, a third story, from 19th-century Laich-Kwil-Tach recordings, explains how herring came to the human world and how prosperity followed (Boas 2002:294-295). In this story, there was a famine among the people. All that remained in one house was a box of dried fish eggs. When the parents were out, the home was visited by a man who asked the two young boys in the home, “Why don't you eat the fish eggs; there's a whole box of them there,” to which the boys replied, “No, we must not touch them; our parents

have forbidden it.” Thinking this wrong, the man replied “just take as much as you want,” but again the boys resisted saying that their mother would beat them. At that, the man revealed himself as the “Moon Man” and he told the boys, “henceforth when you want to have food, ask me for it. I will replace a hundredfold the eggs you take from your parents.” At this the boys ate the fish eggs.

When the parents returned and found what the boys had done, they were very angry. Later that night, the boys looked to the moon and said, “Oh, make us happy; you have promised it to us.” After four times, the waters filled with herring and all other kinds of fish. In this way the people had an abundant supply of fish and the boys’ father became a great chief (Boas 2002:294-295).

Another version of this story is recorded a little later, in the early 20th century (Boas and Hunt 1905a:375-376). Similarly there are hungry sons and the oldest son decides to eat the salmon spawn his parents are saving. When they learn of this, the oldest son is struck so he leaves his family. In his travels he meets the Moon who asks him to pray to the moon. As the boy does so he hears a “loud noise in the sea” and realizes that the herring were coming, and as a result his father became a great chief (Boas and Hunt 1905a:376).

These stories each have common threads. Generally, before there was salmon or herring in the human world, humans were hungry. Through relationships with human counterparts, the fish, as fish persons, at least in the case of salmon, come to the human world and human person wealth and prosperity follow. Given the need for respect and proper treatment of salmon that I turn to shortly, these stories at first appear opposed to the standard of relationship between humans and fish that is emphasized in ceremonies

such as the First Salmon Ceremony and in practice with cleaning and preserving the fish. However, upon reflection, these stories codify respectful treatment and provide humans with an understanding of what can happen when fish are poorly treated.

The Ultimate Transformer

When reading the Boas and Hunt texts it is clear that there little difference between what is human and what is nonhuman and that one's state of being is managed through transformation. In the texts animals live as humans and humans travel to nonhuman worlds to live, learn, or even thieve, but during their stay, the world is seemingly human-like. Occasionally the veil between worlds is lifted and the human person may recognize aspects of the nonhuman world for what they are, but more often than not, they see the nonhuman world as largely human. This "spiritual ecology of fish, as understood by nineteenth-century Kwakwaka'wakw, supplied the reference point for larger notions of life, death, and resurrection" (Berman 2000:55).

Metamorphosis or transformation is common in the animistic world. It allows a nonhuman person to take on an outward human form in order to live and mingle in the human-person world, or a human person to take on another form to live or move about, often under seemingly human-person conditions, in another world (Green 2015a; Hallowell 1960 [2002]:33; Praet 2009; Thornton 2008:79, 247; Vitebsky 2005:12; Viveiros de Castro 1998:472; Willerslev 2004:629). Transformation is possible because the outward appearance of all beings is simply an incidental attribute (Hallowell 1960 [2002]:34), worn as a mask or clothing that temporarily covers the inner being or essence. Dreams are an important part of sociality between person forms (Povinelli 1995:509) and are a common mode of mobility between worlds and times (Ingold 2004:41), but so too is

physically removing oneself from the human world. For humans who travel to other worlds metamorphosis is dangerous and must be done carefully (Hornborg 2006b:318). It is frequently left to specialists, often referred to as shamans in the literature, or to experts in what Willerslev (2004:630; 2007:8-9, 110) calls mimetic practice: a transformation in body but not in perspective. In this way, one's outward appearance may change but there is always the realization that the inner being remains human, a process of anamorphosis (Descola 2013:138). Consequently, dangerous situations in the alternate reality that appear human-like or safe for human persons are recognized and avoided.

By crossing worlds it is possible for some to obtain direction and potentially manipulate the nonhuman world (Carlson and McHalsie 2010:65; Lima 1999:109; Viveiros de Castro 2004:468) or to witness the world from the perspective of a nonhuman person (Vitebsky 2005:12; Viveiros de Castro 1998). In the ontology expressed in 19th-century Laich-Kwil-Tach stories, power, or *tlogwe*, is circulated and exchanged and upon their return to the human-person world the one who underwent the temporary transformation is permanently transformed through the acquisition of *tlogwe*. The reciprocal state of well-being within the human/nonhuman-persons relationship includes the authority called *nawalak*^w. *Nawalak*^w is the power obtained by travelling to other worlds and “its possession allows people to transcend what Kwakiutl call the ordinary human conditions” (Goldman 1975:180). Boas translates *nawalak*^w as “supernatural,” which upon general reading places it in juxtaposition to “natural.” This is not, however, how *nawalak*^w should be understood. In the 19th-century text it is an extended power present in the world, available to anyone who is capable of transformation and transcending worlds. Unlike other beings who live in worlds other than the human world,

human persons are not naturally endowed with *nawalak*^w. In contrast, salmon-persons are naturally endowed with *nawalak*^w and from them and other beings human persons can acquire *nawalak*^w, as well as *tlogwe*. Thus, while Boas uses the term “supernatural,” a more accurate translation would be to explain the term *nawalak*^w and maintain its use in the passages. Certainly herein I have worked to understand *nawalak*^w and do not mean for “supernatural” to stand in juxtaposition to “natural.” It is within these terms that the song at the beginning of this chapter begins to have meaning:

The salmon came to search for a dancer.
He came and put his supernatural power into him.
You have supernatural power. Therefore the chief of the salmon came
from beyond the ocean. The people praise you, for they cannot carry the
weight of your wealth. (Boas 1897:475)

“You have supernatural powers” refers to the potlatch host who has acquired power, likely from an early ancestor who traveled to the nonhuman worlds. Through the *tlogwe* gift he became *nawalak*^w and others, including salmon-persons and human persons, are drawn to him: “therefore the chief of the salmon came from beyond the ocean.” Finally, the host’s *nawalak*^w and/or *tlogwe* is so great that figuratively, he cannot be lifted or carried. At the same time, the salmon have chosen a dancer from the human world to represent them. To him they transfer *tlogwe* and in this way he comes to represent them in the human world through the dance and song.

In a time when there was little difference between the various persons in the world, all beings were in human form, and it was only by donning the animal mask that one transformed (Goldman 1975:178). For example, in one Kwakwaka’wakw story the mountain goats told *Wawikyustâ’lagicilitsuk* that they “were actually human and that they were wearing skins as clothing” (Boas 2002:373-374). Eventually, the external state of

being for all animals in the human world became more permanent, although in the nonhuman world, the basic human form of all beings persisted. This essential or basic human foundation within all beings connects the different beings on the kinship level through their common humanness, even if the connection is not always obvious to human persons—for instance, in the example above, the goats had to tell their human counterpart of their humanness.

Salmon play an important role in this cycle of transformation and as will be shown, it is the ultimate transformer, having agency as numerous forms in both the human and nonhuman worlds. In the 19th-century world salmon were humans who donned a salmon mask to metamorphose into the salmon before travelling to the human world (Furst 1989:99) where they offered themselves to respectful and deserving human persons. This offering or gift was not limited to salmon. Again, in the example above with the goats, the goats give their human counterpart a goat skin, essentially one of their masks, and tell him that it will give him as many goats as he desires, but when he behaves greedily the mountain collapses and kills him (Boas 2002:374), exemplifying the consequences of human greed within the relationship between human persons and nonhuman persons. Within the relationship, nonhuman persons in the shape of animals are obliged to give themselves to humans, while in return humans are obliged to provide for the immortality of the nonhuman persons (Goldman 1975:178). This relationship based on trust and respect among beings who share an ancient kinship results in a world of parallels, a world in which the alternate realities appear very much like the human world.

Of all transformative beings, salmon is arguably among the most powerful. To exemplify I turn next to examine the salmon in its various forms and its complement of

abilities. While considering the salmon in its fish form, I also consider the human-fish relationship, its attending responsibilities and its consequences, including how the human and nonhuman fish person relationship is codified in 19th-century narrative and how it is brought to the human person world through prayer.

I. The Salmon Persons

Like other nonhuman persons, salmon live in their world in a state of humanness. “Spring-Salmon kept all the salmon-masks” (Boas and Hunt 1905a:302) and by donning the masks, all salmon take their salmon form (Boas and Hunt 1905a:302). The brave were honoured with the spring salmon mask; the weak were given the pink salmon mask; while those who were neither strong nor weak wore the sockeye, coho and steelhead masks (Boas and Hunt 1905a:303). In this way, rank, like in the human world, is an important concept. Among the salmon, spring salmon is the highest ranked, being the chief among salmon (Goldman 1975:179). Pink salmon were considered weak: “and the weak ones shall put on the hump-back-salmon (masks)” (Boas and Hunt 1905a:303; see also Berman 2000:62). This ranking is not surprising as spring salmon are most certainly the largest and strongest salmon species while pink salmon are not highly valued as a source of food locally.

On the Northwest Coast, stories abound that reveal nonhuman persons in human form. For example many Nations have a story about salmon boy who, generally due to some form of misconduct, is taken to live in the salmon world where he lives in a way that is very familiar to his human world. Here he learns about respect and proper treatment of those salmon who don their mask and travel to the human world each year. When salmon boy returns in salmon form to the human world he is recognized by his

mother and he is transformed back into human form where he teaches other humans proper respect for the salmon (see for example Langdon 2007:238-240; Swanton 1909:301-310; Thornton 2008:73-74). The Koskimo (a Kwakwaka'wakw First Nation) story of salmon boy is different. Here a man is fishing and sees "a person" swimming amongst the salmon. As he surfaced the man "pulled him into the canoe; and as soon as the person came into the canoe, he was a boy" (Boas and Hunt 1905a:375). This boy quickly grew and "became a man of supernatural power," or *nawalak^w*, (Goldman 1975:180) and it is said that because of him the Koskimo learned that twins are the human form of salmon, as this man was said to be one of twins (Boas and Hunt 1905a:375).

Twins (also discussed later in terms of their role in the First Salmon Ceremony) are important in the 19th-century Laich-Kwil-Tach and Kwakwaka'wakw world as they were the human incarnate of salmon and were understood to "belong to the Salmon" (Boas and Hunt 1921b:674-681). Because of their direct connection with salmon and therefore their salmon-ness, twins in human form, like salmon in fish form, were naturally endowed with *nawalak^w*. Their powers equalled the powers that salmon themselves held and included control over the weather, a power that increased with age, the power to cure and the power to call salmon to the river (Boas 1966:367-368; Boas and Hunt 1921b:633-635, 675). Because twins are the human incarnate of the salmon, upon death, their soul returns to the salmon world and, like other salmon, they are immortal (Boas 1930:257).

The relationship between twins and salmon was also recognized in the naming practices of twins and often their siblings. Generally, twins were named for their associated salmon species. For example, twin girls who came from the coho salmon were

named some version of Abalone-Woman while coho salmon twin boys were named a version of Only-One. Twins connected to the sockeye salmon were called Head-Dancer (girl) or Head-Worker (boy) (Boas and Hunt 1921b:693). Twins' older sibling was named Salmon-Head while the child born following the twins was called Salmon-Tail (Boas and Hunt 1921b:681, 692).

The connection between twins and salmon was a common aspect of the human-salmon relationship on the Northwest Coast. For example, the birth of Nuu-chah-nulth twins meant that their father became an “instrument of the salmon” and was responsible for rituals required throughout the salmon season (Gunther 1926:616). Their birth could also place particular restrictions on the parents. For example, Klallam parents of twins were required to stay away from bodies of both fresh and salt water for a year (Gunther 1926:616). In fact, when an early settler family had twins their Klallam neighbours entreated the father to refrain from fishing because of the risk to the fish and therefore the people who depended on them (Gunther 1926:616). He refused and by all accounts, both Klallam and the local fishery office, the run of pink salmon in the Dungeness River plummeted for twenty years (Gunther 1926:616).

II. The Salmon Fish

Each year, as a gift to humans, salmon wore their salmon mask and began their journey, arriving in the human world as fish. They were greeted by leaders and fishers as *nawalak*^w as “Bringers of Life” (Furst 1989:99) and were offered prayers of thanks and respect. By June, the salmon begin to arrive, starting with the sockeye, followed by spring and then coho, pink and chum, who arrive in the early to mid fall. In at least one location, bluebacks, or immature coho, are available in early January. Consequently, for

at least six months of the year, salmon were present in the human world. An important part of the human-fish relationship was respect. Codified within numerous narratives, specific behaviours and reverence for fish was vital to a healthy, rich and successful life on the Northwest Coast. Through narratives, the Kwakwaka'wakw understanding of salmon is recorded; they are humans who appear in the human-person world in their salmon masks and they are sentient beings who are aware of the human-person world and as long as proper respect is offered, the salmon will choose to continue to provide their human counterpart with wealth, health and overall well-being. This requires special treatment in the form of prayers, proper handling, reverence and care of the remains. If salmon are neglected, they may choose to punish their human-person counterparts by not returning the following year.

Through their kinship with humans and the codified forms of respect, spring, sockeye, coho and chum salmon, as well as halibut and eulachon received reverent treatment by Kwakwaka'wakw people (Berman 2000:62; Boas and Hunt 1905a:303). It is likely pink salmon were not included because of their position as the “weak ones.” Herring, an important springtime food species and a recognised source of abundance, were considered unclean. A critical expression of this reverence in the human-fish relationship was the First Salmon Ceremony. Discussed at length later in this chapter and in Chapter 7, this ceremony was conducted on behalf of and by the larger group. However, equally important was the personal relationship of the individual and his/her spouse with fish, particularly salmon.

In the human-fish relationship respectful human persons were those who, like in the story of Wise-One and his sons, understood that the bones must be cared for and that the

salmon cannot be “ill-used” (Boas and Hunt 1905a:391-392). Kwakwaka’wakw oral traditions are filled with examples of how to respectfully treat salmon and what might happen if they are mistreated. One important example explains why, in the previous story, *Mä'isila* left $\bar{O}^E meäl$ and took all the living and preserved salmon with her. Once married and after $\bar{O}^E meäl$ begged *Mä'isila* to bring salmon to their world $\bar{O}^E meäl$ became careless in their relationship. This was risky given that *Mä'isila* was the human incarnate of salmon and that it was because of her goodwill that $\bar{O}^E meäl$ and his family lived with abundance. Eventually, $\bar{O}^E meäl$ did the unthinkable; when he stood in the house, his head rubbed against the salmon drying in the rafters. In his anger, he “scolded” spring salmon and threw it in the corner of their house. His indiscretion against the highest ranked salmon became inexcusable when he laughed at *Mä'isila* for expressing sadness at this disrespectful behaviour. At this *Mä'isila* rose and spoke to the dried salmon: “come, my tribe, let us go back” (Boas and Hunt 1905a:330). The dried salmon enlivened at her words and she led her people back to the water. This left $\bar{O}^E meäl$ and his family poor with nothing to eat (Boas and Hunt 1905a:320-330), forcing him and his people to travel to the salmon world to obtain salmon through treachery, in a way that may seem counter to a reciprocally respectful relationship, but that in the end led to such a relationship.

Prayers to Fish

In respect of salmon’s status as *nawalak^w* and its ability to grant deserving humans special privilege and care, one of the terms of the 19th-century human-fish relationship was for human persons to speak reverently to fish persons in what might be characterized as prayer. These prayers were individualistic in nature, meaning that outside of the First

Salmon Ceremony and the Salmon Dance, they were said privately and directly to the nonhuman fish person. For example, a woman prayed to the dog salmon:

O Supernatural Ones! O, Swimmers! I thank you that you are willing to come to us. Therefore, I beg you to protect me and the one who takes mercy on me, that we may not die without cause, Swimmers!"
(Boas and Hunt 1921b:609)

Then once she had prepared the salmon, she gathered its entrails and slime and returned them to the water at the mouth of the river in order for the salmon to be resurrected and return to their salmon world.

Following the First Salmon Ceremony all fishers, men and women alike, offered ongoing prayers and greetings throughout the season. Unlike the winter ceremonial in which ceremony and ritual belong to the descent group, summer ceremonial prayers belonged to each person individually and were carried out over an extended period of time, translating as and marking respectfulness towards fish.

Women were usually tasked with cleaning fish so they too had a significant role in the maintenance of the human-fish relationship. A woman who cleaned salmon also offered prayers. In them she welcomed salmon and thanked them for their annual return by which her family was kept healthy. She also asked it to return again next year and to keep her protected for the year so that they may meet again (Boas 1930:207). This reveals not only the power of the salmon to provide wealth, but its power to heal and keep one healthy. In the same vein a man may say, "take away my sickness, friend, supernatural one, Swimmer" (Boas and Hunt 1921b:319), or he may say,

Welcome, Supernatural One, you, Long-Life-Maker, for you come to set me right again as is always done by you. Now pray take out my sickness and take it back to your rich country at the outer side of our world. (Boas 1930:184-185)

A similar prayer is made to migratory birds (Boas 1930:184), who like the salmon, reside in another, parallel world during much of the year but return to the human-person world to facilitate well-being.

The power of the salmon to heal and offer health to humans was very much a part of the Kwakwaka'wakw world. So much so that it affected how dreams were interpreted. For example, in a dream recorded by Hunt and Boas, a woman saw dead women but also saw many salmon jumping. She took this to mean that she would live until the salmon returned (Boas 1925:25).

Other Forms of Respect

The First Salmon Ceremony and prayers were very outward forms of respect. There are other less obvious practices that respectful human persons followed to ensure the ongoing benevolence of the salmon. For example a salmon was clubbed only once to avoid destroying its soul (Boas 1930:205). The resurrection of the salmon was possible because if salmon were caught and handled respectfully, its soul did not die. This fact is revealed in a prayer to the coho in which a speaker said "...we know that only your bodies are dead here, but your souls come to watch over us when we are going to eat what you have given us" (Boas and Hunt 1921b:612).

Respectful treatment included placing fish on clean pebbles along the beach and then onto clean cedar mats (Boas 1930:199-200, 205; 1932:239). It also included carrying the fish in particular ways. For example, Laich-Kwil-Tach people strung fish on a cedar withe and carried them round the neck, (Boas 1932:239), a tradition similar to Matilpi people (another Kwakwaka'wakw First Nation) who did this with the first nine sockeye caught (Boas 1932:205). Furthermore, protocol demanded that particular parts of the first

salmon be eaten immediately and properly (Boas 1932:239; Boas and Hunt 1921b:610, 612), while some people were forbidden to partake. Menstruating women could not eat fresh-caught fish for example, nor could fresh fish be cooked in a house in which a menstruating woman was living—to do otherwise was to put her male relatives at risk (Berman 2000:61). It was forbidden to eat the entrails, a taboo codified in the story of a boy who was sent to the land of the ghosts where he became mad after eating the entrails (Boas 1910:477). The heads of coho salmon were ritually roasted but it was important to eat the roasted eyes, for if they were kept in the house overnight, it was said that the coho would disappear from the ocean (Boas and Hunt 1921b:611). Disposing of the salmon bones and entrails in a proper manner often returning them to the ocean, but at other times burning them in the fire, was a noted protocol (Boas 1932:239; Boas and Hunt 1905a:317; 1921b:304), at least for the first salmon.

One Mamalilikulla (a Kwakwaka'wakw First Nation) story explains the origin of returning the bones and entrails to the ocean. In this story, Thunderbird stole the wife of Woodpecker. Wren, the wise advisor, suggested that the animals borrow the salmon masks from Spring-Salmon who held all the salmon masks. In their disguise, they entered Thunderbird's fish trap and Woodpecker, disguised as the salmon, instructed his wife,

As soon as you cut open these salmon, throw the bones, the intestines, and the blood of the salmon into the sea. If you do not do so, the salmon will not go back to our house. As soon as you have cut me open, you must go and throw me into the water. Then you must walk out into the water, and stop walking when the water reaches your knees. (Boas and Hunt 1905a:305-306)

Woodpecker's wife did as instructed and as she placed the remains in the ocean the salmon were resurrected and Woodpecker won back his wife (Boas and Hunt 1905a:307). The spirit or myth animals then conspired to destroy Thunderbird and it was in this way

that they got the right to use the salmon trap and because of Woodpecker and his wife, the people still return salmon remains to the ocean (Boas and Hunt 1905a:316-317).

The return of the salmon to the ocean, which is the water of life, is a fundamental tenet and is essential to the resurrection of the salmon. “After they had eaten, the bones were gathered and were thrown into the water. Immediately the salmon jumped and came to life” (Boas 1910:171). Without this final treatment and payment of respect to the salmon caught each year, the salmon would not be resurrected and would not return to the human world to ensure human health, wealth and well-being.

How the fish were cleaned and the entrails removed was also important. For a speared salmon, the entrails were broken off at the anal fin, but if the fish was caught by hook and line, the intestines were cut to ensure that the fisher’s line would not break in the future (Boas and Hunt 1921b:610).

The intention of each of these practices was to ensure the safe and continual return of salmon. Hunt called these practices of treatment and respect “treating clean” from the Kwak’waka word *ʔaʔikila* meaning “to make good, lucky, well, clean, clear, bright” (Berman 2000:62; 2004:143). Frances, one of the Elders interviewed for this research defined the same word as “do it right.” Boas expands this definition to include the act of observing taboos and being careful in “ordinary pursuits” (Boas 1949:617) and he notes a very similar word, if not the same word, *e’k!eqEla* as an alternative to the word *ts!a’eqa* (Boas 1966:172). Boas defines *e’k!eqEla* as “good minded or happy,” and *ts!a’eqa* as “to be fraudulent, to cheat” but notes that it is also the name for the period of the winter ceremonial (Boas 1966:172). According to Frances, *ts!a’eqa* also refers to something that is wrong at the potlatch when the *gigəḡəmi*, or highest ranking men, throw it out. In this

sense, it is less about fraudulence and cheating as defined by Boas than it is about rectifying a wrong or mistake in the big house. It is notable that an alternative word for the time of the winter ceremonial, a time of making things right in the world, is also a word used for the respectful treatment of salmon.

Likely associated with the concept of clean as well as their precarious state of closeness at such times with the nonhuman world, widows, widowers, young girls and terminally ill people were forbidden to eat salmon (Boas 1932:238). However, it may also have been that these people were understood to be closer to the nonhuman world during these periods (Boas 1932:214). Twins were also forbidden but in this case it was more likely due to their affinity with salmon.

Finally, sharing salmon was also codified within oral tradition and was part of the commitment to a respectful relationship. For example, the story of Heron and his wife reveals the consequence of greed. In this part of the *Q!ā'nēqēlak^u* story, each day Heron and his wife visit their salmon trap to take the sockeye salmon, but they send their children away and hide the fish from them. The children are hungry because the parents hoard the food for themselves. In the end, the children discover their parents' treachery and Heron is destroyed and scattered to become the ancestor of all herons, his wife becomes the ancestor of the woodpecker, and the children go on to a prosperous life (Boas 1969b[1935]:5-76; Boas and Hunt 1908:185-191). Sharing continues to be an important moral and ethos and was commonly discussed during interviews for this research (Chapter 7).

III. The Copper Salmon

Yet another entity in the human-fish relationship is the copper. The copper is a large, shield-like object, not unlike a salmon spread on cedar sticks for cooking or smoking, used in Haida, Tlingit, Tsimshian, Kwakwaka'wakw and Nuxalk ceremony (Jopling 1989:1). It is made of two parts: “a flaring, trapezoidal upper portion and a rectangular lower section – which are united by the horizontal cross bar of a raised T form, whose vertical part bisects the lower rectangle” (Jopling 1989:1). The upper section is slightly convex and is often distinguished with a face (Curtis 1970 [1915]:144). Copper itself was an important and revered element. Its discovery was “tantamount to an encounter with a supernatural being” (Jopling 1989:16) and subsequently, its discovery raised the status of those who found it. The origin of the copper required to make the large shields is still a matter of debate. Some suggest copper only became important after it became readily available through trade with Europeans (Curtis 1970 [1915]:145), while other sources suggest that, prior to trading in sheet copper, there were sources of local copper in the northern part of the Northwest Coast at the Copper River, the Stikine River area, the Skeena River area and Haida Gwaii, where early observers noted its Indigenous use (Jopling 1989:51).

Throughout the ethnographic record, we find evidence that coppers were named and it is common to see them equated with salmon (Boas 1940:234; Boas 1966:86; Swanton 1908). For example the copper named *Wina* (War) (Boas 1966:84) is said to have been caught in a salmon trap (Boas 1925:152-153) and in the lengthy “Prayer to the Copper” considered below, its kinship with the salmon is clear (Boas 1930:185-187). In the prayer to the copper, *Wina*, when the copper was first obtained through

purchase from another chief, it was brought into the home and placed in a well-made flat box on a bed of cedar bark mixed with eagle down. The first night in the home was important as it was expected that all the family members would come together in order to “feed” it. Like the First Salmon Ceremony, this was completed on the first night.

Once the entire extended family unit, the *hámima*, was present the speaker began,

Welcome, welcome, you have come, numaym [*hámima*], you have come to eat with this one which has a name, the copper, for it has not yet been given food by our chief. Now I will go and call it. Now take a new mat and spread it in the middle of the rear of the house. (Boas 1930:185-187)

This latter part is spoken directly to the chief’s wife who prepared a new mat, and much like in the First Salmon Ceremony, she lays the mat out in preparation. Again, the mat is important. As noted previously, old mats are associated with poverty. In this case laying the copper on a new mat is an act of respect, and is, as it is in the First Salmon Ceremony, a mark of affluence and rank. The speaker then retrieves the copper and returns to the throng of people with it on his shoulder. He says,

“Oh, oh, oh! Look at me, numaym. I come carrying on my shoulder this salmon of our chief. It came and went into the salmon trap of our chief. Now we will feed it” (Boas 1930:185-187).

The use of the words “salmon trap” in this instance is ambiguous. It could mean the house, which is associated with the fish trap as guests arrive at a potlatch (Boas 1925:152-153; Boas 1940:234), or it could be that copper, like salmon, is a form of wealth and that metaphorically it is caught in a trap. I suspect that in this case, the house is the salmon trap for the copper.

At this point, the speaker stands at the mat and removes the copper. He addresses his *hámima*, saying,

Now, numaym, now I will do as we were told by our late fathers, for this salmon of our chief, this great copper. Now you have come and put it upright. Now he will pray to it that nothing evil may befall him on account of its coming to our chief... Great one, friend, you have come, now welcome. You have come. You have entered this house of my chief. Now I pray you, Great Supernatural One, you, Steel-head Salmon, that you may protect my chief, that nothing wrong may befall him in anything he does, and also that you invite the coppers of your size that they may keep on trying to come to this clever chief, who will take care of your friends when they try to come to my chief. I mean this, they have all come in, the numaym of my chief, to eat with you as you will now be given food by this one who is clever in owning coppers of your size, Steel-head Salmon. I mean this, that you may return this kind treatment given to you, that they may return the kindly feeling to you so that he may not be penetrated by the words of the chief spoken against him. I mean this in regard to you, friend Steel-head Salmon, for this is not the reason why you came here bought by my chief, that he should kill you or that he should hurt you. For good is the reason why you came, for you will make a name to be the name of my chief and of my numaym. (Boas 1930:185-187)

The chief's wife is then instructed to prepare the food for the copper and the *námima* head. In response, she gives dried salmon to the young men to scorch over the fire. As they do so she prepares the dishes, including two new dishes for the copper, one for grease and one for the scorched dried salmon. Choosing the fattest, scorched dried salmon she tears it into small pieces, placing it in one of the new dishes. Then the new grease dish is placed inside the larger salmon dish. This is the food for the copper and once prepared the young men break up the rest of the scorched, dried salmon and put it on the other dishes, adding smaller grease dishes to each serving in the process. With the food prepared, the speaker announces,

Indeed, numaym, indeed, this is the reason why we come, for we come, for we come to sit with this Supernatural One, this which will be our name, this which has a name, the copper, this which is not often obtained by the chiefs of the tribes, this *Steel-head-Salmon*. (Boas 1930:185-187)

As he speaks, he takes the dish of food for the copper and says,

Indeed, friend, great *Steel-head Salmon*, you have come into this house of my chief. You have come, to come and be treated well by this my kind chief. Indeed, now I have said it. Look at this dish which I am carrying. Now you will eat, great *Steel-head Salmon*, you who came now that I may be on top of you, (I) and my numaym, you, great mountain, and defend us against the words of the chiefs of the tribes.... Now you have this dish, friend, great *Steel-head Salmon*. (Boas 1930:185-187)

Then turning to the witnesses he says,

“Now the dish of our great friend has gone to him. Now put down before us ours so that we may eat” (Boas 1930:185-187).

At this instruction the young men set their dishes in front of the chief who stands to welcome his guests,

Welcome, tribe, kindly welcome in this our house, my house built for you, numaym. Welcome, for you have come to sit with this great acropolis, this *Steel-head Salmon*, for not only I shall have a name from this great copper, for it will be your name, for it came to our numaym. (Boas 1930:185-187)

Following this welcome, the chief instructs his speaker to feed the copper. Taking a piece of the broken, dried salmon, he dips it into the grease and turns to the copper, speaking to it directly,

“Now you will eat, great, good Supernatural One” (Boas 1930:185-187).

With these words, four times he touches a piece of dried salmon to the middle of the face on the copper, then throws the meat into the fire saying,

“O Sitter-on-the-Fire, now you will help me to come and be the stomach of this great copper that has a name” (Boas 1930:185-187).

Then, as the copper's stomach, the speaker eats the salmon and grease remaining in the bowls. This final step is a signal for the rest of the *hámima* to eat and the welcome is complete.

Throughout this greeting the copper has isomorphic connections with the salmon in the First Salmon Ceremony, as well as with wealth and prosperity. It is welcomed and is asked to invite other coppers to the human world, especially to this particular family, who ask that it "return this kind treatment," including returning as food, as the family fed the copper and they ask the copper to invite others who can return the care. As it is welcomed, it is placed on a clean mat and is treated throughout the ceremony with great respect. It is referred to as salmon with protective powers and, much like prayers to salmon discussed in this chapter, it is asked to protect the chief from the others during the potlatch.

There are numerous other examples of a kinship between copper and salmon. Tsimshian oral stories recall that copper is found high up the river because when the spring salmon reached the deep water there, it became copper (Boas 1916:301). In this case it is called "living copper" (Boas 1916:301, 451). According to the story, only the descendants of one man can safely access the "living copper," and then only if they have proper instructions (Boas 1916:306, 451). Within the instructions it is clear; the copper is salmon and is referred to as salmon coppers. They are alive and must be caught and handled properly in order to avoid the death of those seeking to obtain them (Boas 1916:306). Similarly, a poor Haida man, with the assistance of "medicine" was able to catch the copper salmon and subsequently, he became very rich (Swanton 1905:230; 1908:689-702). The story also explains how he cut the fins from the copper salmon,

heating and shaping them slowly to the desired shape (Swanton 1908:689-702). For the Kwakwaka'wakw, *Kumugwe* is the source of copper. He lives in a house of copper under the sea, has canoes of copper and is the source for copper.

Furthermore, coppers were bought, sold and gifted and in this way made their way around and across family, village and group boundaries. This mobility, as well as the ability to bring wealth to the bearer was another affinity kept with salmon (Jopling 1989:27). From an early age, the connection between a high-ranking child and the copper was established. For example, as a baby, James Sewid, a high-ranking Kwakwaka'wakw man, was placed on a copper and announcements of his rank and positions were made (Sewid 1972:18). The copper and his position upon it reaffirmed the statements.

If, as appears to be the case, the copper is yet another form of the salmon, then one must also reconsider our understanding of the copper in what has been presented as competitive potlatching (Boas 1966:93-96; Codere 1950; Drucker and Heizer 1967:104-106). In the potlatch coppers were sometimes broken or thrown into the water, apparently to “express the chief’s lavish disregard of the distinction of values” (Boas 1916:541; Drucker and Heizer 1967:105) and to assert himself in a position higher than others. In the literature this has been framed as a way end a dispute or rivalry (Drucker and Heizer 1967:106) or as an action that can result in “open enmity” (Boas 1966:96). In one recorded instance, noted as a dispute over a potlatch position, a copper was left to sink in the deep water, while its owner said, “this is my gift to you, O chief” (Drucker and Heizer 1967:105). In the text, the statement appears to be towards the rival but it could also refer to *Kumugwe*, to whom the copper would return, or even to the copper itself. In the

process of the return, in its isomorphism with salmon, it could be reincarnated and contribute to the greater wealth of the family, if it indeed asks other copper to come to the human world, as was requested in the prayer and ritual when it was first obtained by the chief. Although research for this study did not reveal a connection between copper and reincarnation in either the written or oral history, coppers were akin to salmon, and as such this idea is worthy of further investigation. Perhaps the confidence in its reincarnation contributed to the willingness to return the copper to the Undersea Kingdom. If it stands to be part of the knowledge of coppers then this is another example of how seeking to understand the world in those terms experienced by its players can help guide research direction and understanding.

The numerous examples noted above further reinforce the idea that, although the relationship and isomorphism between humans and salmon is ancient and powerful, there were other entities who played a role in the relationship. Most often aiding humans, but sometimes acting as an intermediary between the human and nonhuman worlds, or in the case of coppers between two humans, coppers, fish traps and other fishing implements were important beings who had agency in these relationships. Like fish, these beings also required special care and attention from their human counterparts who, if mistreated or disrespected could choose to no longer support their human counterparts, affecting both well-being and affluence. However, if treated and managed properly, these nonhuman persons had the ability to provide wealth and abundance to humans while creating opportunities for success and affluence for all of the beings involved, making the world of fish and humans very complex.

IV. *The Sisiutl Salmon*

The *sisiutl* is known in English as the double-headed serpent and is a common being well known to many Northwest Coast peoples (e.g. Barnett 1955:32; Boas 2002:162-165, 663; Hill-Tout 1900:73-77). It is a long, narrow creature with a serpent's head on each end and a horned, human face in its centre (Boas 1910:333; Boas and Hunt 1905b:121, 202; Locher 1932:6). It can also appear fish-like, swimming in the water, and it can appear as a salmon when caught in a fish trap, where it thrashes loudly and flashes much like thunder and lightning (Boas 1910:451; 2002:419; Boas and Hunt 1905b:196). Other times it appears as a "different kind of fish" that when killed unfolds to reveal itself as the *sisiutl* (Boas and Hunt 1908:192). As such, it is salmon but it is salmon wearing the suit of a more powerful being, Thunderbird, known as the elder brother of humans (Boas 1910:193, 451, 482-483; Boas and Hunt 1905b:197). For example, in one story the Thunderbird appears with a *sisiutl* in its talons but when he sets it in front of two human girls it becomes salmon (Boas 1910:482-483). Furthermore, the *sisiutl* can exist in human form and is referred to as *sī'sEyūLē bā'xusa*, serpent-man in a story where *sisiutl* possessed *Kumugwe* (Boas and Hunt 1908:25, 256). In some cases it is possible for humans to acquire its mask and when worn, they become salmon (Boas 2002:182). In all its forms the *sisiutl* has great powers that can be transferred to humans willingly (Boas and Hunt 1908:25) or by force (Boas and Hunt 1908:110, 260; Goldman 1975:76). As a powerful entity, it guards houses in the nonhuman world (Boas 1910:53, 63); can kill large beings such as whales (Boas 1910:193); can create a river that supports future generations (Boas 1910:333-335); or be transformed into an island (e.g. Savary Island, Kennedy and Bouchard 1983:164).

For those humans who recognize the *sisiutl* in its various forms there is an opportunity to acquire its power. Capturing the *sisiutl* is often done with the help of human blood drawn from the tongue (Chapter 7) and then part of the *sisiutl* is kept, for example the blood, scales (looking much like flecks of mica and similar to fish scales), dorsal fin or eyes (e.g. Boas and Hunt 1905b:197; 1908:192, 193-194; Goldman 1975:76), each providing a form of power to the holder. Once its powers are attained, they provide their keeper with a powerful shield or even weapon (Boas and Hunt 1908:110, 260; Goldman 1975:76) that protects the keeper from other powerful beings. For those who do not recognize the *sisiutl*, but just see it instead as a fish, the consequences are dire. Commonly the individuals become “rigid” or turn to stone and if fortunate, they are resurrected by another being who has captured the *sisiutl*'s power (Boas 1910:452; 2002:357; Boas and Hunt 1905b:199, 147; 1908:112), or with the aid of the water of life.

In one story, when Head-Winter-Dancer caught *sisiutl* in his fish trap, he first saw it from the watchman's pole. He tried to club it as he would a salmon but it was too powerful and broke the salmon trap (Boas and Hunt 1905b:197). Instead, as instructed by his wife, “he bit the sides of his tongue and drew blood from it. Then he spit some of the blood on the salmon called the double-headed serpent” (Boas and Hunt 1905b:197; see also Boas 1910:333). This quieted the *sisiutl* allowing Head-Winter-Dancer to spit blood on his club at which point he could club it. Like the salmon, when Head-Winter-Dancer returned with the *sisiutl*, his wife laid it on a new mat and butchered it. She and her husband used the *sisiutl*'s blood to make their son grow and then to make his body turn to stone. As a powerful warrior, their son, Stone-body, was determined to use the *tlogwe* to

“make war all over the world... [to] rob all the chiefs of all the tribes of their crests...and that the chiefs all round the world become... slaves” (Boas and Hunt 1905b:200). Using a *sisiutl* canoe, a fast traveling canoe with a live *sisiutl* on its sides, Stone-body and his father travelled throughout the lands overcoming all, obtaining gifts from and the *tlogwe* of the chiefs they met (Boas and Hunt 1905b:203-228). Through the power of the *sisiutl*, originally in salmon form, Stone-body was unstoppable in the human world and it was only when he met “men of supernatural power” that he was killed (Boas and Hunt 1905b:245).

Boas and Hunt collected another story of the *sisiutl* that pertains directly to Laich-Kwil-Tach people. In this *Qō'mēnox*¹⁰ story (Boas 1910:3-7) two powerful men duel. Both men wore *sisiutl* “belts” from which they presumably acquired some of their power (Boas 1910:5). The first man gave his opponent salmon who realized too late that it was the *sisiutl* causing him to become “contorted” (Boas 1910:3). Being powerful, he transformed back to a man and the two men continued to duel, changing one another to stone, fog and birds. The duel finally ended when one of the men lost his *sisiutl* belt, and therefore the source of his power (Boas 1910:7).

Clearly salmon in its forms as human, fish, *sisiutl* and copper was the ultimate transformer in the 19th-century Kwakwaka'wakw world. As the ultimate transformer it was recognized as *nawalak*^v, necessitating proper care, treatment and respect. In the process, deserving humans could form a mutually beneficial relationship with salmon's various forms. While travelling to the salmon world and forming a relationship with a copper salmon appears somewhat limited to higher-ranking individuals, everyone was

¹⁰ A Loughborough Inlet group who later disappeared in name to join the Wei Wai Kum.

responsible for a good relationship with salmon in its fish form, and by offering prayers and proper treatment, one could anticipate a successful fishing season. Also important in this relationship was the First Salmon Ceremony.

19th-Century First Salmon Ceremony

An important practice in the relationship between human persons and fish persons on the Northwest Coast has long been the First Salmon Ceremony (Amoss 1987; Boas 1898:78; 1916:449-450; Boas 1925:149-157; Boas and Hunt 1921b:609-612; Cullon 2013; Gunther 1926:90-91; 1928; McHalsie 2007). Practised from what is now Southeast Alaska to northern California, the First Salmon Ceremony was almost universal on the Northwest Coast (Gunther 1926:609, 612; Gunther 1928:fig. 1). Across the region the first salmon run (as well as the first eulachon run) of the year was greeted with ceremony and no one could fish before this ceremony was complete (Assu and Inglis 1989:94; Gunther 1926:614; Langdon 2007:237; Stewart 1977:166-168; Suttles 1990:468). Like in many other societies this type of practice had an impact on economic production (Spielmann 2002:196) and was supported by all parts of the community as they worked to fulfill obligations that sustained social relations (Spielmann 2002:197) both within and between the human and the nonhuman worlds. And importantly, like the first harvest ceremonies of horticulturalists, the First Salmon Ceremony showed gratitude to the nonhuman beings ensuring the success of the “crop,” as well as a bountiful harvest (Cullon 2013:23).

In comparison to other ethnographic work on the Northwest Coast little information exists in the written record specifically about this important ceremony. However, when reviewed in terms of reverence for salmon, aspects of the ceremony become more

apparent. Using information largely from Boas (1925) I attempt to gain an understanding of the 19th-century Laich-Kwil-Tach First Salmon Ceremony. The Boas data is specifically useful here because it includes a discussion of the “watchman’s pole,” and because of photographs of the Laich-Kwil-Tach village at Cape Mudge in the early 20th-century I know that the watchman’s pole was utilized by the Laich-Kwil-Tach people (Figure 10, Chapter 8).

All along the coast the arrival of salmon was an important ceremonial occasion. Beginning with self-purification, men whose responsibility included inviting and welcoming salmon to their community cleansed themselves to summon the salmon back to the human world (Boas 1925:157). At the same time, Laich-Kwil-Tach leaders (and likely likewise in the larger Kwakwaka’wakw area), ordered that a watchman’s pole be built. This special pole, shaped much like a four-legged, fruit-picking ladder (Figure 2), was used to call, watch for and welcome the salmon and could only be used by a man who had the inherited prerogative, or *tlogwe*, from the earliest time (Boas 1925:150-151).

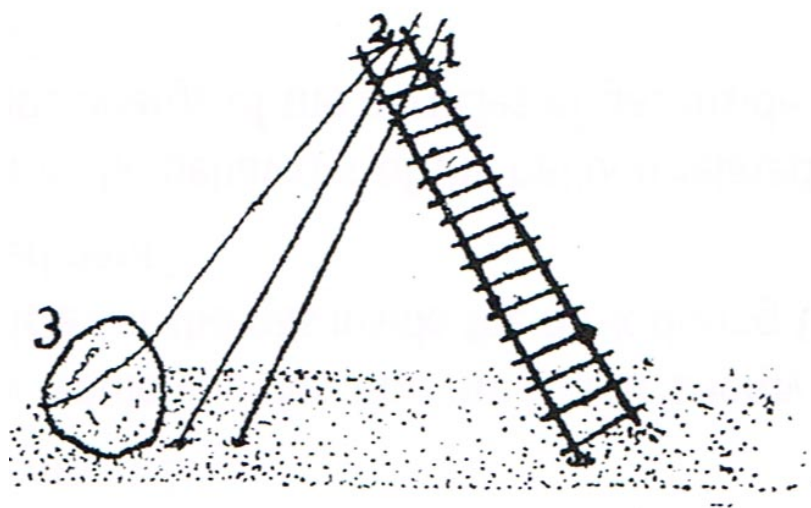


Figure 2: “Watchman’s pole” (Boas 1925:150)

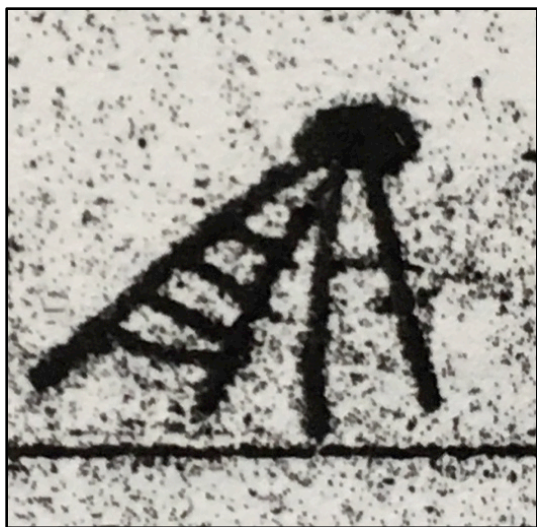
Boas calls the watchman's pole *k•!ítEla* (1925:145-183), which according to Elder Frances is the word used when one is fishing salmon. Elsewhere he calls it *k•!ítElā p!ēqē* (Boas and Hunt 1905b:196; Boas, et al. 1976). *P!ēqē* is the word for “stick,” but Frances suggests that the words do not fit well together. The watchman himself is called *k•'ā'k•ala* (Boas 1893:81), which appears to be the word *λaλala*, meaning “to watch” [MA-011 and DM-011], although Boas also translates it as “to hear.”

Everything about the watchman's pole was steeped in history and ceremony. As it was completed the watchman announced “now it is finished, the great (watchman's pole which is) your privilege, chief, which was given to you by your grandfather at the far end, when first our world was lighted up” (Boas 1925:151). The statement about “grandfather at the far end” refers to stories of people who travelled to the nonhuman world in the early days of human existence, following the transformation from animal beings to human beings. When one travels to the nonhuman world, it was usual for that individual to be given a gift of powers, abilities, a treasure, or *tlogwe* as mentioned previously (Boas 1897:169; 1949:616; Goldman 1975:vii, 25). Upon its completion, the watchman climbed the pole. Through song, prayer and words he called the salmon to the people and to the fish traps that lay in waiting for the fish to enter. He then directed the chiefs to look at their fish traps while he said “my schools of salmon are coming to my salmon weir here, chiefs” (Boas 1925:153). Then he sang to the fish,

Now I see it, now I see it, the salmon. It is coming up stream with a great wave following what I obtained by purifying myself. You were overcome by me on account of this watchman's pole. (Boas 1925:157)

According to photographs of the Cape Mudge village taken in the mid- to late-1920s, the watchman's pole was still in use. Barnett (1935) further confirms that it was in

use until the mid-1930s as his field notes from the Comox, Puntledge and Cape Mudge



(We Wai Kai) people include a discussion of what he calls the “first salmon rite.” Here he includes a description of the “fish stand” whose owner inherited the right to catch the first sockeye.

Figure 3: "Fish stand" (Barnett Field Notes 1935)

The owner of the stand, adorned with black face paint and eagle down (a symbol of peace), climbed the “scaffold” and sang to the fish. He was then responsible for catching the first fish and for its special preparation, eating and return to the ocean. In the process, he caught several fish but ensured that the first was kept separate from the others. Upon his return to shore the first caught fish was taken “gently” to the watchman’s house where it was treated reverently with singing, rattling and offered eagle down. This was a private ceremony between the first salmon, the watchman and his extended family, all of whom were painted and had eagle down in their hair. Together this small group ate the first salmon then returned its remains to the ocean and the next day the fishery opened for the rest of the community.

As noted above, twins play an important role in the First Salmon Ceremony. In the late 19th-century Laich-Kwil-Tach world, twins were the human incarnate of salmon so had a close relationship, or even oneness, with the fish. As a result, they were often

involved in the handling of the first fish in the First Salmon Ceremony, including being responsible for returning the bones and remains to the ocean following the ceremony (Assu and Inglis 1989:94; Boas 1966:365; Gunther 1926:616).

Though the connection between twins and salmon is well recognized, there also appears to be times when the distinction between salmon and other humans is very difficult (Boas 1925; Boas 1930; Boas 1940; Goldman 1975). For example, while the watchman's pole was used for enticing and welcoming salmon back to the human world, it was also used when potlatch guests arrived. The watchman's pole and the entire formality was resurrected at the beginning of a potlatch as guests approached the beach. In this use, non-salmon human persons and nonhuman salmon persons were greeted as equal guests. As the guests arrived, the watchman repeated the ceremony discussed above, including repeating the words and songs used to welcome the nonhuman salmon guests, while on the ground gift blankets were placed at the foot of the pole for distribution (Boas 1925:175). Furthermore, individual guests were referred to as a "salmon," as was the wealth that enabled a man to host a potlatch, including the copper (Boas 1930:185), and a large number of guests were referred to as a "school of salmon" (Boas 1925:152, 172-174; 1940:234; Goldman 1975:157). Meanwhile, the host's house was called the "salmon weir" because of the guests the host hauls into it (Boas 1925:152, 172-174; Boas 1940:234). This last piece is further exemplified by the Gitksan potlatch guests who are also salmon. According to Jimmy Williams, who was speaking with William Beynon, the Gitksan word *quxt'in* refers to

a trap like arrangement made to represent the *t'in* (fence for salmon) which they built in the front of the house in the interior... When the guests arrived this would close making it different (sic) [difficult] for

the guests to come in. But the door would go when the guests sang their songs at the door. ‘a sort of ceremonial entrance.’ (in Barbeau 1920a)

It appears that the suffix *t'in* refers to a fish trap fence (Barbeau 1920a BF 80.2:83) but that *t'in* was also the common name of the Gitksan, *Lax Gibuu* clan, house of *Niik'yap*, home at *Kisgaga'as* (Sterritt, et al. 1998:18). According to Williams, the proper name for the house was *wi.támaog.on* but that when a fish trap was built as an entrance at the front of the house it became known as *t'in* (Barbeau 1920a). Each time a person entered the house through the fish trap they were greeted as salmon (Barbeau 1920b). Furthermore, children were isomorphic with salmon in a Gitksan ceremony called *Göbotkéta* in which two unclothed children laid in the middle of the room. The room became the river and the children the salmon. The term was translated to Beynon as “small children who lie/outwards in the water (salmon)” suggesting that the children were salmon (Barbeau 1920c).

Another example of the isomorphism of humans and salmon is noted in how honoured guests are treated at a potlatch (Boas 1916:438; Gunther 1926:613). During a Tsimshian potlatch, a high ranking “princess” who is greeted with great ceremony is carried on a plank from the beach to the potlatch house. Gunther (1926:613) argues that like in the potlatch, when the first salmon arrives it too is an honoured guest and is carried on a mat covered in cedar boughs. Here again, in this isomorphism, salmon are humans and humans are salmon. They are entities of equal being. This also appears in song. For example the Kwak'wala words in a feast song refer to the host's rivals as “losing their tales” (like old salmon) (Boas 1940:235; Boas and Hunt 1921a:1291).

The First Salmon Ceremony on the Northwest Coast generally consisted of three essential parts: 1. welcoming the salmon as it came to shore; 2. the ritual butchering,

cooking and eating of the salmon; and 3. returning the remains to the water (Amoss 1987:56-57). In most cases the sockeye salmon, the first salmon to return each season, was honoured. In some cases, the spring salmon, the largest of the salmon species on the coast, and often seen as the chief of the salmon, was honoured (Amoss 1987:57), but there are instances of chum and coho salmon's arrival being honoured as well (Boas and Hunt 1921b:609-612).

Generally on the coast when a salmon run began, no one fished until the first catch was officially welcomed. For this first catch, people gathered on the beach, sometimes including only those who were properly statured, to greet the fish and/or the fishers (Amoss 1987; Elmendorf 1960). Sometimes the poles of wooden-stake fish traps were adorned with feathers (Gunther 1926:607) and in some cases the top of stakes were carved with figures from important salmon histories (Langdon 2007:265). As fish arrived, they were greeted as knowing, sentient beings (Cullon 2013) and were honoured with prayer and praise. The concept of cleanliness was common in the ceremony (Gunther 1926:608) and depending on the group, the first salmon was wrapped in new mats, clean, fresh leaves, cooked in newly made vessels, eaten with new utensils and on new dishes and cooked with new boiling stones (Gunther 1926:608). This concept of cleanliness extended to the people involved and often there was a taboo against young, unmarried women, menstruating women, orphans, widows and widowers partaking in the ceremony (Drucker 1965:157; Gunther 1926:608), although, as mentioned previously, this may have had less to do with cleanliness and more to do with the power or influence these individuals could wield.

Kwakwaka'wakw fishers' wives were important in the First Salmon Ceremony. For the first coho salmon the fisher's wife met him on the beach. As she greeted the coho salmon she prayed to them and laid them on the beach in front of the house. In preparation for cooking, she treated the eyes with special reverence, placing them on tongs and cooking them by the fire. In the meantime, the fisher called the family and together they ate the roasted eyes, for if they did not do so before morning the coho would disappear from the ocean (Boas and Hunt 1921b:611; Gunther 1926:607).

Similarly, the wife of a chum fisher met her husband on the beach to take the salmon. First praying to the chum, she thanked them for their return and for their gift of food, finishing with asking for mercy and protection from death,

O Supernatural-Ones! O, Swimmers! I thank you that you are willing to come to us. Don't let your coming be bad, for you come to be food for us. Therefore, I beg you to protect me and the one who takes mercy on me, that we may not die without cause, Swimmers! (Boas and Hunt 1921b:609)

After the prayer, the fish were prepared in various ways, each depending on how they were caught, and the slime, blood and entrails were put into a basket for their return to the ocean (Boas and Hunt 1921b:609), thus ensuring their return to the salmon world.

The purpose of this ceremony was to welcome the first salmon of the season, to show respect and to ensure a strong return that and subsequent years. In contrast, if salmon were mistreated or disrespected, they would be offended and no longer return. Proper treatment meant that the first salmon would return to their world to tell the others that deserving humans would care for them and that it was good to travel to the human world.

As this chapter describes, salmon existed in the 19th-century Northwest Coast world in four different but isomorphic forms: human, fish, *sisiutl* and copper. According to my review, salmon appear to be the only being that had this many forms. This begs the question of its root form. Given that all animals wear their animal masks in the human world but live as humans in their own world, it is likely that the salmon's original form, or its essence is human. In this way there is an "underlying unity of organic life" (Goldman 1975:200). However, the salmon is also associated with the nonhuman world and it is sometimes unclear what form is basic to beings in that world. Nevertheless, salmon in the undersea world live in human form, in human-like ways, again suggesting that the root form of salmon and humans are the same. As beings who travel seemingly easily and regularly between worlds, salmon are powerful entities. In the 19th-century world, humans had at least four ways of accessing the power of the salmon in its various forms: sometimes taking these powers by force (e.g. by slaying a *sisiutl*), sometimes taking the powers by wealth and authority (e.g. copper acquisition), sometimes having influence over them (e.g. a relationship with twins) and finally, and most often, by respectful and thoughtful treatment of the salmon in its fish form. Any one of these means helped to provide wealth and well-being to human persons, but it is the last of these methods that was open to all human persons. This was the only way that everyone had an opportunity to negotiate his or her own relationship with the salmon.

Thus far, I have focused on the direct relationship between human persons and fish persons and its corresponding responsibilities and respectfulness. But parallel to these relationships and the corresponding actions are other agents who helped to negotiate and navigate the relationship and the multiple worlds occupied by the various persons.

Next, I briefly turn to these other agents and the place they held in the human-nonhuman relationships that informed the 19th-century Laich-Kwil-Tach world.

Chapter 6 Other Kin in the Human-Fish Relationship

O old woman [referring to Halibut Hook]! Look at my work on your behalf. Now this is clean with which I am going to catch my younger brother [halibut] here. Yes, yes! (Boas 1909:476). This is what I was wishing, old woman, – not to wait long on the water for you. Now hold this (my) younger bother. Don't let go of this (my) younger brother. (Boas 1909:478)

He was paddling along, going to Islands-in-Front, and he made a salmon-weir in the river there. As soon as he had finished his salmon-weir, he sat on a large stone and questioned his salmon-weir. He said, "What have you caught, Salmon-Weir?" Thus he said. Then the Salmon-Weir replied, and said, "Oh, what little thing may it be? Only a little bull-head." Thus it said. Then Born-to-be-the-Sun said at once, "Throw it into the water."

Then he spoke again, and questioned his Salmon-Weir. He said, "What have you caught, Salmon-Weir?" Thus he said. "Oh what little thing may it be? Only a little sole." Thus said Salmon-Weir. "Oh, throw it into the water!" said Born-to-be-the-Sun; and I every time (he spoke) the Salmon-Weir would throw the fish it had caught into the water.

Then Born-to-be-the-Sun spoke again, and questioned his Salmon-Weir. He said, "What have you caught, Salmon-Weir?" Thus he said. Then Salmon-Weir said, "Oh, what little thing may it be? Only a little flounder." Thus it said. Then Born-to-be-the-Sun said, "Throw it into the water." Thus he said. Then one of each kind of all the kinds of fish went into his salmon-weir, and every time Born-to-be-the-Sun said that they should be thrown into the water. Now all the kinds of fish were finished, and the last one went in. Then Born-to-be-the-Sun questioned his Salmon-Weir, and said, "What have you caught, Salmon-Weir?" Thus he said. Then his Salmon-Weir said, "Oh, what little thing may it be? It is only a little double-headed serpent." Thus it said. At once Born-to-be-the-Sun said, "That's it, that's it, that's it!" Thus he said, and took it out and put it on the large stone on the beach of Islands-in-Front." (Boas and Hunt 1908:105-106)

Fish Traps, Fish Hooks and Other Sentient Beings in the Human-fish Relationship

The two opening quotes to this chapter, the first a conversation with Halibut Hook and the second a conversation with Salmon Weir, exemplify the role, agency and kinship

of other sentient beings in the relationship between humans and fish. Agency existed among fish hooks, wooden fish trap stakes, rivers, and constructed landscapes and while the human person navigated his or her relationship with fish persons, they also remained mindful of the agency of these other beings the their consequential relationship. Once again, texts recorded during the 19th century provide insights into these relations.

The Trap Door(way)

Fish traps are an old and ubiquitous technology on the Northwest Coast, dating from at least the Middle Holocene, 5488-5741 cal BP, to the Late Holocene, including modern times (Cullon, et al. 2017; McMillan, et al. 2017). From Southeast Alaska to Oregon there are at least 1,227 registered fish trap sites that include thousands of individual features (Cullon, et al. 2017; see also Byram 2002; Elder, et al. 2014; McMillan, et al. 2017; Moss 2011:35, 126; 2013:327; Moss and Erlandson 1998; Smith 2011). Ethnographic references to fish traps are common (Barnett 1955:78-81; Boas 1909:461; Stewart 1977:99-128) and they are often important features in oral texts (Boas 1910:245-265; Boas and Hunt 1905a:390-392; Boas and Hunt 1908:103-113). Fish traps were unquestionably a significant technology for Northwest Coast peoples and were undoubtedly important for harvesting salmon and other species of fish (Bernick 2013; Byram 2002; Caldwell 2008; Connaway 2007; Cullon and Pratt Forthcoming 2018; Marshall 1993; McKechnie 2005; McKechnie 2007; Monks 1987; White 2011).

Forming an important part of recent archaeological analysis (Byram 1998; 2002; Cullon and Pratt Forthcoming 2018; Cullon, et al. 2017; Elder, et al. 2014; Eldridge and Acheson 1992; Greene, et al. 2015; McMillan, et al. 2017; Monks 1987; Moss 1990; 2013; Moss and Erlandson 1998; Smith 2011; White 2006; 2011) fish traps are generally

understood through Cartesian approaches to knowledge: geographical location, length, width, height and, when possible, age. We ask questions about how the trap functioned and what species it targeted (Losey 2010:18). In these ways, a fish trap or weir (terms frequently used interchangeably, likely because they often functioned together) is defined as “essentially any structure constructed in water and acting as a funnel or barrier to direct fish into a trap or enclosure or to entrap fish behind it, where they can be easily harvested” (Connaway 2007:5). By blocking the water’s flow and the natural movement of fish, the weir works to impound fish in intertidal areas, rivers or estuaries (Langouët and Daire 2009:132).

Fish trap and weir technology is widespread throughout the world and appears to be one of the oldest technologies for procuring large numbers of fish in a relatively short period of time. In all places, designs are remarkably similar with “variations depending on environment, hydrology, fish and their habits, materials available, needs of the local people, possibilities of trade, commercial endeavors, and cultural habits and preferences” (Connaway 2007:17; Langouët and Daire 2009:138, 141; Stewart 1977:99). Generally, methods of construction and the appearance of these features have changed little over time, making it impossible to depend on design-type as a “chronological classification criterion” (Langouët and Daire 2009:135). Nevertheless, environment-specific variations among fish traps reveal the detailed understanding their builders and users had of marine life and their surrounding environment, and reflect the skill with which marine resources were managed and exploited.

Although long believed to have targeted salmon, faunal analysis and cross-cultural research suggest that traps and weirs were utilized to catch many species of fish and

marine life at different times of year (Byram 2002; Caldwell 2008; Connaway 2007; Marshall 1993:58; McKechnie 2005; 2007; McKechnie 2014; Monks 1987; Pomeroy 1980:104; Roberts 2007; Smylie 2004 [2011]; White 2006; 2011). For example, recent evidence suggests that fish traps may have targeted primarily herring in Comox Harbour, just south of the present study area (see Caldwell 2008). Traps and weirs may also have been used to attract and catch predatory sea mammals (including seal, sea lion and dolphin), ducks and birds (Byram 1998:199-219; Monks 1987:119; Pomeroy 1976:166).

On the Northwest Coast, fish traps and weirs appear in all sizes from very small to very large (see for example Byram 2002; Moss 1990; Moss 2013; Stewart 1977; Tveskov and Erlandson 2003). Remnants of these features often include long lines of wooden stakes and/or stones—“lead lines”—sometimes culminating in a heart-, chevron- or box-shaped enclosure. At other times, all that remains is a short line of stakes or stones, and occasionally, only one lone stake remains. In some cases, often in large estuaries, stakes are so numerous that it is impossible to discern any sort of shape or pattern and these thousands of wooden stakes and/or stones likely comprise dozens of huge, individual traps and weirs. These larger sites may represent resource sites that were owned by the larger group, beyond the extended family, and people from other communities may have travelled some distance to access the resource. Using the Knight Inlet eulachon fishery as an example, Mitchell and Donald (2001:19) suggest that multi-community resource exploitation was possible because of shared understandings of rights and the presence of informal means of settling disputes. It is likely that a similar principle governed the shared use of large estuaries and it is possible that their use was controlled through some

sort of social and political mechanism, possibly informed by the need for an ongoing and respectful relationship with fish that valued sharing as discussed previously.

Radiocarbon dating on fish trap features from Laich-Kwil-Tach lands suggests that a single fish trap could be used over multiple generations. For example, radiocarbon dates from a complex of wooden stakes at Saratoga Beach suggest that the trap was maintained for up to 600 years (Cullon and Pratt 2009). Additionally, radiocarbon dates from a single feature obtained at Blenkinsop Bay in Johnstone Strait (Cullon and Simonsen 2009) provided similar results, suggesting that long-term, multi-generational use of a trap or weir was not an uncommon occurrence. Written records from the United Kingdom and France, where particular traps and weirs were used and maintained for several hundred years, supplying whole regions with fish, corroborate these findings of extended periods of use (Langouët and Daire 2009:136; Smylie 2004 [2011]:90-92).

With fish trap technology, fishers had the capacity to over-exploit the returning fish, so it is likely that this form of fishing required deliberate stewardship, management and engagement to sustain it. Remarkably, despite the extensive documentation of this technology and its likely contribution to human well-being, fish traps have been overshadowed by technologies and techniques of preservation and storage in our consideration of social complexity on the Northwest Coast (Ames 1998; 2005; Carlson 1998; Clark 2010; Matson and Coupland 1995; Moss and Erlandson 1998). Furthermore, fish traps and the abundance they provide have not been fully considered within issues of ownership and control of key locales that ensured access to seasonal abundance, nor has the concept that fish traps and the relationship with fish contributed to resource abundance been fully explored. Both ownership and fish abundance also hold key places

in the academic understanding of the Northwest Coast Culture Complex so including the significance of fish traps within the human-fish relationship in a relational world of reciprocal respect is vital to improved understanding. Instead, mass harvesting of fish is generally considered a later development involving changes in the organization of production and resource management, and an increase in social differentiation and sedentism (Cannon and Yang 2006:124).

What also appears to be missing in most discussions about this fishing technology is a consideration of the human-fish relationship. Only recently have some anthropologists (e.g. Langdon 2006a; 2007; Losey 2010) begun to consider the role fish played in fish trap success and how the relationship between humans and fish contributed to the knowledge and understanding that informed fishing in general and fish trap use specifically. Here I explore the concept of a sentient fish trap, as well as other fishing technologies, and a world in which the fish trap is an active partner in the relationship between fish and humans, just as the quote at the beginning of this chapter suggests.

According to the Oxford Dictionary, the word “*trap*” means an “enclosure or device, often baited, for catching animals, usu. by affording a way in but not a way out” (Oxford Dictionary 1995:1484). The word comes from Old English *treppe*, or *træppe*, and is related to Middle Dutch *trappe* and to medieval Latin *trappa* (Oxford Dictionary 1995:1484). Accordingly, it appears as though the word “trap” has a long history in the English language and that for a very long time its meaning was connected to the Judeo-Christian concept of subordination of the animal. This concept was reaffirmed in Enlightenment thinking in which humans were understood to occupy the realm between the divine and bestial (Kirksey and Helmreich 2010:548), where humans clearly inhabit

the realm of culture, and therefore, reason, and animals inhabit the realm of nature or wilderness (Raber 2010:E32), and therefore lack reason. In the process, reason became dominant over nature and humans became separate and dominant over animals. Thus, the concept of “trap” in this case, as a technology or tool to capture large numbers of fish, possible because of human dominance over nature, is the paradigm from which fish traps have long been studied and understood. However, if we attempt to understand the world in which specific fish traps were built and used, fish traps and their role on the Northwest Coast may be better understood.

The story of the fish trap aiding Born-to-be-the-Sun to capture the *sisiutl* at the beginning of this section, collected by George Hunt in the early part of the 20th century, exemplifies the contrast between the Western and Indigenous knowledge. In the story, the fish trap, a sentient being, worked in cooperation with Born-to-be-the-Sun to assist in acquiring the *sisiutl*, a powerful being that provides armour for its possessor and as a weapon, turns those who see it to stone (Goldman 1975:76). In this case, the trap was a participating agent who chose to work in cooperation with Born-to-be-the-Sun to support a particular initiative.

In the story the connection between Born-to-be-the-Sun and the fish trap is a vital component. Another example of the connection, this time between humans and fish traps, is noted by Carlson and McHalsie (2010:297). According to Coast Salish oral history, when coastal people expanded into the Nooksack River region some Nooksack people were kept as slaves specifically to operate the fish trap. But it was not the operation of the trap itself that was important, for coastal people were not new to this technology. It was instead the “special Nooksack spirit power” that was associated only with the Nooksack

trap builders and Nooksack territory that was key. Because of this relationship, the trap, and likely the fish who swam into it, would only cooperate with those who held that favour or position (Carlson and McHalsie 2010:297). Once again, trap and fish agency was important, as was the need for humans to work with those agents to maintain a strong and healthy relationship.

When considering my argument that sentient fish are in a relationship with humans and that the relationship is based on mutual respect and reciprocity, it no longer makes sense to attempt to understand fish traps as a machine-like object built to catch fish. Instead, options for cooperation, agency and mutual respect should be explored.

These concepts of respect are found sprinkled throughout the archaeological literature. For example, Elroy White, in his study of Heiltsuk fish traps was told by Heiltsuk Elders that their stone-walled traps had “gates” (White 2011:86). When fishing, the gates were closed with rocks or stakes, and as the tide rose fish moved to the high side of the wall. Heiltsuk fishers could then select fish from the enclosed area and as the tide fell the remaining fish were released when the fishers opened the gates. These gates, as well as the practice of dismantling a wall, ensured that the traps did not accidentally catch fish when people were not there to fish (Byram 2002:99; Losey 2010:29). Another example is found in reef-net fishing, a sustainable Coast Salish harvesting method (although also possibly practised elsewhere on the Northwest Coast). Because salmon were kin to one another, it was important to ensure escapement large enough to sustain the family line (Claxton 2003:26). This was done through a small opening at the end of the reef net, known as the vulva, which allowed some fish to exit (Lutz 2008:65). This reference to female genitalia is of interest as it too may be related to transformation and

how one passes from one world to another. Providing such options and opportunities for salmon maintained the respectful relationship (Claxton 2003; 2008:52-55; Turner and Berkes 2006:495-513).

Traps were also designed in ways that ensured fish were not killed unless the trap was in use and they were designed in ways that allowed safe passage for those fish who chose to ascend the river, only capturing those who chose to enter the trap (Langdon 2006a). Such designs insured that fish could choose to pass over the traps to access the migration stream at high tide, or to enter the trap with the descending tide.

Thus, although others have begun to consider the sentience and agency of the fish in the human-fish relationship, I propose that there is yet another nonhuman person involved; that of the fishing implement, be it a trap, fishhook, net, etc. In line with this thinking, if I wish to begin to comprehend the spirit in which traps were built I must reconsider my previous conceptualization of the fishing structure as a trap, or even as a fishing structure. Instead of a “trap,” perhaps a better way is to consider them within a triadic relationship of human-fish-trap, in which each participant has agency in a relationship that is imbued with reciprocal obligations. In this triad, the fishing structure acts more as an entry point or doorway than a trap. Through this place fish are welcomed into the human world. Through it fish leave the undersea world and enter the human world. The concept of the doorway is exemplified literally when Gitksan guests enter the potlatch via a fish trap built at the entrance of the potlatch house, described previously. Upon passing into the house the guests found themselves amongst the wooden stakes of a fish trap and were ushered through the stakes and into the house with song. In this way

they were recognized as honoured guests, passing through the doorway into the host's house.

In much the same way, fish who arrive at the trap are welcomed and greeted with prayer and song as they exit their world and enter the human world. The fish are willing to enter through the trap because they trust that their human counterparts will care for them and ensure their ongoing well-being.

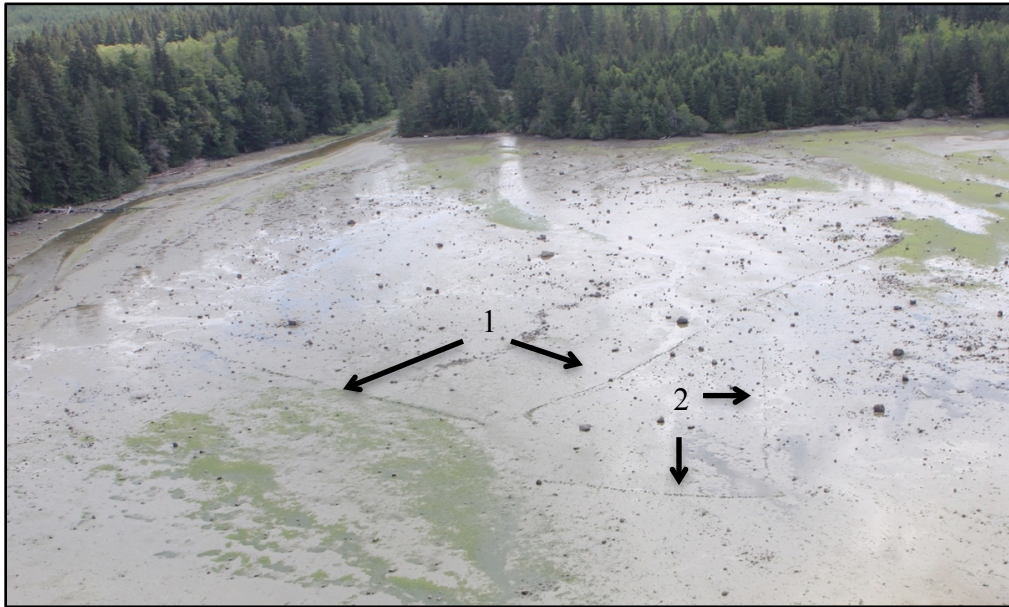


Figure 4: Large V-shaped stone fish trap at Blenkinsop Bay. Photo by D. Cullon, 2010.

As an example, the large fishing feature identified at “1” in Figure 4 is recorded as a large V-shaped fish trap in Blenkinsop Bay in Laich-Kwil-Tach territory. A second, smaller V-shape, identified as “2” in Figure 4 is also visible. Generally the interpretation is that these structures funnelled fish, on the outgoing tide, toward the apex of the V-shape where the fish were caught in some kind of a trap, or were selectively caught and killed. However, if viewed as a doorway in a world in which both the fish and the trap have agency, then it is no longer a trap in which humans are dominant. Instead it becomes a relationship among human and nonhuman entities, one in which humans build a

sentient structure that then supports human needs but that also offers the nonhuman fish persons the choice of entering the human world or remaining in their own. In the example shown in Figure 4 the direction of the opening is also important. The entrance faces upland, meaning that fish ascend the river with the incoming tide, allowing them to choose to remain in the river or to return to the ocean with the outgoing tide. However, on the outgoing tide they are greeted with an expansive doorway, and if they choose to enter, the doorway leads them to the human world and to the humans who wait for them at the apex of the doorway.

This concept of the doorway is my own and I could not find any indication linguistically that the word for trap and the word for doorway are connected. However, it may fit well within the 19th-century Laich-Kwil-Tach world, for it is through such doorways that one passes between worlds and most certainly salmon too have a doorway. In a *Q!ā'nēqēlak*^u narrative, *Q!ā'nēqēlak*^u waits for four days at the “door of the Salmon” “where the various kinds of salmon come through” (Boas and Hunt 1905b:171). Other doors between worlds existed as well. For example, in one story as Copper-Making-Woman, along with her son and husband passed between worlds, she said to them, “Come, let us start. Only take care! You must all help and paddle, that we go fast when we pass through the door of the underworld” (Boas and Hunt 1905b:79). In this case, the doorway appears to be a cave through which the water runs, and the sides of which are littered with the bones of all those who have drowned (Boas and Hunt 1905b:79). As they pass through the cave, they are caught by the tide and pass through to the other side where Copper-Making-Woman and her family meet her father, *Kumugwe* [*Q!ō'mogwa*^{εya}], the Chief of the Undersea World (Boas and Hunt 1905b:81). I found

numerous other examples of doorways including travel to and from the Upper World (Boas and Hunt 1905b:165), the door of the Southeast-Wind (Boas 1910:227) the door to *Baxbaxwalanuxsiwe*, the “Cannibal at the North End of the World” (Boas 1910:33), and the “Doorway into the Forest Spirit World” (Macnair, et al. 1998:24). In a similar way, for the fish trap as a doorway, those fish who choose to enter are moved through the doorway with the tide toward the human world.

As Chief of the Undersea and of all those beings who live in the ocean, *Kumugwe* is a prominent figure (Hawthorn 1988:26). Considered the Master and Protector of Seals, his name means “Wealthy One” and he ruled from a village under the sea and lived in a great copper house whose main posts were living sea lions (Boas and Hunt 1905b:83; Hawthorn 1988:28, 185). He is also known as “Copper Maker” and his wife, and in some cases his daughter, is “Born to be Copper Maker Woman” (Boas and Hunt 1905b:60-93; Hawthorn 1988:185). The synonymy between wife and daughter likely arises from the story in which a mortal man married Born to be Copper Maker Woman and travelling through the door between worlds, they arrive in *Kumugwe’s* world. The son-in-law, known as “Wealthy” in the story, eventually inherits the names and positions of his father-in-law, *Kumugwe* (Boas and Hunt 1905b:84). Consequently, *Kumugwe’s* daughter married a man who became the next *Kumugwe*, making the daughter the wife of *Kumugwe*.

Kumugwe’s daughter first appears to Wealthy in the form of a white, swan-like bird. He immediately realizes that she is “not an ordinary bird” (Boas and Hunt 1905b:61) and in order to win her affection, he begins to cleanse. After vigorous cleansing, the white bird allows him to catch her and he places her in the house.

After some correction from his attendants, Wealthy provides a new mat for the bird and the next morning, sitting on the mat in place of the bird, is a beautiful woman (Boas and Hunt 1905b:65). In this way they come to travel through the door to *Kumugwe*'s world.

Kumugwe's house was full of treasures and by all accounts he was a very wealthy individual. Upon their meeting, *Kumugwe*'s son-in-law presented him with several gifts, one of which was wooden fish trap stakes. Upon this presentation *Kumugwe* said "O son-in-law! please make a salmon-trap out of the poles to-morrow" (Boas and Hunt 1905b:82). Seeing the river full of fish, the son-in-law agreed and with the help of his attendants they drove the poles into the river bottom and tied them with the gifts of roots and cedar twigs (Boas and Hunt 1905b:82). This made *Kumugwe* very happy and they called one trap *xō'elos* and another *mā'lis*. These quickly filled with salmon. Because he was so pleased with his son-in-law, *Kumugwe* had a copper canoe built and filled it with coppers for his son-in-law to give away. He also bestowed upon him a right to the Salmon Dance (Boas and Hunt 1905b:84).

Following their visit, the mortal *Kumugwe*, his wife and son passed back through the "door of the underworld" and returned to the human world (Boas and Hunt 1905b:84). Upon their return, the son-in-law gave the coppers to chiefs of the different groups and he built a house in likeness to *Kumugwe*'s under the sea. A short time later, several of the son-in-law's family disappeared for a very long time. Regardless of their efforts, no one could find them. Then early one morning Copper Making Woman woke her husband to tell her those who were gone were returning. She asked the men and women to sing and drum and as they did so, the Salmon Dancer arrived, as did all those others who were gifted to the son-in-law from *Kumugwe* (Boas and Hunt 1905b:85-86).

In this way, in large part due to his skill at building a salmon trap, and by travelling through a doorway between worlds, Wealthy obtained the *tlogwe* from the Undersea Kingdom.

Another story that clearly exemplifies the importance of a sentient trap was recorded by George Hunt and is attributed to the Tlatlasikwala¹¹ (Boas 1910:245-265). The same story, with only a few modifications was also recorded in Boas' *Indianische Sagen von der Nord-Pacifischen Küste Amerikas* (Boas 2002). Like so many other Kwakwaka'wakw stories, this story has a heroine, *Hā'daga*, who interacts with the sentient fish traps and the Undersea Kingdom in an effort to overcome adversity and to achieve retribution against those who wronged her. One of the key features of the story is that *Hā'daga* is abandoned by her father and community for what is arguably an innocent act, and through prayer to a fish trap her entire life changes for the better.

Hā'daga is a term of endearment meaning “darling.” It can also be translated as “noble one” (Boas 2002:390). In the story *Hā'daga* is Raven's daughter (Boas 1910:245-265) and she marries the son of *Kumugwe*. Elsewhere, she is Mink's mother (Boas and Hunt 1908:80-164) and still in another place, she is the mother of the first Dzawada'enuxw¹² person (Boas and Hunt 1905b:25). In each case, her story is different. The story of her marriage to *Kumugwe*'s son is summarized here as an example of how nonhuman persons, prayer and fish traps work together to provide not only the necessities of life, but all that is also required to live a wealthy life.

The ancestors of the *hāmima K•!ēk•!ā'dāsa* (Those-who-throw-way) of the Tlatlasikwala, or “Sea-Dwellers” had a Chief named, *GE^εwa^εxīlē*, Raven-Sound-in-

¹¹ A Kwakwaka'wakw group whose territory centres around the extreme north end of Vancouver Island.

¹² A Kwakwaka'wakw group whose territory centres around Kingcome Inlet.

House. *GE^εwa^εxīlē* was head of a large, wealthy village and his people were said to be happy. The story begins with *Hā'daga* and her best friend going to the beach to dig clams. While there, *Hā'daga's* friend found four sea urchins and suggested that *Hā'daga* eat them. *Hā'daga* resisted but eventually gave in on the promise that her friend would keep her secret. However, the trust was immediately broken when her friend began to shout that *Hā'daga* had eaten the “sea-eggs.” When *Hā'daga's* father learned of her indiscretion, he announced that they would all leave, and dismantling the village they left *Hā'daga* in apparent shame and poverty with only her two dogs, some old mats and a “burning slow-match (made of) fern-root” that *Hā'daga's* grandmother had hidden for her (Boas 1910:249).

Once alone, *Hā'daga*, concerned for her fate, asked the two dogs for help, lamenting that they are only dogs and not human. She said, “Oh, you dog, I wish you were a man, that I might send you for what I want to get, I mean cedar-twigs to make a fish trap?” (Boas 1910:251). At this, the dog spoke, “What do you think I am? Am I not a man? Will I not go and get them?” And at this, the dog left the house to gather the needed cedar.

Hā'daga then spoke to the other dog, again lamenting that he was not human, “O dog! I wish you were a man, that I might send you to go and get spruce-root to tie my fish-trap that I am going to make” (Boas 1910:251). Once again, the dog responded that he too was a man and left to gather the spruce root.

Upon their return to the makeshift house *Hā'daga* had made from the old mats, a symbol of her poverty, *Hā'daga* immediately began work on her fish traps, in this case, two small kelp fish basket traps. The next day, *Hā'daga* rose early and carried her traps to

the rocks. She sent the two dog-men to gather mussels to place inside the traps. Once prepared, she placed the sentient fish traps in the water and spoke to the first, “I want to obtain Wealthiest in this trap” and to the second she said “Oh fish-trap! I want you to catch the prince of Wealthiest” (Boas 1910:253). As noted previously, Wealthiest is *Kumugwe’s* son.

After a short time, *Hā’daga* retrieved the traps and found only kelp fish. She asked why they came and said again that she wants only to catch Wealthiest. She then released all of the kelp fish. Again, she placed the traps, stating to them again, “Now you will catch Wealthiest.... That is what I wish for. It is that you catch Wealthiest” (Boas 1910:255). On her fourth attempt, as she pulled the basket up, she saw a very handsome man sitting in the fish trap. There was also a small box and a little house. *Hā’daga* spoke to the small man and asked, “Are you the son of Wealthiest...?” He responded, “O you! I am the prince of Chief Wealthiest. I will have you for my wife” (Boas 1910:255). Then the man removed himself, his box and his house from the fish trap and established a thriving village at the place they began to call “Having-Fish-Traps.” His house was large with a “snapping door” and his box of treasures was full of “all kinds of things to eat, and grease-dishes” (Boas 1910:257).

Prince of Wealthiest then had *Hā’daga* for his wife and *Hā’daga* asked her two dogs to howl a message saying, “Howl! for the tribe of this my mother.” When she awoke the next morning she heard many voices and found four houses to the north of her new house and four houses to the south. This placed her in the centre of the new village, making hers the highest-ranking household. These new arrivals were very happy and treated Prince of Wealthiest as their chief.

Sometime later, after *Hā'daga* sent word to her grandmother that she was a wealthy woman, *Hā'daga's* father heard of her success and decided to pay her a visit, for he and his fellow villagers were very hungry (Boas 1910:263). *Hā'daga* welcomed him with food, including a small grease dish that she prayed would remain full, regardless of how much her father ate. In his greed, he did not share the grease but found he could never empty the tiny dish. *Hā'daga* was shamed by her father's rudeness and for it he was driven from her home and village.

In *Indianische Sagen von der Nord-Pacifischen*, *Hā'daga's* father is Raven, or *Ō'meatl* and Raven is known to be a very greedy individual (Boas 2002:390-392). In this version, he again ostracizes his daughter for eating sea urchins but it is Crow, Raven's sister who convinces *Hā'daga* to eat the seemingly forbidden food. She is left with two dogs who gather the cedar withes she needs to make four round fish trap baskets, which she placed at low tide. After the next tide, her baskets were full of fish, but in one she also found *Aikyai'ālisānō*, son of *Kumugwe*. Again, when *Ō'meatl* learned of his daughter's newfound wealth, he traveled to her and for his greed and rudeness, he is banished from his daughter's home.

Many themes of interest run through this story. *Hā'daga's* extreme poverty is underlined in the story by the old mats being her only possession. Old mats metaphorically emphasize that *Hā'daga* is truly alone, and that she is "chiefless," as old mats are discarded and belong to no one (Duff n.d.-d). This contrasts sharply with the house and position in which *Hā'daga* finds herself a short time later. In the story we see the close connection between the human world and the nonhuman world (e.g. *Hā'daga* and *Kumugwe*), between human persons and nonhuman persons (e.g. *Hā'daga* and the

dogs), and importantly between the human person, *Hā'daga*, and the nonhuman person, fish traps, in which the fish traps' agency in providing a doorway between the Under Sea World and the human world that provides *Hā'daga* with a better life is central. Finally, the grease dish, is also important. According to Goldman (1975:76) one of the words for grease dish is *tlogwelitl*, which is derived from *tlogwe*, the treasure that one gets when travelling to the other worlds (Boas 1897:169; 1949:616; Goldman 1975:vii, 25). For this reason, *Hā'daga* was able to call upon it as a sentient being for assistance when her father arrived.

In this relationship traps, like fish persons and human persons, are sentient beings who participate in the relationship both with humans and in the relationship between humans and the fish persons (or other beings sought). Furthermore traps were given names, which were often associated with family prerogatives (Swanton 1905:117), further supporting the concept of personhood and sentience. For example,

Then *Wīwag•ēsaē^ε* went up the river to his place, *Ka•!ālk•!āmEndzēs*. There was no salmon. Then he went up the river, walking along the rocks. Then he discovered people at the salmon-weir. He shouted to them, "What are you doing at my river?" "Is that your river?" said the men. "Is it yours?" said *Wīwag•ēsaē^ε*. "It is ours," said the men. "But what is the name of your river?" – "You are foolish that you want me to say this, that I should give the names of my salmon-weirs. Isn't this *G•îp!ä*? Isn't that *Dâ'yuxwīwē^ε*? Is not that on the other side *Tse'sk·as*? These are my salmon-weirs. (Boas 1910:117)

Communication with fish traps can also occur in dreams (Boas 1969b:18). For example, *Q!ēq!awat* (Wren) built a sockeye salmon trap and in his dream the trap warned him to check the trap for fish early each day to prevent grizzly bear from destroying the trap. When he arrived at the trap, it was full of fish and to the trap he said, "thank you, supernatural one. Now you have taken pity on me" (Boas 1969b:18). Again, the potency

of the trap is acknowledged and its intervention to ensure well-being is recognised and honoured.

Another approach in terms of the role of the fish trap in the human-fish-trap relationship is noted in Boas (1897:475) when he says that the fish trap or weir is a “toy of the salmon.” Presumably this works as a way to once again attract the salmon to the human world where caring humans took time to build and maintain a “toy” for the salmon to enjoy during their visit.

Fish traps are also a manifestation of wealth and prosperity. For example, *Wekai*, the first human ancestor of the Laich-Kwil-Tach people, travels obtaining wealth wherever he goes (Boas 2002:297-299). One stop was in Nuxalk territory on the Central Coast where, after he “broke a giant tree in two and built a salmon weir” the Nuxalk chief gave *Wekai* his daughter to marry, along with a large dowry. Although *Wekai* was subsequently unhappy with the dowry and he ended the marriage, he kept the gifts, further enhancing his wealth.

The human-fish-trap connection is further exemplified in the Salmon Dance and the Salmon Weir dance. The Kwakwaka'wakw *hamatsa* is considered a very important and sacred prerogative involving an initiate who is removed from the community to become one with the nonhuman world, all the while becoming less human and even cannibalistic. This part of the winter ceremonial, with its lore of cannibalism, the taming of a man gone wild, its intriguing dances, vibrant and intricately carved masks, its art, drama and its interaction with the nonhuman world, although likely much misunderstood, has long caught the imagination of Western observers (for example see Goldman 1975; Locher 1932; McDowell 1997; Walens 1980; 1981). But according to two short paragraphs,

tucked away in a Boas publication (1897:475) there is a connection with salmon in which the initiate, much like that of the *hamatsa*, holds a highly respected and regarded position, but perhaps because it does not allude to cannibalism, it did not capture the imagination of Western observers in the same way. Boas calls it the “Salmon Weir Dance” (1897:475):

The salmon weir dancer is initiated by the salmon.... The novice remains in the woods for about one month. When he returns, he is naked. His body is smeared with the juice of a plant, which makes it very slippery. His cedar bark ornaments are similar to those of the *hā'mats'a*, but much smaller. The dancer first rests on one leg, his body bent almost horizontally at one side, the other leg extended to the other side. Then he changes to the other leg, bending his body to the other side and extending his other leg. (Boas 1897:475)

His dance is accompanied by a song that tells of the dancer's time at the weir and how he communicates with the other beings:

I went to work at my salmon weir. When I took out the salmon, their eyes were picked out by the crows.

(Speaking to the chief of the tide:) Stand still, chief! You who makes the tide rise, who causes the whirlpools where the tides meet, whose skirt of seaweeds makes the tides rise.

(Chief of the tide says:) Cry *hāp!* supernatural one! Cry *hāp!* (Boas 1897:475)

The description of this dance is of interest here particularly because it begins by saying that the “salmon weir dancer is initiated by the salmon.” Once again, this connects the human and salmon worlds and reveals another aspect of the human-fish relationship. Very clearly the human dancer is not initiated by other human dancers. Although not stated in Boas, presumably, while the initiate is away, he is in the salmon world and this dance is one of the gifts he brings back to the human world. It is likely that other former initiates, who themselves are likely the human form of salmon in these instances, assist

the new initiate and help teach him the dance and responsibilities that it affords. Its tie to the salmon trap is also important, once again revealing the connection among the three sentient beings—human, fish and trap.

Perhaps related to the Salmon Weir Dance is the Nu-u-chah-nulth (likely Tla-o-qui-aht) fish trap mask and rattle collected in 1840 and 1897 respectively from the west coast of Vancouver Island. According to a Kwakwaka'wakw artist, the mask and rattle were danced by women (Thom 2015:38). The mask displays a U-shaped fish trap structure on the top and wooden-stake-like teeth in the mouth (Figure 5). The large cage-like fish trap rattle with suspended fish mingled amongst a cube-shaped box (Figure 6) trap was held behind the dancer's back and under a blanket (Thom 2015:38-40). Two pieces in the Charles and Valerie Diker collection are similarly designed, in this case a frontlet that depicts what might be a fish trap, collected in 1860, and a rattle much like Figure 6 collected in 1910 (Berlo, et al. 1998: 103, 107-108). While this regalia might have been part of the First Salmon Ceremony, the pieces are also important because they tangibly exemplify the link between the human and nonhuman worlds. The mask in particular reveals the connection between the human person and the sentient fish trap, and in this case, the nonhuman-fish-trap person.

The Salmon Dance, the fish trap mask, the fish trap rattle, the Undersea Kingdom dance, the Animal Kingdom dance, the Watchman's Pole, etc. continue to reveal the connection between the human and nonhuman worlds and the thin veil between them. Through them knowledge is performatively expressed, and is shared with and taught to others. Through them the Kwakwaka'wakw world is continually brought into being. Through them the connection between particular individuals and other nonhuman persons

is exposed and in conjunction with other respectful and reverent actions, the relationship within and between worlds is maintained.



Figure 5: Nuu-chah-nulth Fish Trap Mask, Audain Art Museum, TAAM.2015.103, courtesy of the Audain Art Museum.

Figure 6: Nuu-chah-nulth Fish Trap Rattle, American Museum of Natural History, 16/1966, courtesy of the Division of Anthropology, American Museum of Natural History.

Family Ties—The Sentience of Fishing Gear

In ways similar to the fish trap, many other forms of fishing gear were also sentient, having agency in the relationship between humans and fish. In many cases, the knowledge and expertise associated with making, building and using the technology was attained from nonhuman persons in the nonhuman world (de Laguna 1972; Jonaitis 1981), and in some cases, only particular people who had the right from the nonhuman world were eligible to use it (Boas 1925:150-151). These *tlogwe* attained by previous generations informed the relationship and the prescribed actions. For example, before an

eulachon fisher placed his dip net in the water, he prayed to the net, recognizing its history and sentience, saying,

Go on, friend, on account of the reason why you came, placed in the hands of my late ancestors by our Chief Above, our Father, and go and gather in yourself the fish, that you may be full when you come back, friend. Now I go into the water where you may stay, friend.
(Boas 1930:204)

In a similar fashion, the halibut hook is also an important agent in the relationship between the fisher and the fish (Jonaitis 1981). For example, as the Kwakwaka'wakw halibut fisher makes his hook, he speaks to it, referring to it as “younger brother,” creating or recognizing a kinship with it. He explains each step of its construction, suggesting to the hook what each step will do for its success,

Now you will purify yourselves, good younger brothers. Do not let go of your hold of Smelling-Woman... when they take hold of you, good younger brothers. I should blacken you, good younger brothers, with these spruce branches that you may smell good, that you may soon be smelled by Smelling-Woman, when I first put you in the water, good younger brothers.... Now, good younger brothers, I am putting on you this sweet smell, good younger brothers, that you may at once be smelled by Smelling-Woman... when you first fall on the roof of their house, and then take hold of Smelling-Woman when they come near you, good younger brothers and do not let go of your hold when you take hold of them. (Boas and Hunt 1921b:1325).

This last line, referring to the roof of the halibut's house, is also important, not in terms of the sentience of the fishing implement but in terms of the halibut's world. Smelling-woman is Halibut, a woman living in a house under the sea very similar to the world of the salmon. Like the salmon, she too must be treated respectfully by the fisher (Jonaitis 1981:8; Swanton 1909).

To the spruce roots, the “Old friend” that the fisher uses when making the halibut hook, he says,

Old friend, come, for you, yourself, have called me to come and get you, friend, keep together with your uncommon supernatural power, I mean that you will hold together our friends, the cross pieces [of the halibut hook]. Do not break apart when my younger brothers are taken hold of by Smelling-Woman.” (Boas and Hunt 1921b:1326-1327)

After catching a halibut, the fisher washes the hook. In this process he once again recognizes its personhood and kinship through speaking of and cleaning its “dress,” which, according to another prayer to a newly made halibut hook, is the spike and its lashing (Boas and Hunt 1921b:1324). Furthermore, the “Old-Woman” is the halibut, again an expression that acknowledges her personhood, and her agency is noted as she appears to have some choice in coming to the fisher and the human world.

Oh, you good younger brother, now your dress has been washed. Now you will go down again to call Old-Woman, Smelling-Woman, Flabby-Skin-in-Mouth and Born-to-be-Giver-of-House, that they also come here where Old-Woman has already come. Now, go, good young brother. (Boas and Hunt 1921b:1322)

Respectful treatment is also important with the halibut and if not handled properly, halibut will not allow itself to be caught again. James Sewid tells a story in his autobiography with Spradley (1972:62-63) in which as a young boy, Sewid and his friend, Robby Bell, caught a 200 pound halibut. With its size the boys struggled to bring the halibut to their small boat. Once they did Robby Bell clubbed the halibut but hit it in the wrong spot and it did not die but swam off into the deep water after almost swamping the little boat. They were not far from shore so rowed to a small island and pulled the halibut into shore where they chopped its head with an axe. Struggling with the big fish, they eventually made it back to the village and an Elder asked how they caught such a big fish. He then explained to them that it was not the right way to kill it and that as a result

they would never get another halibut. Sewid writes that after that they tried many more times but that they did not get another halibut.

Unlike halibut hooks, Jonaitis (1981:9) suggests that salmon hooks were secular and did not afford special significance. This seems odd given the extensive relationship between humans and salmon. For this research, only one reference of the fisher speaking to a salmon hook was located, but this example indicates that like the halibut hook, eulachon net and fish trap, it is possible that salmon hooks too had agency in the relationship between salmon and the fisher. This is logical given the agency of the trap within the relationship. In this one example, after the salmon hook used for trolling was baited, the fisher said to it, “Now go at it, go ahead, it has been put on well” meaning that the hook is ready and the bait is secure so it should be ready for fishing (Boas 1909:485).

Finally, Tlingit research suggests that human-constructed landscapes through streamscaping to enhance fish habitat were also sentient, having a relationship with both humans and fish and having a role in the human-fish relationship. These constructed landscapes, *ish*, were deep pools in salmon migration streams, built to provide deep, clear, cool water in which salmon can rest during their movement up otherwise swift-moving streams (Langdon 2006b:143). Like other technologies that supported fishing, the *ish* is a sentient being with agency and as such, is another nonhuman person in the human-fish relationship. As a sentient agent it afforded special reverence and respect, as explained by a Tlingit Elder,

There were those who were knowledgeable about all kinds of subjects. This thing named *ish* – it was almost as if it were human and it was spoken to in that way, this *ish*. This is how they valued this resource. It was as if their life depended on it so they treated it with respect. Because they got their food from this place is why they would speak to it. There was pride, there was honor (given to the *ish*) so no one

was to say anything foolish about it or to it. If it was said that we could laugh at it, it was not so. We were told not to talk to it in a foolish way but to respect it. This is what the white man calls taboo. When you do this there is a discipline, a law that will correct you. It will be like it falls on you; this is the way it is. All that is seen around us is said to be alive around us is what it is called. The Tlingit people have known this to be true from time immemorial. (Langdon 2006b:145)

While I did not identify similar Laich-Kwil-Tach examples of sentient, human-constructed streamscapes, it is likely that for them, like other Northwest Coast peoples, landscape construction and its ongoing use and engagement was informed by the enlivened world replete with its myriad of relationships.

The intent of this and the previous chapter was to provide examples of the human-fish relationship as represented in 19th-century ethnographic texts. While much of the relationship is exemplified in oral texts recorded by Boas and Hunt, Boas recognised their historical aspects (Boas 1916:565) and here I suggest that they are important for informing the human-fish relationship that in turn informed 19th-century Laich-Kwil-Tach action and life.

The intervening years between these early ethnographic texts and today saw great changes in social, political, economic and even spiritual aspects of life in Laich-Kwil-Tach communities. These changes impacted the transfer of knowledge between generations and saw the introduction of a different way of being and knowing that both challenged and was integrated with Laich-Kwil-Tach ontology. I turn my attention to this in the next chapter and consider how the Laich-Kwil-Tach relational world was affected and how forms of relationality documented for the 19th-century continue to operate in 21st-century contexts.

Chapter 7 The Contemporary Human-Fish Relationship

“Mom always said that the Indians came from fish” [TR-002]

Attempting to understand the ongoing relationship that Laich-Kwil-Tach people have with fish in the 21st century is challenging but in many ways, through attending to practice and performativity, the relationship, albeit in a contemporary context, is still evident. Throughout the next four chapters, I endeavour to show how attending to practice contributes to our understanding of the ongoing relationship Laich-Kwil-Tach people have with fish. In Chapter 8, I consider how the contemporary relationship is expressed in the big house and within contemporary prerogatives, with a focus on younger generations. In Chapter 9 I turn to how the relationship with fish is expressed in the late 20th- and early 21st-century fishing industry and how in a highly capitalised industrial fishery, Laich-Kwil-Tach fishers have kept a unique place and relationship with the fish and their waters. Finally, in Chapter 10 I turn to examine the role Laich-Kwil-Tach people have created for themselves in their fisheries organization, A-Tlegay, within an industry of fisheries science and how this role expresses and is productive of an ongoing relationship with fish.

In this current chapter I consider the teachings today’s Elders received and how they share this knowledge as an ongoing production of relational ontology. Most of the people interviewed for this research have parents who experienced the 1922 potlatch trial and their ramifications. As a result, virtually everyone interviewed grew up in a world in which one went to prison for practising their big house protocols. The *Indian Act* (the *Act*) was enacted in 1876 and thus began infringement on the right to fully engage with

one's prerogatives. The potlatch itself came under direct attack beginning in 1884 when a clause banning its practise was added to this legislation. In its early years the clause had little effect and even though people were charged, very few charges led to prosecution. This changed in 1918 with a modification to the *Indian Act* that made the 1884 clause much more enforceable (Tennant 1990:101). As a result, in the hands of the Indian Agent in Laich-Kwil-Tach territory, the clause became a shocking reality.

In December 1921 a potlatch was hosted on Village Island in the Broughton Archipelago. Following the potlatch many participants were arrested, charged and stood trial in early 1922. At least three Laich-Kwil-Tach people who attended and participated in this potlatch were charged: Billy Assu; his son, Dan Assu; and Johnny Gus (Sewid-Smith 1979:37-38). At trial, the sitting judge was the Indian Agent and the prosecutor was the local RCMP officer. Those found guilty were given two options: 1. go to Oakalla Prison; or 2. the convicted and their entire community could surrender their potlatch regalia and the charged person could remain at home. This unorthodox "voluntary" surrender was to be complete by March 31, 1922 (Sewid-Smith 1979:36). The Laich-Kwil-Tach communities were among those communities that agreed to give up their regalia, making future gatherings and potlatches, as well as the First Salmon Ceremony, more difficult. This move by Canada and its agents was meant to stop the potlatch permanently. They did not succeed, but it did cause any form of potlatching to go "underground" (Sewid-Smith 1979:2). Potlatching was masked as church events, Royal birthday celebrations, and Christmas gift giving, but with restricted potlatch opportunities and enforced secretiveness, the younger generation's ability to fully learn and understand the potlatch system and its attending prerogatives was compromised. For example, when

I asked one Elder, Bill, if he remembers anything special about the birth of his twin brothers when he was nine years old, he said, “our problem in that timeframe—no potlatches. If there was anything to do with potlatches, it was really with money, canoes, all that” [BR-014]. In other words, it was impossible for his parents to follow protocol, at least outwardly, because of the potlatch ban, and instead people gave large gifts in an effort to maintain potlatch order and protocol. At the same time, because the potlatch was a critical piece in maintaining relationships with other beings in other worlds (e.g. Animal Kingdom, Undersea Kingdom), the potlatch ban, along with fisheries legislation that banned Indigenous fishing technologies, impacted the very fabric of what is in the world.

Furthermore, those interviewed, and/or their parents were schooled under the residential and industrial day school system that separated families, forced language loss and imposed “proper moral restraints,” as discussed in Chapter 4. Fear within this system and the consequences of it resonated throughout discussions with Elders in this research,

I feel very foolish not remembering.... We weren't really into the culture for years. But then we were banned for doing anything like that, and it kind of spoiled things for us like we could have learned a lot and we missed out, we missed out on a lot of things that we should have, that we should know. And we couldn't do anything here like, we weren't allowed to have potlatches or anything 'cause the police were right across.... So we lost out on a lot of knowledge about culture and, but my grandparents told me things but I wasn't a very good listener. [MA-007]¹³

If we had a Potlatch in Cape, Mr. Wood[?] would come over. We had a big potlatch there. Couldn't have it here because the cops would come over. [TR-002]

¹³ Block quotes are statements made by people interviewed for this research. The square bracketed information at the end of the quote indicates the initials of the speaker and their interview number. Biographical information is available in Appendix A for each consultant. The internal square brackets are either a clarification of the consultant's statement or a question posed by me during the interview.

She [Grandmother] just said there they [salmon] are. You could see them. [So you went out and got the fish for her that time? What happened to you?]. Nothing. Well I guess they found out where it was going. I told all the White fisherman that my grandmother wanted it. There was a fishery warden there too. So I was just waiting for him to call me to go to jail or something. [BR-014]

These quotes highlight a few key points. The first comment, about feeling foolish was made by Mitzi, an Elder who was 91 years old when interviewed. Born in 1923, the year following the potlatch trials, her childhood experiences were greatly influenced by the potlatch ban. She was 18 when the ban was lifted, the year she married and shortly thereafter had children. In the meantime, she spent two years of her childhood at the Coquleetza Residential School. These combined experiences denied Mitzi the full opportunity to learn, experience and engage with the Laich-Kwil-Tach world as a child.

The second comment was made by Tony, who was born in 1929. His comment reminds us how close the police were to the people of Campbell River and Cape Mudge, the primary communities for Laich-Kwil-Tach people at this time, and how this closeness impeded the ability to potlatch, even underground.

Bill's comment, the last of the three, reveals how real the colonial authority was in the Laich-Kwil-Tach world of his youth in the 1930s. Born in 1921, Bill is the oldest person interviewed for the study. As a very young man, upon the direction of his grandmother, Bill caught her some fish. However, his very real fear was that by listening to his Elder, the grandmother who raised him and a high ranking, well-respected woman, he would be arrested and sent to prison for ensuring she had food to eat. His obligation to his grandmother was compounded by his position in the community as the oldest son of a high-ranking man. In this position he was obligated to behave properly, which included being a good provider and respectful towards his Elders. Although Bill was not arrested,

his fear was justified in a world in which the decisions of the Indian Agent and the RCMP were final.

Together, these short comments, almost made in passing during the interviews, reveal the environment of fear and caution in which Laich-Kwil-Tach people lived, as well as the long-term consequences of feeling uninformed and even ignorant of one's inherent teachings, including those of a reciprocal relationship with fish. Nevertheless, in spite of colonial policy and law, and the dire consequences of the residential school system, there remains a contemporary moral commitment with fish.

Recently, I attended a Laich-Kwil-Tach community meeting for treaty information sharing to inform the community of ongoing discussions. Framed as a "family meeting" in an effort to get smaller groups together to discuss treaty and to disseminate information, fishing was a topic of conversation before the meeting began and people were demanding to know how fish, particularly salmon, were going to be included in the treaty. They wanted to know how their family fishing grounds in Johnstone Strait are included in the treaty and like so many other "fish discussions" the conversation was lively, as opposed to discussions on many other treaty chapters, which are often dry and technical. Why? Because Laich-Kwil-Tach people are fishers. This deep connection with and reliance on fish as exemplified in the previous chapters for 19th-century Laich-Kwil-Tach people continues today and not only plays a role in self-identification but informs one's sense of rights and concern for the fish. There is an ongoing reliance on marine resources and people intimately associate abundant marine resources, particularly salmon, with health, well-being and prosperity. For example,

The well-being and the rights of the fish and that is our right because that's our life, that's our survival, not the fishes' life, but our life. So that's where

I see it. You know this whole aspect of life and survival came up when we started talking about the Stuart Lake sockeye, how it's dying off. We used to have our season made by my grandfather because that run was early and it had big sockeye. It ran mid- to late June along the Johnstone Straits and we would get big sets and already we would have a couple thousand dollars. That was big money back then. Then I would know, I'm okay for going to university. [RN-021]

Rod's statement makes it clear that although the world may have changed, true reliance on fish has not. A healthy run of fish continues to mean health, well-being and prosperity for the people, not just in terms of food, but for everything life presents, including paying for one's education and providing for one's family.

As I Recall: Teachings, Practice and Being

An important part of the interviews for this research was to consider how 19th-century Laich-Kwil-Tach ontology continues to inform the present. Here I attend to how through practice it was modelled by former Elders, how through practice, today's Elders continue to model it and how, through lived experience, the relational world remains formative of Laich-Kwil-Tach ontology. As discussed in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6, 19th-century Laich-Kwil-Tach people shared a world inhabited by multiple sentient beings who shared human-person qualities, lived in ways that were recognizable to human persons and who often shared reciprocal responsibilities with human persons to help ensure reciprocal well-being. Part of my challenge in this research was to understand the relationship in contemporary contexts. I contend that although tenuous, sometimes difficult to see and easy to ignore, the sentience of the animated world, of which humans are very much a part, continues to inform not only the present relationship, but also practice and contemporary concepts and expectations of Aboriginal rights. One Elder described the connection as

λa'ima... the animal kingdom. The story of the animal kingdom was that the animal kingdom was just like people, like a family. And they had their own way of life, and they all had, all the animals had their own dances. And that's how it came to be a dance. And that was given to whoever the first person was. And, how do you explain it? It's almost like a vision. Yeah. And each one had a title. Like the animals, each one had a title. That they weren't just nothing.... Our people were very... close to the animals, like the bear and the wolf. They had respect for the animals. [DM-011]

When questioned further she said that the animals communicated and lived as humans but that they were animals first. In other words, this suggests that there was a transformation for the first human. For many, this connection is still a part of life and manifests itself to those who are willing to see it. For example, Berta spoke about her great-grandson, saying,

You know we were so connected and we came from animals. And our dances show that. Our masks. I know... our grandson is a wolf. When he was a little boy he used to howl like a wolf. Only two years old. He did it twice. Howled like a wolf. If you really pay attention... he's very loyal. And he even struts like a wolf. [AB-020]

The ethnographic texts also describe worlds in which nonhuman persons live as sentient beings in a very human-like world. Although no one I spoke to views the world in these terms today, again, there are threads that reveal the link. When asked if they know about a world where salmon lived Berta responded, "there has to be" [AB-005], while Daniel used the killer whale to exemplify his understanding,

Because they hardly ever find a dead killer whale.... They take them and they have their own graveyard. They have everything. They have, it's an underwater kingdom. That's what Harry Assu... they got their own place, they got everything under there. That's what he said to me. My dad agreed with him. They were both working on the wood up the hill. When they sat down to rest, they started talking about the *maxinux* [killer whale]. That's the only time I ever heard anything about the Underwater Kingdom. But I used to, you know that one that, at the dance, Underwater Kingdom, that's a different thing though. That was good too. They must have known something then. [DB-005]

In terms of fish, particularly salmon, the human-fish connection was strong, perhaps stronger than any other relationship with nonhuman persons. Conceivably, this is because of the reliance on salmon for human well-being, but it is also likely because of the kinship salmon persons and human persons shared. The quote that forms this chapter's title was the result of my question concerning teachings about where fish go in the winter time,

Well my mom always said that the Indians came from the fish. But the white man came from the monkey.... I'm not making fun of it, where do we come from?.... I'm not making fun of you that you come from a monkey. I come from a fish. [TR-002]

While not addressing where fish go, Tony's statement works simultaneously to draw differences and parallels between him and I and therefore, between the Indigenous and the European communities. While we both come from animals, the animals are distinctly different and each forms an important part of one's history of becoming and state of being. Tony's statement has greater depth considering Tony is a twin and as mentioned previously, twins are salmon's human form. So in Tony's case, his mother's explanation of his origin also connects to his being a twin and his internal salmon essence.

Along the same lines, when we were speaking about Daniel's career as a fisher, Berta turned to him and said, "you're related to the salmon. That's your brother" [AB-005]. Another Elder, Frances, said that although she did not really know about the salmon as persons, she did suggest that it could explain her brother's actions when the salmon arrived at the river. She explained,

Actually, some of them had Indian names. The salmon. That would be the first salmon that came up our river. And they call them by their Indian names.... I can only remember that my brother used to chant it. He would call them by their Indian name. [FQ-016]

Similarly, Salish fishers referred to salmon by name, often noting their kinship connection to humans. For example, coho is “the parent of your daughter” or “son-in-law” (Lutz 2008:65).

A close connection between humans and fish allowed the human-like, sentient qualities of the salmon to be passed to a human person. For example, Elders explained how eating the various parts of the fish gave one particular qualities,

My grandmother ate them. She said eating the brain of the fish head. I think she's right. She said when you eat the fish, the brains, they can find their own river again, they have lots of brains and they can make you smart. They believed that before. I don't think nobody believes that anymore. [TR-002]

I was told about was the dorsal fin on the back of the fish, if you ate that you'd be a good swimmer but that was kind of a, what do you call it? [a wives' tale?] Yeah, yeah. Some of the old people used to tell us, if you swallow that you'll become a good swimmer. Don't chew it. You swallowed it. That's the little dorsal fin on the back. Right towards the tail. And we used to smoke the tips, the wing tips you cut off, we used to smoke those up and another, quite a delicacy in those. The tips, like the just below the head, the wings. Yeah. There's always a piece left when you cut the head off the fish. There's that piece left and you spread it out and that was quite a rich area. Yeah where it joins on the belly part. The wings sort of. Yeah. We'd thread through it on a stick and hang them up to smoke. [OH-008]

I ate the eyes yeah. That's why I can see so good now. [SD-006]

Furthermore, although no one explicitly spoke about salmon sentience, some comments embedded in the discussion are explained in terms that resonate with 19th-century accounts. For example, Daniel spoke about how the salmon respond if they are “bothered” by the commercial nets,

You know, this is what the Department of Fisheries and Oceans don't know. They, my uncle Norman, he is a troller, he said that when they are bothered they go real deep. He was catching them 65 fathoms down,

60 fathoms down. Our nets only go down 25. He could see them on sonars and sounders that they were real deep, we couldn't even touch them. This is how they get by. They get by the commercial fisherman real easy. All they have to do is go out a wee bit and go down deep. Real deep. Just like the spring salmon. When killer whales come they move away from the reefs, the spring salmon go down 40, 50 fathoms down so they can't touch them. They are deep fish. Adams River sockeye, I think all that sockeye salmon are the same, they know how to hide when they are bothered too much. [DB-005]

When they are bothered they fin wild and the tails go real hard. That means they can go deep quick. That's what I learned about the sockeye salmon. They know when they're bothered. They know. [DB-005]

Daniel also described how the fish play,

Because they jump a certain way. You know, if they're going south they face south, if they jump north they go north. Sometimes they go north when they are playing.... They are flipping around real hard, they flip their tails and go real fast. You can tell when they are taking their time slow, they flip and go really slow. But they do a lot of finning. [DB-005]

Another Elder acknowledged the sentience and intelligence of salmon in terms of their migration. Western science has long sought to understand how salmon return to their natal river and recent studies suggest that their presumed ability to sense the earth's magnetic field is a viable explanation (Putman, et al. 2013). For Laich-Kwil-Tach Elders, salmon return to their natal river because they are "smart" [DM-011] and for this reason many were told as children "that if you ate a lot of fish you'd be smart" [DA-002]. Daniel also shared what he was told, further explaining how salmon succeeded in their return to the rivers each year,

I asked him questions after we talked, Billy Assu and them talked. I said "what are they talking about." He said "when the fish leave the river when they are little, they have to have a guide to look after them." It's almost like a shepherd leading the sheep. That's the way he put it. They have to have a guide. [DB-004]

One Elder in particular, Sophia, seemed very in touch with the sentience of salmon. Although never a fisher in her own right, Sophia's father was a fisher and one of her sons works for A-Tlegay, the community's fishery society. Sophia made a number of comments throughout our meetings that suggest, at least for her, the agency of the nonhuman world explains much of the human world:

Well they have a right to survive and to go up the river and lay their eggs and to continue, but then again do they think it's good that they are able to feed the people too? Because it's been part of our lives all these years, I don't know why, that we should change it now. It is give and take you know, let a lot of them live and yet harvest them to be able to, and maybe we should give thanks to them for feeding us, I don't know it's a hard thing too... I'm putting myself in their shoes, in their environment, in their body and I'm thinking I wouldn't want myself to be caught, to be eaten right, so what do I do myself as a human? Do I just overlook that and say, "I need you fish, I need you to sustain my hunger for you and to give thanks that you are supplying that," I don't know. [SD-006]

I'm sure they'd be sad because their brother or friend got caught and they were able to keep going, fish keep on swimming, but their friend got caught, I don't know if they know, if they knew where that friend was going once they got caught. Cause they have mind or brain to be able to think that sort of stuff you know like. I'm trying to put myself into their shoes, what would happen if we were all running down the road and some of us got caught and some kept going, you know what I mean? It's just that their world is all water. [SD-006]

Well, we were all made by the Creator and maybe that was instilled in the fish to say that it would be a good thing to share themselves with the humans to help them to flourish and to.... That the fish are helping them to grow and to give them sustenance for their bodies. Even though I'm thinking that it must be hard to place yourself in that position, whether it be fish or bear or human. To be able to give yourself up for their growth and continuing life. But maybe that is what was instilled in all of us even a fish, a bear or human by the Creator. Because, I can't think any other way why would the fish do that for us. Other than someone putting it in their mind or body, this is what they should do. [SD-013]

For Sophia, empathy for fish is important, because it too is a sentient being who acknowledges its long relationship with humans, and who, like humans, thinks and has kinship ties but in a world that is water.

Part of my challenge in this research was to understand the human-fish relationship in the 21st century. While Sophia's ability to express her kinship and connection with salmon might be unique among those I interviewed, those other connecting threads noted, such as Tony's statement that he comes from the fish while I come from the monkey, appear to be informed by a shared world inhabited by multiple sentient beings who share qualities, who live in ways that are recognizable to one another and who often hold reciprocal responsibilities to help ensure the others' well-being. In other words, the relational world. These connections, although often difficult to see and easy to ignore, this sentience of the animated world, of which humans are very much a part, continues to inform the present relationship which is evident in concepts and expectations of Aboriginal rights expressed in the community and in meetings like the one noted above. This relationship is also manifest in and productive of practice, which informs mutual responsibilities, so I turn next to these teachings.

Teachings: Care and Respect

Care and respect were integral to the 19th-century human-fish relationship, as numerous examples in Chapters 5 and 6 exemplify. Care and respect included prayers, communal ceremonies, meeting the fish with a clean and respectful death, returning entrails to the ocean and sharing both the abundance of the catch and the responsibility for its care. My research suggests that the underlying practices of care and respect that informed 19th-century knowledge are manifest in teachings by today's Elders and instil a

strong sense of responsibility for animals, plants and their habitats in today's ontology.

For this reason Laich-Kwil-Tach people, and indeed First Nations in general, continue to demand a role in management and decision-making.

While care and respect is exemplified in 19th-century texts through recorded stories, their importance was visible in action and teachings in the 20th century. It is the action and teachings witnessed, experienced and so practiced by today's Elders that are evident in the interviews. For Berta, she recalls the care her Elders gave to the salmon, referring to it as "sacred" and recognizing their affinity with salmon as "beings,"

They are beings. They are. And we always, because we were put on the coast, there is a reason for that. We always had celebration for the coming of the salmon and returning and coming and returning and it was always sacred. I remember watching the old grannies doing the fish. It was almost a sacred thing they were doing. Yeah, I don't really quite know how to explain it. To say that they were very reverent about it. Probably really thankful that we were able to do that with the fish. Because of the way they filleted it. Took care, make sure it was done right. They didn't, they always took their time. They didn't rush through anything. And I just remember watching my grandmother take really good care of how she worked with the fish. [AB-005]

Don also recalls the care and attention his elders gave the fish,

And that's something that they were very careful of, you know when they were going to work on fish. Is you know, you caught the fish but they would never work on it the same day. You always left it over night. Because the blood, you know and the texture of the fish is quite different then. It's a lot easier to handle [possibly due to the effects of rigor mortis]. Cause when you are going to smoke the fish you always cut the slabs off each side of the meat for your *kawis*. That's where that came in. It was a lot easier to handle. Easier to cut. [DA-002]

Daniel offered a different way of telling me about care and respect. Each time I met with him he told me a story about his father in 1958. He is very proud of the story and looking back says he wishes he learned more from it. Each telling of the story built on the last by bringing in other pieces, revealing the importance of having multiple meetings

with one's community consultants and developing those relationships. For this reason, and because I do not want to synthesize the stories as did Hunt, each telling is included in full here,

My dad was different. He'd go out on a Sunday, because we used to open on Sundays, at 6:00 on Sunday evening. He never even pulls the anchor up. He just anchors out. Fish jumping all over and we say "dad, it's fishing time." No, he never pulls the anchor up. "Tomorrow morning we will fish." He was never greedy. One Sunday night we fished cause we made him set. We got 10,000 sockeye in one set. We had the *Western Cloud*, a big boat. And he said, "enough," he said, "we gotta be thankful for this fish." This is what he said, "That's a lot of fish," is what my dad said. Thankful. So he prayed, he prayed right there. And we went and anchored. Everyone else was still fishing and we could have filled the boat up. That was 1958. The biggest sockeye run that came for a long time. The first big run. They were just splashing everywhere. I made him go fish. I was the one who made him. I said, "dad, let's go watch it anyway." He said, "ok," he wanted to go anchor. I was the one who said, "dad, let's push the skiff in." I said, "could I run the boat?" It was a real calm beautiful day. But the fish were just splashing everywhere. It was even bubbling where we were from the bottom, fish were bubbling up, there was so much fish.... It was the mouth of Nodales Channel. Howe Island, just down the left side of Howe Island. It was getting to slack, toward low water. I said "oh man, I gotta make my dad." I knew the tides, I really studied the tides and I'd taken a navigation course. And Joe, my other brother says "come on, make him set." So I, so we made him set. Even Hilda, my sister said "make dad set." So we got 10,000. He was quite a guy. He was calm, there was no greed in him.... He was "thankful," he said "to have fish around us that would catch so easy." This is what he said. He said it quite loud, right to us. He made us hold our hands in a circle. The crew. We tried to tell him to set again. That was the funny part. I think about it sometimes. It makes me sad because we were just as greedy as the others but my dad wasn't. He was never greedy. [DB-004]

My dad never used to like to fish on the Sunday night because he believed in the church. Believed strongly and he didn't want to, sometimes we would just anchor out and go for nothing on a Sunday, just go picking berries or something. He never fished. But this one time there was so much fish we made him throw the net out. It was all the family, we were all family on this boat, the *Western Cloud*. And we made him throw the net out and we got 10,000 sockeye in one set. And it came, the boat was only, it was a big boat, it was only half full and then we were all yelling at him to throw the net out again so we could

fill the boat right up. No, he went and threw the anchor overboard. Then he said, I was thinking about what he said, you know, he said "it's *kisa o'umps*." He said that. It's not real. He said this is something that's special, it's not, it should never, we should never praise it because he said the salmon is part of us. This is what he said. The "salmon is part of us." Just like what you say sometimes, you know, I don't know how to really explain what he, but it finally came to me, what he said to me there, not *o'umps*. . . . He said it's part of God's creation with us, you know, that salmon and he said, "we shouldn't take too much, to hurt the salmon." That's what he was worried about. But there was millions in the water. And that was that time but he's the one that kept saying things like that to us. That it was, salmon was almost like our friend [DB-005]

My dad, he was a great man. Because 1958, when all our family was on, he had a nice boat, the *Western Cloud*. He went out on the Sunday. He was a real believer in God. And the church, he believed in. We just went and anchored out. They used to open at 6 o'clock Sunday night but we never fished until Monday. We would just go look for a spot and anchor until Monday morning. But on Sunday when it opened there was just so much fish, there was sockeye, big sockeye from Adams River. And we were, where we were, it was just beautiful at the mouth of Nodales at Howe Island. Right alongside of it. And the tide, no wind, and there was fish splashing as far as you can see there was fish splashing and jumping. Sockeye. And, I said to my dad, I said, "we don't have to go anywhere. It's almost six, it's quarter to six, or ten to six." He wasn't going to set. "I think you better set," I said. Then my brothers and sisters were hollering at him to set. He didn't want to set. "Just go around right here" I said to him. Because the tide was slackening right off. There was no boil in the tide, the fish is so thick down there they were bubbling. Bubbling all over the place. So he set. We went right around. We had 10 or 12,000 that set. And it fills just about half a load. And then, my brothers and sisters were yelling at him to set again. "Let's fill the boat up right now so we don't have to work hard for the rest of the week trying to catch them." Cause there was lots. Everybody kept setting you know, throwing their net out. But he went and anchored, "that's enough," he said. See, it takes a different kind of a man to do that. He is so different. I never, I wouldn't ever have done that. I would just keep throwing the net out until I'm loaded, you know. I think he, that he believed in the power of, he believes in the nature really strongly, you know the power of God and nature. He really was a real strong believer. [DB-017]

We were all yelling after we got it all done, we were yelling at my dad to set again so that we could fill the boat up. He said no, he said. . . . Even my sisters were yelling at him. They wanted to load the boat, I did too.

But no, he was teaching something. He didn't worry about other guys catching all the fish because they were filling themselves up. I should've learned something from that. I felt kind of bad this week, I didn't learn I guess from my dad, you know this week because my boat is too small, it just catches— we caught the fish real quick there was a lot fish in there. But the thing is, what I'm really trying to tell you is that my dad went and anchored out. It was Sunday evening. And he knelt down and prayed. So, he was thankful for getting that 10,000. We should have learned, he was trying to teach us not to be greedy. But that was why I think, the salmon ceremony... He used to say we have to praise God, or the maker, the Great Spirit for the fish. He said we have to do it and that's why they did it. They didn't collect, we call it God and the Great Spirit— they had their own names for it. I think it was something to do with *Ump*, the great *Ump*. That's what it was called. [DB-020]

Daniel's story highlights a number of important things that inform my understanding of the relationship with fish. The first is how the commercial industry impacted the relationship, not only between the fishers and the fish, but also between the Elders and the young. In his quiet way, Sandy Billy, Daniel's father, demonstrated the importance of reverence and respect for the fish. While his children's intentions were to fill the hold, Sandy practised restraint and his actions were meant to impart this knowledge and respect to his children. While it is likely that this was normal behaviour for Sandy, its significance may have been greater than in previous years because of what even Sandy recognized as an unreal salmon return. His comment about the size and intensity of the run as "not real" is important and is something I wanted to investigate further. I asked Mitzi, a fluent Liq'wala speaker about this term. Mitzi said it was likely *kis ola*, which translates as "not real" but the term is also used when something appears supernatural [MA-011]. I also looked in a Kwak'wala dictionary for the term "supernatural." I found two words, one *nawalak*^w, defined as "supernatural power," and discussed in previous chapters, and *aɔums*, defined as "supernatural" (Grubb 1977:136).

It is possible that Daniel, who spoke Liq'wala as a child but not as an adult, combined *kis ola* and *a?ums*. His father's use of the word or words reveals that the 1958 sockeye run was unusual even by Daniel's father's standard who was born around the turn of the 20th century and who would have been witness to the large runs that were normal for the time. As he realized the sheer size of this sockeye run, he tried to impart to his children the significance of the moment as well as the concept that this was not just a regular salmon run, but that there was something special about it.

This concept of the *nawalak*^w also flowed through other accounts from Daniel and Berta. The first story Daniel shared on this was about a man he and Berta called the "Doctor."

You know, he, it's not *o'umps*, what he saw. When he saw this double-headed snake, this huge one, that's the *sisiutl*, double-headed snake. He went hunting. He was just a young man, probably in his mid-20s. He went up the mountain and he used to go hunting. This was in Phillips Arm. He was hunting, we call it *malxto*, mountain goat. The white mountain goat. And that's what he went hunting for. And he was way, way back in the mountain. It was early in the morning too. They said it was a little bit foggy, misty. And he saw the flies going up, up and down. A whole bunch of flies. He knew something was wrong. He felt it. And he knew lots of stories about things like that, the *sisiutl*. I guess his dad was a storyteller. So he was told to take care, don't just rush into it. This happened, after the European people started coming. They were here then. It wasn't really, they had guns. They used to fill it from the barrel. He got his gun out right away and he just kept watch and he saw the flies. And he came over the hump and he saw this double-headed snake, and his dad was in the middle, a picture of his dad. And he said, well he had heard the story about not to look away. You could hardly even blink an eye or it would disappear and then something bad will happen to your family. Someone will die. This was the story, that's how it went. So he wouldn't look away. So he took his knife and he cut his tongue right on the tip of his tongue, he cut it. And he took the blood and put it in the musket. And then put the bullet on top and shot his dad first in the middle. Then he shot the two sides of the snake. Same thing, he put his blood in there. That's how he got the power in his tongue. He was one of the greatest. My grandfather went to him when he was about 105 years old. That's how I kind of believe, it took me quite a while to

believe things he did. He did so many things for our people. I guess he went all the way to Rivers Inlet when they wanted him to help people.... he saved peoples' lives. Like if a little boy, I guess there was some kind of poison, I don't know what it was but I guess if they ate something, the kids go out and eat the mushrooms, the poison ones, and that's what happened to one kid. He was eating the mushrooms. He was just about dead. It was all in his stomach. And he just sucked all the poison out of his stomach. Without even cutting him. That was the power he had in his tongue.... that's where he got the power, was from killing the *sisiutl*. Yeah. It's a real long story. The way he was telling, my grandfather. And Chief Billy Assu. They were taking turns trying to beat each other to it.... Yep, everything would come easy to him. He never had a hard time. The *sisiutl* was with him all the time. That's how the story goes. And help him wherever he went, help him heal, heal people. I told you the story already that he healed my grandfather. He was working on, when the Europeans first came they were interested in big trees. You know, right on the water. And he was falling them. Him and Alberta's grandfather. They were together. He's the one who led him down, held his hand because he couldn't see. The bark, the small little, you know from the big fir tree. The bark came into his eyes and he couldn't even open his eyes. He said the doctor was about 105 years old then. He said around that age, he was over 100. The doctor just told him to keep his eyes closed. And he just put his tongue on both sides and he put everything, he sucked right through the skin. Then he saw all the little pieces in the doctor's hand. And he said, here, and he gave it to my grandfather. And you can open your eyes now. He opened them and there was nothing wrong. Before that he couldn't open his eyes.... This doctor, he got his power from the *sisiutl*. [DB-005]

Well this doctor used to go fishing too and he would see the *sisiutl*, there, and the fish would just come to him. He wouldn't have to go far. Just go out in the boat a little ways. He was from Phillips Arm. That's where he grew up.

You know Phillips Arm? Both sides of the river there were houses. He lived on one side, I don't know what side. After he killed the *sisiutl* with that gun he had, the blood he used, he came down and he didn't even go into the house. He knocked on the window or the door and his wife answered and he said, "could you just give me some blankets?" He said, "I'm going to sleep outside." And that's because, "I did something." And he quickly told his wife what he did, that he killed that *sisiutl*. He said, "I had dreams before that." He dreamt that things happen when you do things like that. Sometimes it's good things, sometimes it's bad things. And he said that, "I am worried that if I sleep in the house, something might happen to the house or you. I don't want you to get included in this." His wife got worried, you know, because

something might happen to him. But he, when he went to sleep alongside the river, he had a nice little spot where he always stood. And he went to sleep, and he dreamt that what happened never really happened. The blood... this is the story of blood, because the blood kills the *sisiutl*. And he dreamt that the blood, it flooded and he drifted in blood in the river. But that's all it was, it was just a dream. He woke up and he was in the same spot. That is the only thing that I didn't understand. I tried to ask my grandfather, "What did he mean?" He said it was just a dream, it was like when Noah was, you know, in the world before it flooded, he had lots of dreams. Almost the same thing.... My grandfather said that after he killed the *sisiutl*, you know, he told a story about him, when he used to go after fish and he would see the *sisiutl* in the water. And it helped the fish come to him. Yeah. That was great, you know. [DB-017]

The role of the *sisiutl* in empowering the human person by bestowing *nawalak^w* is commonly noted in 19th-century oral texts. People who capture or kill the *sisiutl* are endowed with special powers and of interest here is Daniel's last comment, that the doctor would see the *sisiutl* in the water and that the salmon would come to him. As discussed in Chapter 5, the *sisiutl* is one incarnation of the salmon, but it is a form that has powers over those who see it, causing one to die of convulsions unless it is subdued and killed with blood from the tongue (Curtis 1970 [1915]:281). A person who succeeds harnesses abilities from the *sisiutl*, and he becomes *nawalak^w*. Before the doctor killed the *sisiutl*, he was an ordinary man, but after, he had the power to heal, to live a long life and he appeared to have an enhanced relationship with salmon. Twins and people initiated into religious ceremony are also called *nawalak^w*. (Boas 1966:166).

Related to this, but not stated as *nawalak^w*, is how some people in the more recent past, for example, Daniel's Elders, were successful fishers, seemingly through a relationship with the fish. For example, Johnson Naknakim was considered a great fisher as Daniel explains,

That man there, he was blessed.... Fish came to him.... Yeah, fish just come to wherever he went. He filled his boat up so easy.... He went after lingcod he went, I just couldn't believe we went into, I was lucky to have him tell me stories too. We went into Yuculta Rapids on the northern end and the tide was really strong. He said, "I'm just gonna go all along the beach." And I said, "I'm going to wait for the tide and go fish where I usually fish for lingcod." I had the *Raven* and he had his little boat. I forget the name but he had a little boat too. Anyway, I was just starting to fish when he came to me, he said, "my boat's full," he said and he came along side and I looked, "holy cow." His hatches were full. It just seemed like about an hour that he was gone. I said, "Oh, gee, how did you do that?" "I just went along the beach," he said. [DB-004]

In another story, told by a previous Elder and housed at the LRC, Johnson's father most certainly appears to be *nawalak*^w. According to his granddaughter, Daisy,

Naknakim was from Cape Mudge but he stayed over there sometimes in Campbell River and he was sick. Well he was dreaming and he was told to go and sit there at the beach and that he was going to get this piece of salmon from the beach, it will be flipped over and turned around on his foot. And he was told just to cut four pieces of the tail part and don't cut it anymore. There is a bunch of killer whales at low tide, *maximux*. And the whales actually came onto the beach and collapsed there and knocked the salmon right to him. That's his own dream story of his about the whale and that is why we have lots whales on our blankets.

Through the 19th-century texts it appears that people with these abilities were not uncommon and that their gifts were accepted and understood. This extended into the 20th century as exemplified in Daniel's account, but also in a story shared by the oldest person interviewed for this study. When speaking of his grandmother, the woman who raised him, Bill, who was 95 years old, said she had an ability that he had not known about,

After I got married, I knew I couldn't live there. So after a couple of days I went to tell her [grandmother, Mary Wamish] that we were going. So I went there in the morning and I started to tell her. She held her hand like this and she repeated every word I was going to tell her.... Maybe you heard about it, some people, you know, they know what people said about you, etcetera. And I didn't know she was gifted for that. If I had known that I would've taken her to horseraces. No, but I was flabbergasted when she told me what I'm gonna say to her. [BR-014]

In Daniel's accounts about his father on that Sunday in 1958, he mentions several times that his father prayed. Boas says that "all nature, the heavenly bodies, rocks and islands, waterfalls, animals, and plants are beings of supernatural power whom man can approach with prayer, whose help he can ask, and to whom he may express his thanks" (Boas 1966:155). Commonly Kwakwaka'wakw prayer expressed the emotion of the speaker and allowed the speaker to communicate with beings, who were referred to using honorific names, often translated as "Supernatural One" (Boas 1966:155). Salmon and other animals that migrated and returned each year were greeted by prayer in which humans expressed gratitude for their return, as well as the speaker's wish to meet again in future years with blessings of well-being (Boas 1966:157).

Prayer in Kwak'wala is *ts!E'lwaga*, which means "to thank, to praise, to ask favours" (Boas 1966:170; Boas 1949:617). The salmon, along with cedar and the lark are addressed in prayer as *nawalak^w* (Boas 1966:165-166; Boas 1949:612), meaning that *nawalak^w* is both a physical being and a way of being, both noun and verb. For example, a prayer to the salmon begins "*Ā'k•asōL εnāεnawālak^u. Ā'k•asōL mē'mEyōxwan*" which is glossed as "oh supernatural ones, oh swimmers" (Boas and Hunt 1921b:609). The second word of the phrase is the plural form of *nawalak^w*. In regards to fish, they knowingly offer themselves to mortal humans as a gift so that humans may eat and live well. It was common in prayer to acknowledge this gift and to recognize the power of the salmon over human well-being, it being able to grant long life, health and wealth.

As discussed in Chapter 5, 19th-century prayers were not made to an all-powerful deity, but were made to beings with *nawalak^w*, including salmon, who, like many other migrating animals could provide health and well-being to deserving humans. In the 20th

century, prayer was influenced by Christianity, but prayer continued to be informed by 19th-century ontology. In a 1980 interview with Marie Mauze, Harry Assu, born in 1905 explains how his Elders prayed and contrasts it with his form of prayer,

That's how they prayed in them days, you know I used to hear quite a few of the old people pray, they really believed in that. In the early days that school house and this church when there was building churches before all the time, not today people don't care anymore, I don't know what's the matter. I always say it wasn't, you know, that's the first place you go to is church and that's the last place you go is in church when you go. Myself I really believe in church, you know, like when you working if you praying they gonna help you, I really believe that myself. When I used to fish and we get into a big storm I used to pray quite a bit to get out of it, I figured out it really helps. A lot of times when I'm fishing I don't know where to go and I used to pray, seemed like they tell me to go that way and the fish is there and I really believed that. (Assu and Mauze 1980)

While Harry clearly explains that he “believes in church,” which I take to mean the Christian God, he also connects this to fishing and success in fishing. Furthermore, he says, “they tell me to go that way and the fish is there,” which could refer to communication with anything from ancestors to fish, or it could simply be that because pronouns are very different in Liq'wala, speakers often apply Liq'wala conventions to English pronouns, and “they” could mean “He,” as in the Christian God. In interviews and general conversation, this connection is often described as praying to the Creator, which appears to acknowledge non-Christian roots. One Elder also referred to it as Nature. Several people spoke of their parents or people of their parents' generation, who were born in the early 20th century and their connection with the Creator. According to several of today's Elders, it is still important to offer thanks to the Creator for the gift of salmon and for other plants and animals acquired from their lands and waters. While prayer, or at least words of thanks, appear to remain important to 21st-century Elders,

there was a shift throughout the 20th century from communicating with those with *nawalak^w*, to the Christian God, and then to the Creator. However, at no point through these transitions did it appear as though people asked for an abundant harvest. In every case, people appeared to offer thanks for what they received. In other words, people offered prayers or words of thanks following the catch. This is similar to 19th-century prayers, which also did not ask for an abundant harvest. Instead, the *nawalak^w* being was asked for health and well-being and was thanked for its generosity. It was asked for forgiveness for its death, but was told that it would be treated properly so that it could reincarnate and tell others of its kind that it was treated well. This respectful treatment has parallels with the First Salmon Ceremony, in which the first salmon are treated respectfully and even reverently so that others will come to the human world. In this way, people did not specifically ask for abundance but demonstrated to salmon that humans are caring beings who would ensure their well-being in the human world so that they could return to the salmon world in peace. When salmon knew this, they willingly gave themselves to deserving humans.

The following quote about prayer reveals how they continue to be productive of knowledge. Harry Assu (Assu and Inglis 1989:4) referred to prayer as *hoxhalax*. Daniel's description (below) of what Harry told him about *hoxhalax* shows that respect and well-being remain important and that one does not ask for success in achieving material things, but one asks for well-being, for health, or in this case, to remain safe. To *hoxhalax* before a soccer game exemplifies this further; rather than asking for victory, Harry asked that he be helped to be a dignified person, and that he would have success, not in winning but in proper conduct,

We had some great people. Even Harry Assu. He told a lot of things. I fished with him on the herring. That's when he used to tell me stories. He used to say, you know when you, that's what he said, used to say, "before you go out you *hoxhalax*, not to catch a lot of fish but to be safe. All the crew." That's what he used to say to me. And I thought that it was really great of him. Then he said the same thing. He asked me if I really believed it. I used to go to church and he was always in church. He really cared about me. And he said, he said, "I *hoxhalax* when I play soccer. Not to score goals, but to be a good sportsman." That's what he said. He was a great guy. [DB-017]

Daniel also spoke about his own spirituality. Although he admits that his desire to be successful often took over during his career as a commercial fisher, through practice he remains committed to the salmon and their well-being. He too continues to offer thanks to the salmon, and attributes this learning to his Elders, to the knowledge imparted, such as Harry's quoted above, and to the time when his father was convinced by Daniel and his siblings to fish when he felt that the situation was *a?ums*, or not real.

Today Daniel says,

But when I get a good set I pray in my mind. I thank because of my dad.... Ya, I don't know how many times I've done that now but I think about my dad. That's why. He was one of the great guys. I think that's really important.... Ya, I think this is really important, ya, really important because it will help the salmon too. It's not just there for us to make a lot of money. It's for food, to help us survive in this world because food fish is really, really important I think, in my life any way. It's not just to sell. [DB-004]

During a later meeting as we continued our discussion about salmon, Daniel spoke about an experience he had while fishing, one that he did not share with anyone for some time after it happened. During this experience, he recognized that something was different, and as a Christian man, he prayed to God,

Then another time, I think I told this one before though. I told it to someone. I was trolling with the *Susan Laverne*. This is way later. My brother was on one side and I was on one side. Cause we had, we could

pull fish on both sides, you know, by hand. No net. And we had, this wasn't sockeye, it was big salmon, the spring salmon. And in a little while my brother was only getting one at a time. And I don't understand why, but the salmon was coming on my side. And they were big ones. Like 40 and 50 pounders. And my thing, that tote box was half full. I was pulling it in. Then I stopped all of the sudden. It seemed like a warm blanket came over me. And I took my hat off. I said, I usually say a little prayer. I said, "O Lord, what is this, this warm blanket coming over me." And I said to myself, I wish I could throw these [salmon], I wish they could come back to life and I would throw them back in that water. This is what I said at that time. And I didn't know what that mean and I still don't really know. But it was something to do with the salmon, so beautiful. They look so beautiful in that hatch and I wish I could throw. My brother said, "what are you doing?" Because I stopped. I told him way later, maybe 20 years later, what I was doing. He understood. Our dad used to teach that. That's what he said.... But I quit fishing. I wouldn't go. I pulled my lines up for a long time and my brother was wondering what was wrong with me. I told him I would tell him later. He was wondering what was wrong with me. But I just started to really believe. I really believed that the salmon, that we were so close with it. Especially when my dad said it. It sure came to me today when you were talking about the salmon. But my dad said. He was really close to it, to nature. There are a few men in the village, all of them are Elders but now today you wouldn't find anyone. You won't find anyone like our elders, the way they were. They were so close to nature. They believed anything could happen. [DB-005]

Ollie also spoke of how his father, born in 1902, “was always grateful to the Creator” and how connected he was to the fish, seemingly connecting the two thoughts; that being grateful meant being connected and that being connected meant being grateful. He acknowledged his father’s ability to understand the salmon and their movements, making him a successful fisher, but it was the connection with the salmon that enabled this understanding. He explains,

But he [father] was always grateful to the Creator for providing that, that's what he would say. Especially when we had a good catch. And he knew, he probably, I guess you would say he almost thinked like a fish, he knew where they were going to be at a certain time each time, each year, he knew just where to be. And he'd predict which way they were coming. Whether they were coming down and from that I used to do the

same thing. He watched the weather. And you know what the fish are going to do pretty much. [OH-008]

Finally, June credits her mother for much of her learning and during her interview she noted that she always offers words of thanks to the Creator. This goes well beyond salmon. June is also known in the community for her knowledge of traditional medicines and she regularly works with youth to share this knowledge. I have worked with June on several occasions when she is doing her “nature walks.” When she shows the youth how to harvest, she always begins with the need to offer words of thanks to the Creator. However, the words themselves, for example, “*gilakasla denas*,” translate as “thank you cedar,” so while when explained in English the gratitude appears to be to the Creator, in the language, the gratitude is expressed to the tree. In other prayers, especially in community meetings, the Creator is often referred to as *Gilgame* or *Ikə Gilgame Ump*, meaning “chief” or “father of chiefs,” a change from the previous *nawalak*^w as the entity offered thanks. However, as June’s explanation below reveals, her words of thanks are informed by previous teachings, in which the future well-being of family is considered. For example, in several of the prayers recorded by Boas and Hunt, concern for the coming years is expressed as a hope that they “may not die without cause” (Boas and Hunt 1921b:609). June explains her gratitude in this way,

I respect what I get. And that, we do thank the Creator for what they give us and hopefully down in generations that my children and my grandchildren will still be able to have the fish you know, that we have been so used to. That it's not just going to go away.... I thank the Creator for what he has given me. [JJ-003]

Another common theme across the interviews is the importance of using what one receives, to avoid waste. When I asked people about what they were taught about their responsibilities toward fish “waste,” or its avoidance, was key and continues to be a vital

part of a respectful, reciprocal relationship. For example, Don made sure to explain how each part of the fish was used. His words exemplify my argument when towards the end he explains that his detailed description demonstrates how no part of the fish was wasted,

When you are going to do the *kawis* you just hang it on the racks. You take it down, debone it, cut it to the thickness you want and you hang it again. You leave it for a while and you take it down again and get all the bones out.... [For *kawis*], that's where when you open it up, toward the outside edge it's a thicker spot, and that's where you slice it off for your *kawis*. Both sides.... When you are opening it up to smoke it, when you open it up, there will be the outside part on each side will be thicker and that's where you slice your meat off for your *kawis*. And at the same time you're taking the bones off the fish that you're going to smoke. It's with the meat that you will make *kawis* out of.... And not only that but right down toward the tail they always leave just so much you know, on the tail when you cut it off. And what they do, they slice the meat off the tail part, right around. That's what they end up hanging on sticks. They put a hole on the back end of the, where the tail, where you cut it off and you hang it on sticks and smoke that too.... And that's what we call *t'ut'uwuxste*. And that's the best part of the, to me. I always like that, the best because that is the best part of the meat for me. When it was smoked it was really nice.... When you get to the tail, even before you cut the fish open you know, before you do the whole thing, you cut that tail part off. That allows you be able to open the rest of it up.... For each part that they do, that you, each part of that fish, you are gonna smoke it a certain length of time. It's not gonna all be smoked the same.... You just slice that tail off. That's when you open the rest of the fish up.... You take it and you cut it right around and you end up with the meat so long and the tail of the, the bone part of the tail is still there together with it. No you don't take that bone off. Leave it together and smoke it that way.... Cause there's meat on that bone that is real tasty when you got a finished product.... People will do them some 2 nights, some 3 nights because you can over smoke.... [The head], cause you take the head and you clean, you clean the head off, you know the inside and you boil it. Then you eat it.... The nose of that head is what we call *talkwəmay*. And you have the meat on the cheek. We call that *pəʎa*. Because you know, you end up eating just about the whole head. You really don't waste anything.... So really, you know, we've gone from the head to the toe of the fish and you didn't see us waste anything.... And with, you know the salmon eggs you boil it. And you, when you do that it separates, and then you scrape the, what holds it together, you skim that off. The finished product, you take it and you freeze it. What they did [back] then, I don't know. But now that's what you do, you freeze it. And what you do is, when you have

seaweed you, that's when you use the eggs. Mix it with the seaweed.
[DA-002]

While this was to be my last meeting with Don before he passed away, I realize that Don began to educate me many years before. When I was new in the community Don and I sat on a “Culture Committee” together. The goal was to work with a group of Elders who could help inform treaty negotiations. At a luncheon a baked sockeye was on the table and Don and I approached the fish from opposite sides of the buffet line. As I went to serve myself, Don directed me to the tail of the salmon, telling me that it is the best part, the *t'ut'uwuxste*. Ever since I have taken the meat from the tail.

While Don detailed the practice of using all of the fish, others used fish heads to illustrate their point, presumably because fish heads among Euro-Canadians are generally considered waste, while for these Elders they are considered a desirable part of the fish, and for some, a delicacy,

I just know that we didn't waste anything on it like we even ate the fish heads, everything was used on the salmon, for our livelihood, everything was used nothing was ever wasted. I remember my mom liked smoking the tails or the cheeks, and they would cut that off and we would eat the head. Like everything was used in the salmon.... My mom used to smoke that part [cheeks] for me. That was my favourite part. [JJ-003]

Something I remember growing up was just about everything on the salmon was edible. We'd eat the head and the gel on the head. The gel on the head. All that uh *sinduxte*, the tender part of the head of the fish. It's the whole head part, it's kind of, like a white, it's kind of a gel. The cheeks, that's a little different delicacy of the head. That part. And the eyeballs, the eyeballs very rich, tasty. *Sinduxte*, yeah it's something like “your nose running.” That’s what it means in the, our native tongue. Yeah that part and the cheeks and whatever else is on there. I can't remember what they called it but it was more, quite a delicacy that rich part of it, fish and the eyeball. [OH-008]

We were told that none of it should go to waste. And that it was a special thing to get from the ocean and not let it, parts of it to go to waste except for to throw the guts away. And even the head was preserved. So somebody could, you know, could boil it or eat it at a later date. [SD-006]

We were told not to waste it or any food that's what I was taught. You don't waste anything [MA-007]

And we did eat some of the fish heads, so delicious.... The nose, this part on the nose.... Oh yeah the cheeks are nice too, yeah. Even those little things that stick out of the eyeballs, *lalongsikʔanik*^w.... Someone gave me a great big fish head and I forgot it in the oven. There was nothing left to the nose there just the skin and bones. I almost cried! Oh my god that was disastrous for me, looking so, looking forward to having it. [MA-007]

“I almost cried....” When Mitzi overcooked her salmon head she considered it a disaster showing the importance of this food from her youth. Furthermore, it was upsetting because it was wasteful and therefore disrespectful to the fish and contrary to her teachings and the maintenance of a respectful relationship. Although few of the younger generation continue to utilize the entire fish in ways done by their Elders, it is still widely understood that nothing should be wasted and people should take only what they need and share what they have.

Take What You Need, Care for What You Take, Share What You Have

Closely tied to the values of care and respect is sharing. As described in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6, in the 19th century, salmon, as sentient beings, willingly gave themselves to deserving humans. What it meant to be a deserving human was defined in many ways, but the practice of sharing and a shunning of greed were among the most important and are codified in oral histories (Cullon 2013:28). During discussions with Elders for this research, sharing and anti-greed sentiments were common, indicating that this practice remains important in their relationship with fish. When questioned about their current

family fish needs for eating, everyone was very thoughtful, carefully counting, and coming to a number that to me seemed less than expected. Others counted the needs of their family for whom they often prepare fish. As a contrast, some identified moments of greed among others and many spoke about the “old days” and how taking only what is needed and sharing what you have were simple facts of life. This practice was found throughout the community and is modelled in everyday life. For example, Shirley, who participated in a number of interviews, laughs when she tells you that she does not like fish and that as a child she wandered through the village at dinner time looking for a house that was serving beef; she never went hungry. Or Bill, who as a member of a high-ranking family was corrected by his grandmother for questioning her generosity,

I had most of my young life with her and older people used to come around dinner time. Or when it was time for lunch or anything. I balled her out. I said why the heck do these guys know when it's dinner? "Look. What you were going to be, that's what you have to be. That's our tradition." Like her dad was a big guy. All the old people, well that's just something that was done. The people in the higher ups, if you came, actually even white persons, sit down and that's the tradition.
[BR-014]

Bill and his wife, Lillian, continued this practice by insisting on feeding me each time I visited, in spite of their age as nonagenarians and my protestations.

In the interviews we often discussed one's access to fish in today's world. Although Laich-Kwil-Tach people still have one of the strongest fishing fleets on the coast, it is a shadow of its former strength. Until the 1990s and prior to the Mifflin Plan discussed in Chapter 4, virtually every family had a fishing vessel meaning that each person could access fish from their family's fishing boats. Today, many families do not have boats. This, combined with a the decrease in fish, limited food fish allocation and short fishing windows permitted by the DFO not only makes access more difficult, but impacts the

community's and the individual's ability to sustain an ongoing relationship with fish.

Unfortunately, this combination has led to some disagreement in the community and to what some characterize as greed,

Yeah, to me sometimes other people aren't showing that greater responsibility towards it and nowadays they're just out for what they can get and they don't think about it at all you know.... I don't think it would've went over too well [in the old days] 'cause in the old days the old people used to make sure everybody got their share. And they made sure everybody got what they can use and uh, for smoking and stuff like that. [OH-008]

It's such a different day and age now though in how things were done. Cause we had a lot of elders, elder men around, it's so different with the younger people, that I find, that they will get just, you know, for their family. Everything was shared, when I grew up, in our village nobody did without.... Everybody just took what they wanted... you went down and got it. [JJ-003]

Some people interviewed feel that this ethic of sharing and taking only what one needs has eroded and that sometimes people abuse resources and behave improperly. They are considered to be breaking the protocol prescribed in a respectful relationship. For example, one person compared previous generations with the current state of clam digging, saying, "you just take what you need [in the old days]. I got some people who like to clean the beach out. Jeez" [EC-027]. Mitzi agreed, saying,

I think people just took what they needed. I don't think they went out and caught a lot of fish just for the sake of catching a lot of fish. From what I gather they just went out and caught what they needed for the winter. [MA-007]

Along the same lines, Berta spoke of what her grandmother, Louise Hovell, would say,

"That's enough now." Just like *Adi* saying she wanted only one, maybe two sea eggs. She didn't say "go fill this box up." She only wanted one or two.... My grandmother.... [AB-017]

Compounding the problem is the food fishery allocation and timing process discussed in Chapter 10. For example, in the current system the problem of the DFO limited First Nation allocation for sockeye, the most prized of salmon, is compounded by the limited time to fish, which is amplified by a decimated fishing fleet. So while Laich-Kwil-Tach fishers still have the capacity and gear to catch food fish for their families and community, their ability to be the decision makers, and to base those decisions in Laich-Kwil-Tach ontology has been usurped by the state. Furthermore, while Laich-Kwil-Tach fishers still at least have the capacity to fish, many other First Nations do not. Thus, other First Nations turn to Laich-Kwil-Tach skippers and crew to fill their allocation, limiting opportunities for the same fishers to fish for their own community. Furthermore, the ethic of sharing is opposed here because unless the other First Nation obtains special permission from the DFO, a so-called “amended allocation,” the other First Nation’s catch comes out of the Laich-Kwil-Tach allocation, a loss the community cannot afford. Laich-Kwil-Tach fishers are caught in the middle. While wanting to support their community by providing fish, they also need to make a living and keep a very expensive boat operating. Fishing for another community offers a profit essential for contributing to the household finances that they might not otherwise see and can make the difference between a year with a profit and a year with a net loss. It also helps to keep the boat and crew working, which is important for the community’s fishery. At the same time, it generates discontent and frustration in the community, as Ollie explains,

Yeah, like my feelings towards that, with the rest of the people is that we're kind of abusing our privilege of it, with it, you know. Well, the abundance of fish that come in, there's a lot of our people don't get their share of it. There's a food fish permit they're getting it with. Mind you they're hired by other bands to catch fish for their people too. But it's still kind of, to me it's still kind of abusing our privileges to harvest it

for, and their selling it to other places you know, they make big bucks for it. And a lot of our local people are going without. I know quite a few people on our reserve alone that didn't get any. And that's one of the reasons I try to get as much as I can as a band member from food fish, to do, try to get 300 at a time so everybody that don't normally get any, they come to our place and we can it up there. And some of their ancestors come from here but they don't get any 'cause they're not a band member here. So that's why I have them come to our place, buy the cans and bring them over and I'll try and get the fish for you, can 'em there. Some of them are non-native but they're connected through marriage like. And they can't get it so I always try to get as much as I can. [OH-008]

Ollie's concern, that the fishers' profit is an abuse of their privilege, is grounded in that respectful relationship with fish. He was taught that it was important to ensure everyone is fed and that this is part of the privilege of their relationship with fish. Nevertheless, he too is conflicted because he knows the other people also need fish. Another fisher expressed his frustration saying, "they [other First Nations] should get off their butt and go catch their fish instead of sitting at home waiting for it. There's lots of young kids over there that could be fishing." [EC-027] This too is an expression of the importance of being present in the relationship with fish; that it is not enough to sit by and let others take care of you. Nevertheless, practice has become limited by state policy and has led to these kinds of conflicts between First Nations.

Another practice regularly discussed throughout this research was people's efforts to avoid wastefulness. People told stories about their own mistakes, the mistakes others made that affected their fish and how their grandparents cared for the fish they caught.

Tony began this discussion early in the interviews. He said that,

They treated the fish like gold. Well it's like how you, you know, it's precious. [TR-002]

This concept of fish being precious is reflected in the practice of taking what was needed, sharing to ensure that people in the community had the fish they need, and processing in such a way that nothing was wasted. For the last piece, it was not only about eating as much of the fish as possible. It was also about handling the fish properly, cleaning it correctly so as to avoid loss and then preserving it properly so that it smoked and dried properly to last through the winter months without spoiling. *paʔikila*, or “treating clean” as Hunt described it (Chapter 5) (Berman 2000:62; 2004:143). Several people told stories or made comments that relate to being careful with fish in ways that ensured maximum use, minimum waste and therefore maximum respect. Tony begins with a story about his grandmother and how fastidious she was when “doing fish.” She was so particular that she slept in the smokehouse, because, as will be seen in the comments below, cutting and smoking fish is an art that requires great skill,

Well my grandmother was really particular. My dad's mother, she slept in the smokehouse just to make sure it was right.... You had to cut the fish right. My mother walked down the beach and "ahhhh, what are they doing to that fish...." It wasn't right but we ate it. [TR-002]

That dog salmon. Auntie Lily, Skookie, They used to come smoke in my smokehouse. We did hang them. I told Skookie, “leave them fish alone. Don't touch them,” I said. We were invited for a steak. We went to Quadra, all of us. No fish left, they all dropped. The hundred. Lily got mad at me instead. Lily got mad at me. She had a big fire. A lot of wood in there. I guess the heat was too much. And she turned around and got mad at me.... I didn't want to talk anymore the fish. It got too hot. I told Skookie, "leave it alone. Don't touch it. We are going to go eat. We are invited out." We come back and they are all down. That was hundred. It was full. And worse fish we ever had. She turned around and got mad at me. [AS-009]

It was really weird how I learned how to can, my mom had passed away, and we couldn't, we had a hard time getting fish and who ever gave my dad fish just gave him a bunch of coho, and I didn't know the difference, they tasted the same when we did eat it, and he left me with all these cans and he said, “your neighbour over there, Emma will tell

you how to do it” and I went, “you left me with all this fish.” He was going to Vancouver and that's how I ended up canning. But I used to help my mom when I was in my teens, cause she used to make me go help her in the smokehouse and I said, “I don't want to do it” and she said, “you need to come cause I'm not going to live much longer,” and she died when I was 23, 24, '73.... so I ended up learning, that's how I learned to hang them and smoke them... I learned how to do it, I used to hang it all up, I even made gawis over at Emma's. I used to make gawis all the time, the dried ones. My husband went over to look after the fire one time, that we, and I don't like dogs [chum salmon], I used to like to do the pinks, cause I didn't like my smoked fish thick and he went over, and we had dogs, he thought he'd be a good semaritan he said, “I'll go put wood on the fire.” I said, “I don't know if I trust you.” He put too much wood in there and they all fell down cause it got too hot inside the smokehouse. So I lost all my fish and he was never allowed to go and do it again.... After all my hard work, I had it all hung up in there. [JJ-003]



Figure 7: Gawis in Daniel's smokehouse. Photo by D. Cullon, 2016.

As the stories above exemplify, and as Don explained below, the temperature in the smokehouse is important for several reasons. As the two ladies above note, if the fire is too hot the fish falls onto the fire, the ash and the dirt floor, but if the smoke and heat is inadequate, the fish will not preserve. Don suggests it has something to do with the

fattiness of the fish, which is why chum, with its lower fat content, worked well for smoking before canning became popular,

Well, it's not only that it's when you get it too hot in the smokehouse. It does something with the fat. If you don't do something with it right away then it will go bad. That's why you gotta be careful when you are working on it. Most of our people are so used to it that they just know what to do. [DA-002]



Figure 8: Salmon fillets in Daniel's smokehouse. Photo by D. Cullon, 2016.

Ollie elaborates further, considering the difference between smoking for canning or drying and smoking for preservation. Prior to canning and freezing, salmon was smoked and dried. When finished, it had almost no moisture content and was stored in baskets and boxes in the big house (Boas 1909:419; Boas and Hunt 1921b:228).

Oh in the old days. They had, they didn't have any cans way back. So they prepared it the best way they could to keep it. That was quite a bit drier. Like the half dried we call them now, smoke it for 15 hours and then can it. But they used to smoke it for 3 or 4 days to dry it right out. And that way, especially after they come out of the river, they had less

fat, that way they could stack it up like cordwood as long as it stayed dried.... They'd keep forever as long as they were dry. They'd never spoil. [OH-008]

Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 review how 19th-century Laich-Kwil-Tach and Kwakwaka'wakw people managed salmon entrails and the practice that informed it. This chapter reviews the ongoing engagement people have with salmon through processing and the embodiment of knowledge expressed through action. While today much of the understanding behind action is different, the actions themselves remain the same, revealing the ongoing performative dimensions of *ʔaʔikila*, which remains part of being in a relational world. The 19th-century action was part of the relationship with salmon in which humans assured fish that they were well intended and respectful. In contrast today's action appears more about returning the entrails and is productive of knowledge about relationships with other marine life. When asked about what one does, often the answer is very short: "feed it to the seagulls, recycle" [EC-027] or "back in the water" [DA-002]. Only a few people elaborated further,

We'll they just took it down to the beach. A lot of feed for the gulls.
[MA-007]

Well when she was doing the fish she would do it down the beach. And then I guess somebody would bring the jars up to the house to cook. And then as she was gutting them, just throw it into the ocean. [SD-006]

Well they bring them back to the ocean. Fish heads you know all goes back in the ocean, where I guess the crabs or whatever eat them and of course the seagulls are all there flying around. [SD-006]

The youngest person to participate in interviews for this research is a member of the Chickite family, a prominent fishing family. When asked what her family does, Melanie replied,

I think it just goes onto the beach for the eagles. We are huge feeders of the eagles. Any freezer burnt fish all goes back onto the beach and they will actually make a point of keeping the seagulls away. You know showing, there's an eagle tree next to the house, so they will show the eagle that it's there and they will wait until he comes. And a lot of the times when they are cleaning all of the food fish, there will be 20, 30, 40 eagles on the beach.... I think because it's kind of our spirit animal that my family really connects too. [MS-015]

Thus, while the practice of bringing the salmon remains to the beach remains important, for the Chickite family their connection with the eagle takes precedence, at least in the present. It is unclear if this has always been their practice or if there was a shift when returning salmon remains to facilitate their resurrection became difficult in the face of western education and science. Nevertheless, like salmon, eagles have long held an important place in Laich-Kwil-Tach ontology. Eagle down continues to represent peace in the big house and the eagle is an important being on totem poles, house fronts and regalia. Many people feel connected to the eagle and point out eagles waiting outside a potlatch or eagles circling above during a burial or funerary burning.

Stewardship

My grandfather, he said this so many times, we were the luckiest people on earth before the white man came. Everything just came to us, the fish came to us, that's what he said. The birds came to us, the animals came to us. He said we never had to go after them. We looked after them. This is what he kept saying. We looked after them. That's what my grandfather said. I heard him say that many times. [DB-005]

Archaeological records from the past 7500 years reveal remarkable consistency in salmon use (Campbell and Butler 2010:1), suggesting that a stable, persistent and sustainable fishery existed throughout this time. Following the last Ice Age, some 14,000 salmon stocks (or runs) colonized about 3,600 rivers and streams in what is now British Columbia (Haggen, et al. 2006:i, 5) and in spite of a heavy human reliance on the fish,

salmon populations remained healthy and arguably prospered. While it has long been assumed that salmon provided a natural abundance and that local technology lacked the capacity to damage it, anthropologists now recognize that overexploitation by small-scale societies, including those on the Northwest Coast was possible (Smith and Wishnie 2000:493). Given the capacity of Northwest Coast fishing technologies to catch fish in numbers comparable to the 20th-century commercial fishing industry, overexploitation was a real possibility here (Haggen, et al. 2006:7; Jones 2002:197; Menzies and Butler 2007:441). Recent interdisciplinary research interested in Indigenous fishing, however, suggests the opposite is true, contrasting sharply with the complete disappearance of 4000 salmon runs in the short period since the beginning of the European-style commercial industry (Haggen, et al. 2006:i). This recent research on Indigenous fishing has revealed a number of enhancement and management techniques: hydrological engineering or streamscaping created back eddies for enhanced spawning and rearing habitat (Jones 2002:158) and formed pools, known as *ish* in Tlingit, for resting during migration (Langdon 2006b:143-145); relocating fish and fish eggs to alternative spawning grounds (Billy 2009; Sproat 1968 [1987]:148; Thornton, et al. 2015) expanded and built new fish runs; expanding and building spawning habitat to enhance spawning numbers and success (Thornton, et al. 2015:192); clearing blocked waterways or physically carrying spawning fish over a blockage (Billy 2009; Hume 2000:C.10) prevented the complete loss of a run; and fish stewards or managers, along with a ritually mediated timing of the fishery, ensured adequate escapement (Gunther 1926; 1928; Haggen, et al. 2006:8; Menzies and Butler 2007:456-457; Swezey and Heizer 1977). Although the debate regarding conservation and intentionality is ongoing (Cruikshank

2003:S96; Harkin 2007:229; Hunn, et al. 2003:S82; Smith and Wishnie 2000:500; Thornton, et al. 2015:189), I contend that the examples above illustrate sustainable harvesting, conservation and enhancement techniques, as they demonstrate actions that prevent damage, loss and waste (Hunn, et al. 2003:S82), as well as actions that promote the vitality of a salmon run and encourage the formation of new ones. Furthermore, this long relationship with fish and other species helps to identify new or different trends in species behaviour or availability that may be important signals in understanding species well-being (Thornton 2015:96). These stewardship practices are fundamental to the relationship between humans and fish and results in niche construction, an evolutionary biology concept in which organisms are understood to modify natural selection by acting as “co-directors of their own, and other species’ evolution” (Laland and O'Brien 2010:303). Humans are the ultimate niche constructors and as such, we have a potent effect on our environment and the organisms with whom it is shared (Laland and O'Brien 2010:306). Each of the actions above, which I characterize as “enhancement and management techniques,” fit within a niche construction theory in which human agency can contribute to phenotypic changes (Laland and O'Brien 2010:316). Furthermore, human agency within niche construction here is guided by ontology and the relational world. In these terms, the action and practice behind the evolutionary description above is better understood.

Undoubtedly, Indigenous people throughout the world developed techniques that enhanced the production of important resources and the overall productivity of the landscape. These techniques are central in the resource management knowledge of Indigenous peoples but rarely is there a recognized connection between this knowledge

and the relationships that inform practice. During the interviews I conducted for this dissertation, I attempted to tease out some of the cultivation and management techniques that are still understood and shared by the Elders in spite of decades of colonial interference on fishing practice. Generally Northwest Coast peoples' pre-contact resource use is described as an annual pattern of movement (Matson and Coupland 1995:8) in what has been characterised as a "seasonal round" where families left the larger community and moved to various resources at different times of year to access predictable resources. However, according to Daniel, there was much more to this than accessing resources,

They had people looking after some of the rivers. And that's really important. They don't want to over fish it. They had men caring about that cause they wanted... some of the chiefs were so powerful at that time that they, I guess they talked to each other, different bands, and they don't want to over fish this one river and they make sure no one touches that fish, that river. [DB-004]

They were really careful. We had some great, great leaders. Great, great Elders, chiefs, you know. They were careful. This is what I heard, the stories of my grandfather. Everyone of them made sure. There was always a leader from one family. He would send them here to go look after that river, that salmon. They dried fish there. That's the kind of, they look after it. [DB-017]

As Daniel explained during a visit to one such site, built into this pattern of use was a practice that ensured that one person or one family was tasked with caring for and overseeing the well-being of the river and those other beings who relied upon it. In Liq'wala the word for river is *wa*. Adding the suffix *nuk*^w to make *wanuk*^w changes the meaning to "owner of the river" [MA-028] (Grubb 1977:217). Indeed a Kwakwaka'wakw Elder I met years ago explained how her father's name, *Wanukw*,

meant that he owned the river. However, being an owner meant that one must also attend to the care of the river, its ecosystem and all beings who were collectively involved.

The Tlingit have a similar position called *héen saati* meaning “master of the stream” (Thornton and Kitka Sr 2010:213). According to Tlingit Elders the *héen saati* “ensures sustainability of the resources by managing the relationship between the various inhabitants (fish and human) of the dwelling place... so for the Tlingit, managing salmon is similar to managing their own families” (Thornton and Kitka Sr 2010:213).

This spreading out of people and management responsibilities created a presence throughout the territory that is more nuanced than can be described through a process of “seasonal round.” It attended to multiple relationships in a relational world while also creating a presence that for 18th- and 19th-century Laich-Kwil-Tach people was important once they established themselves in their expanded territory. In this way, what through cultural ecology before appeared as movement to follow resource availability, becomes a more complex enactment of relational ecology based in Laich-Kwil-Tach ontology and is more about relationships, management and sovereignty than it is about resource availability and procurement.

Accordingly, part of the human-fish relationship was to attend to the river and the salmon in order to ensure that the salmon reached their spawning grounds. People had an intimate knowledge of the rivers and streams, as well as of the salmon’s needs, and used this understanding to implement management practices. The Northwest Coast is a temperate rainforest, and with a significant annual rainfall mountainsides and riverbanks can become unstable and slip. Arguably such landslide occurrences have increased in the past century as land destabilized under intensive forestry practices, but given the terrain,

seismic activity and precipitation, landslides on the Northwest Coast have always been an environmental event that can block important spawning streams. Furthermore, before forestry operations on the coast, massive trees lined streams and as their banks changed and storms blew, large trees could fall and block spawning streams. According to Daniel, people were quick to respond to any event that impeded salmon migration and spawning,

That little river at Topaze Harbour is a beautiful little river. That's the one our people really looked after. I heard lots of good stories of when there's a slide our people would go up there and all of the families, and the whole, you know, our whole village would go up there and try to clean it and if they have to pack the fish over when they are spawning they packed live fish across. Tell me things like that. This is where the story really was told. They walked right in the water. To catch the fish and pack it over the other side of the slide. Cause you know when the slides, it doesn't really completely stop the water, it still travels, sometimes it diverted and sometimes it still runs under the slide a little bit. Enough for the fish to come up. There's lots of stories my grandfather and Billy Assu told me about that. That's where they really tried to save the salmon you know. They were worried about them not coming back. Like what happened to the Fraser River in 1913. That big slide. [DB-004]

That's what my dad said. Nature leads us and guides us sometimes. Looking after.... I asked him what does, when the fish need help sometimes, when there's, like I told you the story about Phillips Arm when there was, when a tree falls they burn it off.... But they took a long time to take the tree out so they packed the fish. Even the women came to help. Kids. They packed the fish from around the big tree to get it up the river. Things like that. You know they called that, that's where that word was used again.... *O'umps*. [DB-005]

Several people interviewed for this research had an intimate knowledge of salmon and spoke about managing the catch, distinguishing salmon runs from one another and many spoke about their experiences with the DFO. Tony told a story about a very old maternal relative, his mother's great-grandmother, meaning she was likely born in the early 19th century, noting that there was a balance between catch and spawning salmon:

There was a lot of fish and no one else was fishing. My grandmother, my mother's great grandmother, she died at 106. I know she's buried over there. She said there was lots of fish, she said, they come back pretty good every year - go fishing and there's lots of fish. But she said when they get no more it's dangerous because they all die off because there's too many of them. They die off and they get smaller and built up again. They knew how to fish then.... They knew when the humpbacks gonna be, they knew when the dogs gonna be, they knew when the sockeyes gonna be. They never took one stock at a time. They go for the dogs even if they let the sockeye or humpbacks go by. They took all species. And then they would go after halibut you see. They wanted the halibut quite a bit. [TR-002]

Daniel agrees:

They made sure not to overfish it. If there was way too much fish in one river, this is what my dad used to say, they would call the Salish. If the river had way too much and we couldn't take it all, they would call the Salish to come. They would try to help each other. Yeah. [DB-017]

Don also noted how important fishery management and control was in the past.

Recognizing fish traps as a formidable fish capture technology he commented,

And you gotta remember too that they had a lot of fish traps. And they had a real control on the fish stocks. [DA-002]

Management knowledge extended beyond catching the fish and maintaining spawning grounds. Johnstone Strait is a migration corridor for sockeye salmon travelling to the Fraser River and its countless tributaries. Millions of sockeye return to the Fraser River each year and their patterns and spawning grounds have been used by the DFO to group them into separate "stocks." According to the Cohen Commission, a commission tasked with examining the state of the Fraser River sockeye (Cohen 2012:76), 271 spawning populations are grouped into 19 identified stocks and 8 miscellaneous stocks. After spawning, depending on the populations, young sockeye spend a year or two in their nursery lake and then migrate to the ocean and northward, travelling through Johnstone Strait and Laich-Kwil-Tach waters. After a few years, they return, and

depending on water temperature they migrate to the Fraser either via Johnstone Strait or the Strait of Juan de Fuca (Cohen 2012:12-13). This pattern means that for thousands of years Laich-Kwil-Tach people had millions of sockeye salmon migrate through their waters. Other species of salmon also migrate through, some to their natal streams in Laich-Kwil-Tach waters and others to natal streams throughout the Gulf of Georgia. This long history and long-standing relationship resulted in a familiarity and recognition of sockeye runs. For example, although Daniel concedes that to know a run definitively the DFO conducts studies on fish samples, he also suggests that there are physical differences that one learns through embodied knowledge,

Yeah. We can tell them apart. If you are a commercial fisherman you can tell them apart quite easy. But you have to really know the salmon. The most beautiful salmon is the Adams River sockeye salmon. It is the most beautiful one of them all. And there is some of them that are almost really, I think, there is one that is almost the same, it looks the same but our people could taste the difference. In the salmon. From one river to another. They could taste the difference. I remember, I heard people talking about it from, because some of those rivers are quite close, they come quite close together. They don't come as thick but the Adams when it comes it's really thick probably the most. Last year was the Adams River.... They are wider, a little bit wider. Just by looking at the skin part, it has a nice blue back on it. Pretty blue. It's a real pretty fish, a beautiful salmon. And they are bigger than most salmon, than most rivers. There are a little bit bigger....

We can tell because the colors so different. But you got to be close. Some of the rivers are close, the colors are almost the same. Dark blue and really greens.... When you get them out of the water. You get to see, you can tell by the looks of the fish. Sometimes you get a net in and some of them are green coloured and some are blue. And then you know you have a next run. Maybe the horsefly, a little bit of horsefly and a little bit of Adams. Because they are close together. [DB-005]

As noted at the beginning of this section, fisheries enhancement practices are also part of the relationship between humans and fish. One such practice, egg transplanting, is noted in the literature (Billy 2009:130-131; Jones 2002:48; Sproat 1968 [1987]:148;

Thornton 2008) and was also mentioned in this study, although Ollie questioned its efficacy at first, deciding later that there must be another aspect to his experience that he did not fully comprehend,

Just kinda heard some of the old people they'd go in the rivers and get eggs. I don't know whatever happened because you have to have the male's seed there too. But I know, I remember when I was quite young I used to see people go take some of the eggs and throw them in the little creeks. But I never ever seen any of the results come out of it. There wasn't a male to go up there after them. Some of the old timers tried I guess. It was just out of the fish. Guess they didn't know back then to, they needed the male to go with it when they put it in the river. And they were fairly solid yet so they weren't, the fish weren't ready to spawn. [OH-008]

However, in a subsequent meeting, when asked about this further Ollie adds,

He must've known something, maybe just feeding the other things in the river. Well steelhead and trout would [eat them]. And birds and whatever else, mostly the sawbill duck. [OH-012]

Another practice that is informed by relationality but often read as a management strategy that ensured sustainability was to harvest the fish after they had spawned. Many years ago Daniel told me a story about he and his father in the early 1940s were fishing in the stream at Cameleon Harbour on Sonora Island. They walked up the stream to where the chum salmon were spawning and they gaffed the fish that had laid their eggs. Because chum are poor jumpers and even small waterfalls pose a barrier (Canada 2013), they prefer to spawn in the lower and quieter reaches of a stream, so one does not need to go far to catch them. Daniel and his father walked up the stream and caught 10 fish, which they tied to a rope to float down the stream. Daniel recalled the story because he fell in the water with the fish. But he also explained that even though they had “spawned out” they were still very good eating. Ollie explains further, “they done their job,” indicating

that waiting until after spawning means that the migration cycle is complete and taking the fish for food will not impact their reproductive cycle.

Catching chum and other salmon at this point in their lifecycle also means that the fish is at its lowest fat content. For this reason, chum salmon was an important resource on a damp coast that experiences a large amount of annual rainfall. Its lower fat content means it dries and smokes more easily and that it is less prone to mould and becoming rancid throughout the wet winter. Ollie explains,

And most of the time when, in the old days when chums went to the river, that's when the old timers used to take the chums just after they spawned. They done their job so we can take them. And they were still good for smoking and curing. They looked ugly but they were still good. Less fat and that's why they could preserve it better for keeping it on the shelf after they'd smoked and dried it. Well they had no other ways to keep their fish and stuff. They did their job. They done their job. More coming next year. Or three years or whatever. Their attitude was they've done their job now we can take them, what we need. [OH-008]

Silenced Knowledge

Every person interviewed for this study agreed that their knowledge, both collectively and among the individual fishers, is significant and that they should have a much greater role in fisheries management. Several people also expressed the sentiment encapsulated in June's comment,

“Our fishermen. It's their livelihood. To me what, I think they should be managing our salmon stocks. Not the Fisheries. I really feel that we need to have some on board to help manage.” [JJ-003].

However, among the challenges faced is the absence of a place to be included and also an absence of a voice. For example, Daniel regularly makes comments about management policies and decisions and their ensuing problems and also notes that the DFO biologists and/or decisions makers will not listen,

I don't know, it's really I think one of the most beautiful things the native people did. They cared about the nature... and how it helps us survive, you know. We looked after it. I could tell you stories and stories how my grandfather, Chief Billy Assu used to tell stories about how they save some rivers. I tried to tell it to scientists and they didn't like it. [DB-020]

Ollie has a similar story. For years Ollie travelled the coast with his father and through observing and modelling his father's actions he learned about the waters and the fish. He learned how to watch the tides and fish movement and from this learning and his observations he shared an interesting story,

Well when the fisheries started really getting involved that's what really kind of messed things up. Like there's, I know quite a few places, one in particular, Glendale Cove in Knight Inlet, used to start fishing pinks up there in early June and they'd run all summer 'till August. It was not a very big river, there was two small rivers there, Glendale River and Thompson River [Tom Browne]. And they used to produce a lot of fish, five, six million every year. Then this one time the fisheries went in there, and I blame the fishermen as well, they opened it right up to the flats, they said they had an overstocked river. And sometimes some of that fish in the river was not ready yet so they'll back out and another group will go up but they used to round the whole bay and outside in another big bay, they'd wait their turn. And that would run all summer. The group would go up, do their thing, then the next group would move in and so on, they'd move in to the other spots. Then when the fisheries got involved they said they had an overstocked river, they opened it right up on to the flats. And the fish in the river weren't ready so they backed out and they got the whole works, some boats went a ground in the flats reelin' fish. And that killed that whole river. And then they turned around and replanted it but they did the whole thing at once. If they had redid it the same way the run was, they would have had something. But now they've done it all at once and now they've got an overstocked river 'cause they all want to go at once. [OH-008]

In a follow up meeting, Ollie explained further,

There are two short rivers – Glendale River and Tom Brown River. They produced a lot of fish. Both the rivers produce up to four to five million fish. From May to the beginning of August – the fish keep coming. So the fish would hold here waiting to go up and after the first bunch goes up, another big school here, is ready to go up, and the other big school moves up. We had our camp here and we used to see them, a

school here, and another school here, all the way around to Siwash Bay. And when the school moved up the school moved over to there and this one moved up into there, and they all shifted... that's the pattern that I noticed all those years I was growing up there.... They wipe the whole thing out because these weren't ready [to go up the rivers] and they backed out. Sometimes when they're not ready they will back out. They wipe the whole works out and then planted it all at once and now they all want to come at once. Now they have an overstocked river. Whereas if they had done it this way, stock the river and then let them go out, and then restock it, and so on, over the period of time that it took them to do it naturally.... These guys all knew when their turn was. And like I say, these two little rivers produced a lot of fish over that period of time. Between five and six million fish. And this was like that for years. [OH-012]

While sentiments of frustration like Daniel's and Ollie's arising from their knowledge being silenced were common, another sentiment arose in a few of the interviews. This one was not only of regret about what has happened to the fish, but about the role Indigenous fishers might have had in it. Primarily Daniel, but also one or two others, expressed regret for not having learned better from the practice and knowledge modelled by their Elders. Daniel spoke at length saying,

Herring. And it was, herring was real cheap too. We shouldn't have fished it that way we fished. I just want to say that in there. Because it went just for oil and also fertilizer. The body. We never used it for food. That is the sad part about the herring.... Well, the reason why, I think we wasted the herring because it never went for food. It's good food, really. You know a lot of people in the world eat herring. And, I don't know, I think it was more of a waste because we, after I don't know how many years later we fished the roe, roe herring. Our people in the village, like our elders didn't like that. They said that it was going to hurt the, hurt every, they were going to hurt the salmon, they were going to hurt the cycle of the herring. Kill the herring. I agree in a way because I think it's sacred. That's the important part. Because Harry Assu said this, I heard him say this to me, he said "Herring spawning is sacred, really sacred." In our like, my grandfather, and Harry Assu's dad, they talked about it a little bit. They said it's, they had a word for it, I'm just trying to figure out the word. It is a beautiful word. You know, because we never touch like salmon when they're spawning. Like Berta said, before they went and hooked fish they had ceremonies, you know because it was sacred. The salmon were spawning, it was sacred too.

That's what Harry Assu used to say.... But we did awful things. We fish that herring when spawning.... It disappeared quite quickly on the coast. You know, a lot of places where they overfished and it wasn't looked after really. I can't, well, they let the big boats, seine boats, the fisheries... There was, you know the big seiners, at that time, they know exactly how much say herring there is there. Just using the sonar and sounder. They know exactly how much herring was in that bay. And there was only about 2000 tons in there. And they should never have opened up and they were opening things like that because of the big money. The Japanese were paying 5000 a ton for that herring. That's why. Money is always the root of all evil. It ruins things. I really, that's the part that Harry, well all our Elders talked about that. It wasn't just Harry but he said it the most, he said it quite a few times because he herring fished. He didn't like it. I don't know what Don will say about it but he said it to me personally, Harry, he said "I just don't like fishing the roe like that when they're spawning." That's what he said to me.... Taking everything, yeah. Tons and tons of fish was taken. And the coast is, all over the coast, some places were really, Queen Charlotte Islands were really bad. There's hardly any herring left but I hear it's coming back. And most of the West Coast, I know some places they overfished. Like I was saying there was only 2200 tons there and they went and fished it. It was a pay – you see they had test boats – fisheries had test boats and they paid them with the herring. And not cash. They paid them with the herring.... Why do they go take it? Because it was big herring, that's why. Really beautiful big herring. See, that's wrong right there. The biggest mistake they made and now there's no more herring there, in that place. Klaskwick Sound it's called, Klaskwick Sound. It's right close to Cape Cook.... Money meant lots to us too at that time. I guess that's why we did it. It was kind of sad. I just love the water, I don't care what kind of money we made. [DB-004]

Later in the interview, Daniel continued:

Well I just, this is what, well Harry Assu said, he didn't like us going fishing for herring. Especially herring he said. He said when you bother them too much at the wrong time, the sacred time, when they're spawning, it's really.... Same as the salmon. When they are going up the river and spawning. He said, my dad's the one, I asked my dad, what does Billy Assu and grandfather talking about? He said that's the sacred part of the salmon, the ceremony they used to have. So they can go and spawn just freely. Not bothered. You can go out, our people used to go out on the river and take certain salmon. They'd, you know, they'd have big ceremonies before they could do it. And they'd take a certain salmon that they think that's not, they know which one's not to take. Cause you know when the salmon spawns they gotta have the male too. Besides the female. They gotta have both or it'd be just a waste cause

there's nothing to fertilize the eggs. And he said they'd watch the salmon that's, I don't know, there was a word that he used, I'm just trying to think of that word. I forget all those words, native words.... It's, he said it's a weaker salmon that they figured that might not make it, that's the ones they would take. Cause he said that's when you notice the river is full of fish and some of them could barely swim. And they usually take that one, you know.... And this is the thing too. He, my dad said, they never went to just one river every year. They go to different rivers to do that. There were so many rivers around. He said that they made sure, the chiefs, or the ones that looking after the band or tribe, the leaders. He said, I think, most of our people had Elders looking after the chief, running the chief, looking after the chief. That's what Billy Assu said. He had lots of great Elders looking after him.... [DB-004]

A great deal was expressed in this last statement. Not only did Daniel continue with his thoughts on the negative impacts on the herring fishery but he also explained how the affront was compounded by the fact that it interrupted their lifecycle at a time that is vital to the overall survival of the fish. He ties this to the notion discussed above about individuals being tasked as caretakers, that role of *wanuk*^w discussed earlier, to a practice of harvesting the weaker fish, to the wisdom of the former leaders and he recognizes the importance of the fish's right to reproduce without harm. This idea of spawning being "sacred" is most certainly tied to Daniel's teachings from his Elders and the relational world. When asked further about this and how the fish might react Daniel responded by telling me about Harry Assu,

He was worried about, he said, whoever made this nature, he said, "we're gonna get punished." That's what he used to worry about. Punished by powerful beings that's, maybe... We never used to say God, we used to say, my dad used to say nature, that's God. That's what my dad used to say. [DB-004]

Many months later, my conversation with Daniel returned to the herring fishery and he commented further on his role,

You know, herring fisherman, I was one of them, we overfished the herring. But I think it's come back so strong. But if they open herring again, they just have to watch and make sure they don't overfish it, you know. Yeah there was some fish that they really over fished, especially the spawning beds, the spawning channels. [DB-017]

A similar conversation occurred with Ollie. Once a fisher but later employed in various jobs that allowed him to be home, Ollie holds both the DFO and the fishers accountable for mismanaging and mistreating the salmon stocks. He suggests that fishers chose to fish even if they knew management decisions were poor,

And the fishermen I blame them too for going along with the fisheries. You know, I always say they crapped in their own nest.... Then the fishermen always said mismanagement in the fisheries department, well it was mismanagement on their part too, the fishermen. And some of the old guys I used to tell them that I said, "you guys went for whatever the fisheries said, no wonder it's mismanaged." By both sides.... if the fishery says it was overstocked... the fishermen went along with what the fishery said. [OH-008]

As this chapter attempts to illustrate, contemporary relationships with fish and marine resources are complex. Although clearly informed by the relational world, an ongoing relationship with fish and exemplified and embodied in practice, it is also influenced by colonial policy, western education and the commercial industry. Throughout the 20th century, Laich-Kwil-Tach people and other Indigenous communities were forced to choose between poverty and/or leaving their home community and participating in a state-mandated fishery that over-exploited what Western management practices classify as a resource but who 19th-century Laich-Kwil-Tach ontology recognizes as kin. This, along with a state mandated residential school program and potlatch ban, drastically impacted the quality of their relationships with other nonhuman persons. Today, what is an ecological and economic catastrophe for the state is a moral and familial catastrophe for Laich-Kwil-Tach people who suffer the consequences as the

state plots out the tragedy of the commons in Indigenous territories. Nevertheless, contemporary Laich-Kwil-Tach ontology of fish, informed by 19th-century Laich-Kwil-Tach ontology continues to inform how people are connected to fish, its importance for well-being and its place in the Aboriginal rights and title discussion. This is exemplified further in the 21st-century big house and within potlatch practice. It is to this that I turn in Chapter 8.

Chapter 8 The Human-fish Relationship – Practice as Revitalization

When I was a boy about five or six years of age, I became aware of the omnipotent presence of masks. They had a life of their own—sometimes menacing and foreboding, always intrusive. Masks seem to be everywhere. They were at home in the attics and storage spaces or dancing round the fire in the Big House. Other times they would be evident round and about the village, like the Grizzly Bear... and *Dzunuk'wa*—the wild women of the woods.... These two really kept us kids in line. For most of us, as children in the village, it is these masks we remember the most, along with *Bak'was*.... Each mask took on the life and spirit of the persona it represented....

I remember the first time I danced in a mask it was about the same time that I first encountered *Bak'was* and *Dzunuk'wa*.... The fire roared with brilliance as we prepared to dance the *Atlak'im*, the dance of the Forest Spirits. Excitement and mystery filled the air. I had seen this dance before, and I had seen all its masks. They were beautiful and full of life.... Once inside their masks, a hush fell upon the troupe. The Forest has many voices and, sometimes, there is deafening silence; such was the moment behind the dance curtain.

As a masked dancer among the Kwakwaka'wakw, I have been in that moment countless times. It is a moment when all the world is somewhere else. I am totally and completely alone. My universe is the mold of the mask over my face. I am the mask. I am the bird. I am the animal. I am the fish. I am the spirit. I visualize my dance. I ponder every move. I transcend into the being of the mask. Younger dancers call it “hyping up.” Suddenly, the deafening silence explodes into a cacophony—birds sing, animals growl, ferns whistle in the wind. Everyone has a voice....

Masks have emanated through the mists of time as dreams and visions. People who have embraced them are *dlugwala* (blessed). These masks have been deemed *nawalak^w* (supernatural). They are part of the Kwakwaka'wakw mind that distinguishes us from the world around us and that gives credence to our own persona. Masks have a potent and compelling force, acknowledging the need for balance and harmony.... every dancer who has danced in a mask has glimpsed this oneness. (Robert Joseph in Macnair, et al. 1998:20-28)

Manifest within the passion of how fishing rights are expressed in community meetings, in the vehement frustration levelled at the DFO, in recollections of knowledge gained from the previous generation of Elders, in a fleet of fishers who steadfastly remain in an increasingly difficult industry, the Laich-Kwil-Tach relational world most certainly has meaning and agency in the 21st century. Perhaps nowhere is this more evident than in the big house, through the masks as the opening quote exemplifies, and through the practice of songs, dances and the first salmon ceremony. Attending to the contemporary expression of the relational world within the big house context is my intention in this chapter.

Twins and the Salmon Dance

As noted in Chapter 5 the initiation of individuals into the 19th-century Salmon Dance occurred during the winter ceremonial (Boas 1897:475-476). The novice disappeared for up to several months, and when he re-entered village life potlatch guests wore eagle down as a symbol of wealth, recognizing that the salmon brings prosperity and affluence (Boas 1897:475). In this case, the Salmon Dancer was the salmon's human incarnate in the form of the human dancer, much like that described by Robert Joseph above. Boas said that the human-salmon-person, greeted with "*haihō*," danced as a jumping salmon, holding his head sideways, dancing with stiff legs. His feet remained on the same spot and his body turned first to the right and then to the left. His forearms were bent upward, with palms open and stretched forward. He dances as such to the following song:

Many salmon are coming ashore with me.
 They are coming ashore to you, the post of our heaven.
 They are dancing from the salmon's country to the shore.
 I come to dance before you at the right-hand side of the world,
 overtowering, outshining, surpassing all;
 I, the salmon. (Boas 1897:475)

The importance of this ceremony and dance in which the initiate becomes the salmon is evidenced in part by the economic value placed upon it. Although the dance is under-represented in the literature, according to Boas (1897:475) “the amount of property



distributed by the dancer's father is as large as that needed for initiating a *hamats'a*,” signalling its importance and status in 19th-century Kwakwaka'wakw society. The *Hamatsa* Dance and initiates still today comprise an important part of the winter ceremonial. In fact if one does not have a *hamatsa* position in his or her family, it is impossible to host a potlatch or feast.

Figure 9: Shyanne Johnson doing the Salmon Dance, May 2015. Photo by D. Cullon.

In contrast, today the Salmon Dance holds a different import. Today it is less part of an initiation as described by Boas and more about ensuring the younger generation of Laich-Kwil-Tach people have an opportunity to dance, a different initiation of sorts. Today, the Laich-Kwil-Tach Salmon Dance is among the first dances learned by children. Very young children are included, so young that they are carried in their mother's arms or simply walk with the dancers, often watching their audience in astonishment. Currently, the Salmon Dance is danced as a group and the children, accompanied by adult women,

wear their dance blanket and a cedar headband with a salmon attached. The dancers carry a large white feather in each hand, used to bless the salmon on their return, and the dancers move their feathers together in a forward and upward motion. As a group, as a school of salmon, the dancers move in a circle and at the right moment in the music, they jump simultaneously, as salmon jump while ascending the river to spawn.

An attendant with a rattle accompanies the dance group protecting the dancers from the numerous spirits who attend these ceremonies and in this way, the salmon is brought into the big house and honoured for its continued gifts to the human world.

Also important in the Salmon Dance are twins, and in all interviews conducted for this study I inquired about twins and their connection with salmon. While most people connect twins with the Salmon Dance, Frances and Berta also spoke about the link between salmon and twins,

I heard my grandparents talking about twins. I used to wonder what they were talking about, that they were *G'utəla*. Fish. And I could never understand why they called them *G'utəla*. [FQ-015]

I used to wonder, “Why do they call them fish?” And my mother would tell me that they are very special, twins. Something to do with, I don't know, I think the tail or something of the fish. And I never really could understand it. [FQ-016]

Frances' recollection is explained in light of the ethnographic texts reviewed and discussed in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6. *G'utəla* means salmon and clearly her parents referred to the twins as such. Born in 1937, Frances' earliest memory of this was the 1940s, suggesting that the link between salmon and twins was as represented in the 19th-century texts. Statements like those from her parents reflect their teachings and a world in which humans and animals originated from the same place. At one point in history, all

beings were the same, making the basic essence of each being the same. Berta explains that they were,

Spiritual people. They were connected with the creator in the land. They knew they were caretakers of the land. Like who was here to tell them they have to do that? They knew because they were the first people. I don't have a problem with believing that. How would we know things that we know? You know we were so connected and we came from animals. And our dances show that. Our masks. [AB-020]

Following transformation, travel between the human and nonhuman worlds and transformation between human and nonhuman forms became limited to those with special abilities. In the oral texts, those who are capable of this travel and transformation are often surprised at first and return to the human world with *tlogwe*, or special gifts, and are *nawalak*^w. Because salmon have the ability to live as twins in the human world, twins are *nawalak*^w and in their kinship with salmon and because of the power they possess, they hold a special place in the human world.

June also spoke of what her mother taught her about the connection between salmon and twins and although characterized as “luck” and “prosperity,” it is likely that its concept is derived from *nawalak*^w understandings,

[Twins are the] transformation from the salmon to the twins. Yeah, and my mom always told me that if you lost one twin the other one would be very successful and lucky because the other one has given all that he had to the other twin. Because I do believe in it because look at how Tony was after he lost his twin. They become very prosperous. That is what my mom always said. Yeah, that their things all go to the other twin. [JJ-003]

They were just special. My mom also believed that, if you lost one, the other twin would be very lucky in his life. She always said that belief. They were part of the salmon. [JJ-010]

Elizabeth Peters was June's mother. A strong Laich-Kwil-Tach woman, she was born in 1900, the daughter of the John Dick from Cape Mudge and Louisa from Green

Point. To June, Elizabeth spoke about “luck” but as discussed in Chapter 5, twins were endowed with *nawalak*^w and had the power to influence their kin, the salmon, but they could also influence the weather and the winds. Being endowed with *nawalak*^w means having abilities well beyond those of the natural human world. In more recent times, the abilities that accompany *nawalak*^w are described as “luck” and by virtue of their connection with salmon twins are a promise of a prosperous life.

Frances also mentions the tail of the fish and knows that this was something important mentioned by her Elders but was not sure why. June helps to clarify the association of the salmon head and tail. For twins, birth order determines if they are the head or the tail of the salmon. The first-born twin is the head and the second-born is the tail. This determines the order in which they are presented during the Salmon Dance, as the head comes before the tail. June explained,

We do have this Salmon Dance that twins are part of the salmon. When we had our Salmon Dance and who was born first got to be the first part of the Salmon Dance and the one born behind was at the tail. It's for whatever twins. It's male and female. Whoever are the twins. It's a twin's dance. They have, we gave them the names, like *h'ema*.... So when we had our potlatch Tony was in the front, Tony had to be in the back because he was born after her. [Can other people be in between?] Yeah. because we still use the dance but it is actually, it is just supposed to be for the twins. [JJ-003]

In virtually every interview people spoke of the Salmon Dance when I asked about twins. This connection is widely known and widely practised. Don ties the dance directly to the First Salmon Ceremony but later notes that it is also part of the winter ceremonial,

Only twins can do it.... As far as I know it's just a ceremony where our people used, when they returned the remains of the fish or the salmon back into the water. They held that ceremony to do that.... Because when the twins are on their way out with those fish remains they, you know, you have somebody speaking, standing on the beach, he's going

on and on while they are on their way out. Then he says something just before they release them. [DA-002]

I've seen it where they, you have to have a twin doing it but then others that weren't twins too. There's a lot of times I hear someone make a remark that it's supposed to be all twins. But in this modern age they allow others.... [But] no, you've gotta have a twin [and they have to be] very much alive. And dancing. You see that's where the rules started falling apart. When they allowed different things to happen. [DA-002]

Don's last comment is representative of the dynamic nature of knowledge and practice. While the Salmon Dance continues because of the connection between twins and salmon, its practice changes with time. This dynamic nature was reified by Tori, a Laich-Kwil-Tach woman who is herself a twin and who dances the Salmon Dance regularly,

All I know is that they let the twins from the different tribes I guess, whoever is a twin, they all hop up and go in there and dance.... But now they have it differently. They have all the twins go up first and then anybody that is, that will follow in at the very end, people that are dancing. I'm nervous. I hate going first. They try to tell me "you have to go up there – you're a twin." I don't like first. "Oh God, do I have to go first," I said. I'm nervous. [TS-009]

The final part of Tori's statement is telling. Because she is the twin, she has to dance. She realizes the responsibility of the dance, compounded by her leading the other dancers, and is nervous. She made this statement two days before a feast at which she was expected to (and did) dance.

Through the practice of the Salmon Dance the connection between twins and salmon remains strong and twin contribution to human well-being continues to be recognized. Nevertheless, the colonial experience is also written on practice as noted by Don who says, "the rules started falling apart." The colonial experience most certainly changed ontological relationships and in the contemporary world where modern Western

science is hegemonic, reconciling 19th-century ontology with modernity is challenging. Nevertheless, as interviews with Elders indicate, there is an ongoing relationship that informs practice and notions of responsibilities and rights.

21st-Century First Salmon Ceremony

In spite of the early polices and laws briefly discussed in Chapter 4, as well as the laws that continue to limit the Indigenous fishery today, some communities continue to conduct their First Salmon Ceremony. In some cases it is done as a large-scale, community event, while in others, families have private and quiet first salmon gatherings and meals to welcome the salmon's return. In some cases though the ceremony virtually disappeared for many decades. In all cases, there appears to be a resurgence of the ceremony as indicated by a simple Google search that results in a number of newspaper articles, images, videos and webpages that show the ceremony in the contemporary context.

In the Laich-Kwil-Tach community, while some families continued to have their own private ceremony, as a communal event, as far as anyone recalls, the practice was dormant for the better part of a century, occurring only once or twice between the early 1920s and 2016. I suggest the early 1920s as the earlier date because in December 1921 a number of community members participated in the potlatch at *'Mi'mkwəmlis*, a small village on Village Island in the Broughton Archipelago, northeast of Johnstone Strait, which led to the potlatch trial and convictions mentioned previously. The Laich-Kwil-Tach people “surrendered” their regalia making any further ceremony difficult.

Another reason to settle on the early 1920s is drawn from a photo of the Laich-Kwil-Tach village at Cape Mudge, taken in what appears to be the early 1920s after the

big houses were torn down and European-style houses were built, an event that occurred shortly after the potlatch arrests. The photo (Figure 10) shows a watchman's pole, which, according to Barnett and Boas (1935; 1925:150) was used in the First Salmon Ceremony (Chapter 5). Its presence suggests a recent First Salmon Ceremony and/or potlatch in which it was used. However, in Assu of Cape Mudge, Assu and Inglis date the photo at 1913, taken during a Wallace family potlatch (Assu and Inglis 1989:47).



Figure 10: Watchman's pole in Cape Mudge Village, c. 1920, BC Archives PDP-00129. Courtesy of the Royal British Columbia Museum.

In his book, Harry Assu says that before 1984, he had not seen the First Salmon Ceremony for seventy years, meaning it would have occurred around 1914 (Assu and Inglis 1989:94). Born in 1905, it is unclear why, if the ceremony occurred in the 1920s and 1930s, Harry would not know the meaning of the watchman's pole unless it was used in another way (e.g. secret potlatch) or if it was used privately. However, the openness and detail of Barnett's field notes suggest little secretiveness in regards to this ceremony. It is also possible that Harry was away fishing during its use. Harry says that they held

the First Salmon Ceremony (without the watchman's pole) again, once, in 1984 as part of the dedication for the east wall in the church at Cape Mudge after the congregation hired Bill Reid to design a piece that was carved by the Haida carver, Jim Hart. For the design, everyone agreed that a fish would be ideal because it is also "the sign of the Christian" (Assu and Inglis 1989:94). Reid designed and Hart carved two large salmon, swimming in a circle and it was put up on church wall. To celebrate they caught four salmon and everyone tasted them before their bones were carried back to the water (Assu and Inglis 1989:93) as part of the First Salmon Ceremony.

When asked about the ceremony just described, few seem to associate it with the church and 1984. One or two people associated it with the early 1990s and the official opening of the *Tsa-Kwa-Luten* Lodge, a resort-style hotel built and operated by the We Wai Kai Nation, so it is unclear if there was a 1984 and an early 1990s ceremony, or if it only happened in 1984. Berta recalled,

We had 2 ceremonies not very long ago. Maybe 20 years ago or more. We went down to the water someone had got a fish. And we left the fish intact with the bones, skeletal of the fish. Took the flesh off. We wrapped it in a cedar blanket and twins had to put it back out in the water. And I think Colleen's girls did that... The skeletal. It was still intact, the head, the body and the tail and wrapped in a cedar blanket and put it back out in the water and prayed for the return.... They did that every time. [AB-004]

In most cases, when asked about the ceremony the response is something like,

"I was too little to remember or know what they were doing." [SD-006]

Daniel said,

We used to do that all the time, our people before. Even my grandfather talked about it, just a little bit. Him and Billy Assu talked about that. In the big village sites, the big village like Phillips Arm, and Jackson Bay, Topaze Harbour, that's where we had big village sites. A lot of people, they had 5 little villages in Topaze Harbour and they'd all come

together and do this thing. They, you know, the ceremony. I asked my dad what they were talking about and he said it's just like, they even had dancing. The Salmon Dance. That's what my dad said, they had Salmon Dances and this was long ago. Before the non-native people came. [DB-004]

June tied the ceremony to reincarnation and to the proper treatment of salmon that would encourage others to come to the human world,

Well I just know that, like when we always had our first feed, she'd always go down to the beach and throw the bones and stuff back in. That was their belief that the salmon would return.... That it would bring more salmon. [JJ-003]

Don also spoke of why the ceremony was important,

Well I'm just wondering... what they called *g'wilas*. You know it's when they have a ceremony with the salmon that they prepared you know. Because that would be part of it you know. *G'wilas*. They had so many different names, for our, you know, it wasn't just called Potlatch. They had a specific name for every one of them. Well that's when they call the people together to, you know the ceremony, whatever it was they were going to do. In most cases it was whoever was head of the family. I can't say I ever witnessed it... but I heard [the old] people talk about it.... As far as I know it's just a ceremony where our people use, when they returned the remains of the fish or the salmon back into the water. They held at ceremony to do that.

Because when the twins are on their way out with those fish remains they, you know, you have somebody speaking, standing on the beach, he's going on and on while they are on their way out. Then he says something just before they release them. [DA-002]

In 2016, as the Laich-Kwil-Tach people drive what appears to be a cultural revitalization, the minister from United Church located on the reserve at Cape Mudge, after dialogue with some of her Laich-Kwil-Tach congregation, approached the Nuyumbalees Cultural Centre to enquire if there was interest in partnering to host a First Salmon Ceremony. This Cultural Centre is based in the village at Cape Mudge and was established in 1978 to house the repatriated potlatch masks and regalia that were

confiscated after the potlatch trial (Assu and Inglis 1989:94). It began as a museum but within the past five years has transitioned to a cultural centre and, like its northern counterpart, the U'mista Cultural Centre, it represents the wider Kwakwaka'wakw community, but with its location in the heart of Laich-Kwil-Tach territory, Laich-Kwil-Tach communities are very involved.

It is unclear why the United Church minister approached the Nuyumbalees Cultural Centre about the ceremony, but it is possible that interviews for this current research may have played a part in its development. In every interview I asked people questions about the First Salmon Ceremony. In every case people said that it is something they want to bring back. Some community members hope that revitalizing the ceremony will have a role in education, serving to connect their youth and others with salmon and reminding everyone that there is a limit to what can be taken,

I thought it was really important because, you know, our people always gave thanks for fish or, any kind of food. There was always ceremony and celebration over it. Whatever we did. And I think it was very important for our younger people to understand that we don't just take things. We are grateful for them. And we give thanks for them. And we celebrate about it.

... to be thankful for coming, a prayer for a successful return. And I think we need to understand that it's a sacred ceremony that probably will nourish us. If we understand it. To have that connection again. Because we need that connection. You know the scientific part of the fishery is not working. The spiritual aspect has to come and take a part, because it is a spiritual happening. It doesn't just happen because the fisheries was formed. [AB-20]

Daniel also felt strongly that the ceremony is important and that because it was done in the past it is important to continue today,

They want the salmon to return, that's why they do that. I think that's the most important ceremony they ever had. [DB-04]

I heard that story from chief Bill Roberts.... He never said too much about it but he said it's sacred, that the salmon ceremony is sacred. I think he came to it and he said that you guys did a good job. That's why he said that. And the salmon twins he talked about, we need to keep this thing going. That's what the old man said to me. He said something else too, it's just so sad I can't remember. Some of this is really quite important. He said he really believed in the salmon ceremony. He said that our people did it everywhere, not just here. They did it in the inlets, you know, wherever they were living. [DB-05]

I think we have to bring it back. We just got to start doing it. Some of our young people, maybe... there are some, that Shawn that fishes with me... He's really, he cares. He wants to bring some of the things back. And I told him about the salmon ceremony and he said maybe we have to do that in the big way. That's what he said to me right away. I said that would be good. Because he drums and everything. He is good. [DB-20]

Daniel later told me that he spoke to the minister at the United Church at Cape Mudge to suggest that the First Salmon Ceremony is a ceremony they should bring back each year. When it was decided that the ceremony would take place, he also set the date of June 18. Then, in a speech to the people assembled for the ceremony, the minister thanked Daniel and Berta for their important role in seeing this ceremony returned. They both sat at the front and centre of the group of Elders who were honoured with witnessing the ceremony.

Another individual, Patrick, who was instrumental in the 2016 First Salmon Ceremony also attended two interviews with his father, Don, and uncle, Tony, during which time we discussed the ceremony. When asked about the ceremony Tony intimated its significance by virtue of the importance of the salmon,

Well the salmon, like I said it was treated like gold. The Indians didn't believe in a god. They treated the earth like their mother. Everything on the earth we live by but it's a different way now. [TR-02]

Then Don spoke about the ceremony,

My understanding was that the purpose of the ceremony is to make sure that they recycle, or the cycle of that species carries on. Well they are part of the cycle of life of that fish.... The last time we held that ceremony.... it was Ron Atkinson that was there, the minister. Because he was involved in it.... Yeah, because we had Bobby Joe who was *hili'kala*, saying what had to be said. [DA-02]

Later, Patrick was doing renovations at the minister's house when the minister asked him for ideas on how to encourage more community interest and participation in church activities. He told her that they had a number of traditional ceremonies and that it might be appropriate for the church to support their revitalization. He gave the First Salmon Ceremony as a specific example.

Following the advice of the Daniel, Berta and Patrick, the United Church minister approached the Director at the Nuyumbalees Cultural Centre to ask if they could partner to host a ceremony. The Director took the request to her Council of Elders and obtained their approval to proceed, but the Council of Elders made it clear that if this was to begin anew in 2016 that it was something that the Cultural Centre needed to ensure happens annually going forward. They agreed that this was an opportunity to support the Cultural Centre's mandate to support community outreach and they felt that it would be good to host the ceremony while there are still people who recall the 1984 ceremony [JS-018]. They were also clear that although they would partner with the church, the Cultural Centre would remain neutral in terms of the religious aspects of the ceremony and in terms of the church's involvement, that this would not be a Christian event. The minister respected this and she took her cue from the Laich-Kwil-Tach [JS-018], something that was further necessitated by the number of people who generally attend Cultural Centre

events, as they would easily overwhelm the church [JS-018]. The connection was also facilitated by geography as the church and the Cultural Centre are neighbours and an active Cultural Centre board member is the head of the British Columbia Native Ministries and lives in the manse.

Finally, the Council of Elders decided that the ceremony was an excellent opportunity to build upon their relationship with and educate the larger community about the importance of salmon to the Laich-Kwil-Tach people, as well as the important role Laich-Kwil-Tach people have in caring for the salmon. In this regard there was a discussion about the openness of the ceremony and the Council of Elders and the Cultural Centre Board of Directors agreed that while the ceremony was for the Laich-Kwil-Tach people, the larger community could be invited. Thus, the focus remained on the Laich-Kwil-Tach people, their relationship with the fish and on reaching out to the younger generation who had never witnessed the ceremony, but the larger community was invited to attend and to learn from it.

To plan for the ceremony the Nuyumbalees Cultural Centre contacted Chief Robert Joseph to officiate, the same person who spoke about of the omnipotent and *nawalak*^w masks in the quote at the beginning of this chapter. The event was planned largely on his advice as everyone agreed that he is an authority. After all, Don had told me he had done the ceremony previously and that he is *hili'kala*, which translates as “spiritual leader” [Frances] or “healer” [Emily Aitken]. I was however, asked by the minister a couple of weeks prior to the ceremony to provide some background materials. I sent a number of sources and then was asked by the Cultural Centre’s Board President to photograph the event.

Because this was a First Salmon Ceremony, it was necessary to ensure that all guests were fed, so a Laich-Kwil-Tach caterer was hired. Ironically, acquiring the fish was a challenge. The idea was that the sockeye for the ceremony would come from Johnstone Strait, the most important waters for Laich-Kwil-Tach fishers and from where the ongoing relationship with fish is most practised. However, the sockeye run had not yet begun locally so some “fish wrangling” was necessary. Instead of coming from Johnstone Strait, the fish came from the west coast of Vancouver Island. This was arranged through Walcan, the local fish plant. It was agreed that Walcan would supply the fresh fish that was coming from the west coast and, in return, when the run began in Johnstone Strait, the Laich-Kwil-Tach fisher tasked with catching the fish for the First Salmon Ceremony would return the same number of fish to Walcan. In this way Walcan still got all of its fish, albeit with a slight delay, and the community could proceed with its ceremony on the date originally set.

The day before the ceremony a number of people, both Laich-Kwil-Tach and non-Laich-Kwil-Tach came together to clean and prepare the fish, in this case sockeye salmon. Six fish were set aside as the official first fish while the others were cleaned and then cooked around a fire, a preparation called *glubek*.

Many of the volunteers were inexperienced and had either never cleaned a fish or did not know the Laich-Kwil-Tach method of cleaning the fish; cut down each side of the backbone, remove the backbone, tail and entrails together to “butterfly” the salmon, in preparation for mounting on cedar sticks to roast around the fire in *glubek* fashion. Nevertheless, the more experienced Laich-Kwil-Tach people showed the others the method and everyone agreed that the experience was rewarding and fun. Once roasted,

the fish were kept on their roasting sticks and were laid flat on the racks amidst the smoke of the smokehouse overnight. This prevented any spoiling, kept the insects off the fish and lightly smoked the meat for further flavour.

At the same time six official fish were cleaned. Their entrails were removed but the head and tail on each was left intact. All remains from these six fish were gathered and returned to the ocean while the fish themselves were wrapped in a cedar mat woven by a local girl. This teen-aged girl recently began the art of weaving and was asked to weave the first-salmon mats, a responsibility she took very seriously. The wrapped fish were then placed on cedar boughs. Six fish were prepared in this way but only two were used in the ceremony. The intention was to ensure that at least two fish were properly cared for and prepared but preparing six provided room for any kind of error. In the end, two of the fish became the official fish that were returned and the other four were included among the fish eaten by the assembled guests.

On the June 18, 2016, my daughter and I attended the ceremony. We arrived at 9:40 AM, about 20 minutes before the volunteers were asked to arrive. The caterer, a well-regarded Laich-Kwil-Tach chef, was on hand, as were his helpers. It quickly became an “all hands on deck” kind of event to prepare for the large number of expected guests. We set out chairs, scooped coleslaw and potato salad and packaged “boxed lunches” that would facilitate feeding the guests. The exception was laying out plates for the Elders as it was deemed inappropriate to offer them boxed meals. At 11 AM Patrick, who managed the fish preparation, arrived. We went to his family smokehouse to get the *glubek*, making multiple trips to deliver the 100 salmon to the kitchen.

As we collected the fish we layered them, two deep, on large cookie sheets and

foiled each layer. We transported them eight fish to a tray, four trays at a time, to the community hall where the volunteers broke pieces off and put them in the lunch boxes along with a bun, potato salad and coleslaw. The boxes were refrigerated or placed in coolers with ice and in this way enough food was prepared for about 700 people. I made the final trip to the smokehouse, to get the last few fish alone. I was entrusted with ensuring the smokehouse fire was not at risk of spreading and for closing up the smokehouse before leaving with the last of the fish.

The ceremony itself was held above the beach, close to the dock where the twins would board the boat with the two first fish. There was some discussion about utilizing the community canoe but it was decided that too many people were needed to move it. In the end, one of the A-Tlegay boats and its crew was arranged. This boat also brought the elected chief to the ceremony. I later heard that the issue with the canoe provided further controversy with the same people who opposed the church-cultural centre collaboration, arguing that only Laich-Kwil-Tach people should have been considered to lift the canoe. Nevertheless, with the large aluminum A-Tlegay boat adorned with cedar boughs, the boat was prepared for its role in the ceremony.

On the area immediately above the beach, event tents were raised and a small number of chairs were set out for Elders. A table with a red tablecloth was set with cedar boughs in preparation for the first fish. As people arrived, most remained standing, respecting the space reserved for Elders and the elderly. Important to the ceremony was the community culture group, a group organized by local Elder, June, and attended by youth and adults in the community who want to learn their songs and dances, or by those who appreciate the opportunity to practise them. Approximately 20 culture group

members, arrayed in their regalia, attended the fish and the twins, forming an important part of the procession that returned the salmon to the ocean.

The ceremony began when the Elders, guests, officiants, twins, singers, drummers and dancers were assembled. The salmon, wrapped in cedar bark mats and sword fern, were placed on the cedar bough-covered table. Chief Robert Joseph greeted guests in Liq'wala and English and invited everyone to partake in the feast after the ceremony. Then Chief Brian Assu welcomed the guests, reminding everyone that salmon is important to Laich-Kwil-Tach people, saying that almost every household participated in the fishery and that "it's what made the We Wai Kai First Nation."

At this point Chief Robert Joseph explained the significance of the First Salmon Ceremony as well as what would happen. Paraphrasing his statements, he said,

The ceremony is ancient with special meaning. I hope that people leave after the ceremony with a better understanding of how everything is connected. When the ceremony is conducted there is a recognition that the salmon have existed "in their own right" as a tribe under the sea. In the Undersea Kingdom. People rely on the salmon returning each year, and this was in the past as it is for the future. Salmon have a "profound significance" among First Nations. And they were significant in terms of the spiritual relationship people have with them. It is important to remember that all of creation is sacred and that it's important to be in tune with the Creator. This ceremony is part of our religious and ceremonial practices. It is tied to our values. Why have we drifted from the notion that everything around us is sacred? As a result we have lost the reverence we had for things. Please recognize that everything is interconnected and that we have a responsibility to promote peace and balance. Traditionally people waited anxiously for the first salmon to arrive. After they feasted on it they sent it back to its own tribe under the sea. Its insides and its bones, along with its cedar bark mat, were returned to the water. They would remind the salmon that it was treated well and with respect and it was asked to tell the other salmon that they too would be treated respectfully. It was hoped that they would carry this message. This is the cycle, without a real beginning or end. We are all custodians. Soon, the fish will be placed in the water so they can return to their own village.

At this point the drummer began a slow rhythm and song; the twins (both young women) moved forward to carry the salmon together on their tray. They walked to the dock, followed by the dancers. Once at the boat the twins boarded and the boat pushed off to float in front of the beach and all of the witnesses. Then each taking a salmon in its mat, the twins leaned over the edge of the boat and let the salmon gently slide into the water. As they did so the drummer stopped and Chief Robert Joseph asked everyone to remember the sanctity of all things, including the salmon. Praying he said, “go home now swimmers, go home now supernatural ones, back to your ancestors. Don’t forget to tell them that we treated you well and with respect and that we hope you will come back next year... *Gilakasla satsum, gilakasla* salmon.” This prayer is similar to those 19th-century prayers discussed previously, with *nawalak*^w being glossed as “supernatural one,” and in which the salmon are invited to return next year, a recognition of their sentience and the importance of respect within the relational world.

Following the prayer, and because this was a ceremony that was also seen as an opportunity to share the practices and educate the witnesses, Chief Robert Joseph explained the meaning of the twins in the ceremony,

Twins were considered to be the essence of salmon. To be actually part of the salmon people as well. So we hold many ceremonies and dances in the hopes that salmon will always be kind to us, that they will always return. And so twins are very significant in our culture.

Then, in the same speech Chief Robert Joseph explained the sanctity of the salmon and its place in the Kwakwaka’wakw world,

When we think about the salmon and the significance of the species they are considered to be like us, a race of people, supernatural people and it’s in this context that we bring reverence to our lives, some sense of reverence to everything around us, to those things that we depend on. I think we’ve gone too far with what we see as “progress” that we

forget how sacred this place is. This divine place with everything in it. And I've been watching over my lifetime and we've moved away from our spiritual dimension when in fact, it's just a thin veil that separates us. And if we learn again to honour the sanctity of all things, of everybody, we can recreate our place here and our society. So when you leave, please think about your lives, how you can give context to your relationship with everything around you in a way that we recognize that all of this is universal, one whole, inseparable and that we need to always be promoting peace and balance and harmony.

Following these statements the drummer began again and the assembly moved to the community centre. Here the culture group danced as part of the celebration and then more speeches were given and it was at this point that the minister from the local United Church spoke. She led the audience in prayer and then spoke of the presence of God and how this was a special day to celebrate the life of the salmon. Then the political leaders in the community spoke to welcome the local Member of Parliament and the Member of the Legislative Assembly. To close the speeches and begin the meal, Chief Robert Joseph said a few final words, during which time he thanked Daniel Billy and Berta Billy for their role in promoting the revitalization of this important ceremony. Finally, the minister offered one last prayer and lunch was served; Elders received their meal on a plate and other guests were given the pre-boxed lunches. The hall was full, every chair was taken, people leaned on the wall around the edges and the hundreds of people in attendance had a greater understanding of the relationship between Laich-Kwil-Tach people and salmon, and the ontology that informs meaning and practice.

By almost all accounts, the revival of the First Salmon Ceremony was a success. There was general support in the community for the ceremony and it brought together many people to ensure its success after so many years. A few people in the community, however, were upset about the collaboration between the Cultural Centre and the United

Church, arguing that the ceremony is sacred and should not be shared with the church or with the larger, non-Laich-Kwil-Tach community in the area. As a result, these few people chose not to attend but vocalized their opposition on social media. The community response, in general, was quick and precise. Most people supported the collaboration and a number of Elders made it clear that while the First Salmon Ceremony is important and it is about the fish, it is also an opportunity to share their relationship with fish while also demonstrating their rights to the local community. They argued that they have always been open to sharing these ceremonies and that relationships with the larger community in today's world are important to foster understanding. In this way, the First Salmon Ceremony is practice as revitalization. The First Salmon Ceremony encapsulates the dedication of the youth and Elder group, the devotion extended by the youth learning the art of weaving, finding a place for her practice to have further meaning, the commitment of the larger community (Laich-Kwil-Tach and non-Laich-Kwil-Tach alike) who learned a new skill of cleaning fish to make *glubek*, and the interest of hundreds of people in witnessing one expression of the human-fish relationship first hand. As such the First Salmon Ceremony is practice as revitalization and revitalization as practice. It is a way to reconfigure and represent the human-fish relationship in the 21st century both to themselves and to the larger community. This sentiment continued in a later interview when Daniel was asked about including the larger community,

I think that part is really good. We talked about it and we figure we could teach a little bit about our ways. Help let them find out the way we were. A lot of them were friends. They just said they loved it and that it's a good way to get together. It is the way of our people, this one guy said, "it's your people. This is just the way of your people and it should never be dropped." That's what he said, this one guy.... "We have to keep it going," this is what he said. And a lot of them come and ask questions. And some of us, we try to explain it and tell them why,

that our people did that. I think that it's really important, that little story that I told you about my dad. He said we are blessed. My grandfather used to say that too, Tom Price. He said, he didn't say blessed, there's some native word for that, I can't remember what it is now. You know we are blessed because everything just comes to us. The fish, birds, the animals. We don't have to go far. He said we are the luckiest people on earth, that's what my grandfather used to say. [DB-017]

Certainly the sentiment of opposition was limited in its extent and generally did not prevent others, even those closely related to the few dissenting voices, from participating. For example, one of the most vocally opposed is closely related to the young girl who wove the first salmon mats. Thus, his opposition did not prevent others in his family from offering their support or from having a significant role.

Several months after the First Salmon Ceremony I met with the Nuyumbalees Cultural Centre Director. Although not a Laich-Kwil-Tach citizen, Jodi Simkin had worked for the Laich-Kwil-Tach people at the Cultural Centre for a number of years. Acting as a liaison in this case between the church and the community, the Cultural Centre was instrumental in the success of this ceremony. One of its first orders of business, once the Council of Elders and the Board approved the event, was to set up the connection between Chief Robert Joseph and the minister, Mignon Smienk. They met to discuss the significance of the ceremony and the role each had to play, but at all times it was understood that the Laich-Kwil-Tach were the decision-makers. The Cultural Centre was also instrumental in funding. Because this is a cultural event, protocol says that people must be fed, and because this is the First Salmon Ceremony, people must be fed the first salmon. It is counter to protocol to charge guests any type of fee so the decision to feed up to 700 people is not one made lightly. To address the financial needs the Cultural Centre requested funding from the local Regional District, the Comox

Conference of the United Church and the We Wai Kai Nation. The Regional District offered financial support because they felt the ceremony offered tourism benefits to the region. The Comox Conference supported the ceremony because it felt that the ceremony was of service to its members. And finally, the We Wai Kai Nation supported the ceremony because it stands strong behind cultural revitalization. The funding was used to provide honoraria to the officiate and to purchase the food. Most of the work was done by a dedicated group of volunteers, both Laich-Kwil-Tach and non-Laich-Kwil-Tach, who generally support the Cultural Centre's events.

Although long dormant, Laich-Kwil-Tach people continue to see the First Salmon Ceremony as an important part of their connection to salmon as nonhuman persons. Chief Robert Joseph made this clear in his statement that salmon “are considered to be like us, a race of people, supernatural ones.” He did not use the word “believe” nor did he couch this as being in the past. This statement was matter of fact and made in the present, about the present. The connection between salmon and humans and the reciprocal responsibility between the two beings is expressed in the ceremony. In some ways, the ceremony performatively embodies the relationship: if humans treat their salmon counterparts well and respectfully, and in the contemporary context they remember their strong connection to them as sentient beings, then in turn, the salmon treat their human counterparts well by offering ongoing nourishment. Long after the ceremony, I asked Daniel if he thought it had anything to do with the huge and unexpected chum run that arrived in Laich-Kwil-Tach waters later that October. He said,

It probably does. For everything. But we have to look after the environment. I think that's the most important thing. We have to really look after everything. [DB-020]

Meanwhile, for Rod, it was more about acknowledging the salmon and their contribution to Laich-Kwil-Tach identity,

That acknowledgement is, I just feel like it's a small thing we can do, it's important. And it's an importance that shouldn't be overlooked and shouldn't be taken for granted like we do, I think. It's part of our life, it truly is. I can't over emphasize it....

As discussed elsewhere in this dissertation, the safeguarding of the relationship between humans and fish was and is ongoing, incorporating roles for the individual, the family and for the larger community. The short period over which the First Salmon Ceremony was conducted encapsulates the broader relationship in a short but intense ritual, exemplifying reciprocal responsibilities, reciprocal respect, resurrection, personhood, sentience and a balance between the two parts of the world in which humans and salmon work to provide for the other in a mutually beneficial relationship.

In the case of this most recent ceremony it was clear to the Laich-Kwil-Tach community that the relationship and the ceremony are important, but there was also another message to the wider community: this is our right, not only to have the ceremony but to the fish, and part of this right is to ensure the well-being of the fish, a right that translates into contemporary management. After Berta told me that the “scientific part of the fishery is not working” she asked me to ensure that for the next ceremony DFO representatives be invited. She felt that they too should witness this ancient connection between Laich-Kwil-Tach people and the salmon in hopes that they would begin to understand that there are ways of knowing other than science. Ways that are informed by countless generations and practice.

Furthermore, in terms of the outside community, those living on Quadra Island, those provincial and regional government representatives who attended, and others who

are not directly a part of the Laich-Kwil-Tach community, this ceremony was a statement of Laich-Kwil-Tach identity, which pronounced that Laich-Kwil-Tach people have a relationship with salmon that is different from the settler community. Studies on Indigenous identification show that material and symbolic resources, as well as continued participation in traditional activities and food sharing, contribute to identification, which in turn contributes to concepts of personhood and nationhood while supporting one's relationship with other beings (Hall 2000:17; Hayden 2014:36; Nadasdy 2003b:76). The role of nonhuman partners in the process of Indigenous identification has only recently been explored on the Northwest Coast (Kistler 2010; Thom 2005) and in terms of Laich-Kwil-Tach people and the First Salmon Ceremony, the salmon are important in the process of Laich-Kwil-Tach identification.

Finally, by sharing this ceremony with the larger community, Laich-Kwil-Tach people were both publicly and internally establishing themselves as salmon people. But not only people who have rights to use salmon as a resource, but as people who have rights to a relationship in which both humans and nonhumans are cared for, publicly signalling the need, and even a right, for an active role in decision-making and management of salmon resources (Anderson 2000; Vitebsky 2005). And because salmon are part of the Undersea Kingdom, Laich-Kwil-Tach people see this right extending to all marine resources. I return to this shortly, but first I examine the Laich-Kwil-Tach fisher in the contemporary context.

Chapter 9 “Inside”

“Inside! Inside! Inside!”

These are welcome words on the seine boat.

I Consider Myself a Fisherman

During most interviews for this research, I asked questions about how the fishery supported the person’s family, both as a child and as an adult. In all cases, everyone identified their father as a fisher and stated that their childhood home was supported by fishing. In some cases, people noted that their father or husband worked in the forest industry in the off season, meaning when the salmon were not running. This trend continued among the community consultants whose age averaged 78 years. When asked about their careers, 11 out of 14 people self-identified as fishers. Of the three people who did not identify as fishers, one, Ollie, self-identified as a “Jack of all Trades” and noted that he was fishing by age 12. His experience “working with old guys” [OH-008] both on the boats and in the “bush” gave him a good understanding of gas and diesel engines, a skill that was of great benefit to him later. But he also proudly talks about his days fishing with his father on the “first drum seiner on the coast” [OH-008],

It came originally, came over from Nova Scotia. Come over by flat car. Yeah. It was a troller when it first came over. It drowned the original owner. Flipped over out, not used to the waves out here. 'Cause it was built for the east coast. So, the original owner drowned in it when it flipped over. And this other fellow that bought it, he made a little drum seiner out of it. Yeah it was a troller when the original owner had it here. And we would, we bought in 1958, '57 when dad bought it, 1957. And then we, we put trolling poles on it and trolled with it also. In early spring. And then when I got older I used to run it for him all the time. [OH-008]

The remaining two people, Sophia and Frances, identified themselves as mothers, but also as the daughter, wife and mother of fishers. In all cases, fishing supported the household for at least part of the year. For some who had large families, they found they had to supplement their fishing income with other work, but whenever possible, they joined a crew and looked forward to fishing season. Frances said that her husband looked forward to it every summer because “it was like a holiday to him” [FQ-016].

Of the 11 people who self-identified as fishers, most spent their lives working almost completely as “commercial fishers” (n=8) and identified as such. One of the three self-identified fishers, but who did not call herself a “commercial fisher,” Katoo, born in 1925, noted that she worked in the canneries and hunted octopus. Katoo was proud to announce that she was “never lazy” and in her interview she told me six times that she never relied on welfare. She said,

In the cannery. Yeah. I worked in the cannery all my life. I never went welfare either. I might as well tell you. Never welfare in my life. I worked in [Quathiaski] Cove. At the cannery there. Then it burned down. Burned down. Then we went to Steveston. And I worked in the cannery there. I worked on two machines. You know, the lids, two machines I was working, putting the lids on. Two machines. It was a clean job. I liked it. The mechanic really liked me. He picked me for herring again. I had to do two machines again. The lids are so big. I had to do that nightshift too. This was nightshift. Yeah, I worked all my life. No welfare. I go trolling with my boys when they were young. Fished, never lived on welfare. [AS-009]

Katoo’s husband, Alvin, was also a fisher, working in the commercial industry for his entire life. He owned different boats throughout his career and fished by trolling, gillnetting and seining. Together they had five children, four sons and a daughter. All four of the boys continue in the industry, relying in one way or another on fish to support their families, some as crew members and some as skippers. Katoo also supported her

family by octopus hunting. When asked about her time as a “master octopus hunter” she responded,

Yeah! I forgot that one! I used to make money. Go out by myself in the rowboat. Make money. For our groceries. How did you know? I used a pike pole and a gaff hook on the end. And hook it. I just know how to do it. Down by the lighthouse. It was just as white as snow. The octopus. The biggest one must of been over 100 pounds. I don't know how I lifted it. But I got it slow too. My husband tried to lift it and he couldn't lift it. It was so big. [Where would you fish... for the big octopus?] The lighthouse, and down around the Cape there. I told Mark, I want my ashes to be down, when I die, by them Copper Bluffs, where I used to fish all the time. That's where I want my ashes to go. Go dump them down below that. I used to fish there all the time. Octopus.... Yeah. I tipped over twice in the rowboat. The rowboat went over and the octopus was still stuck on the bottom. It was funny. I tipped over twice. Once at Copper Bluffs and once in Campbell River, on this side. Maybe somebody see me, I don't know. [AS-009]

Katoo's comments in the interview are telling. Clearly she and her family were and continue to be deeply immersed in the industry and rely on fish for their well-being. As you drive past Katoo's home, there are large boats in the yard, presumably being readied for the next fishing season. Fish was a vital part of Katoo's life; as a child when her parents and grandfather (the man who raised her) were commercial fishers; as a mother who helped support her family through cannery work and octopus hunting; as a wife whose husband's fishing career supported the family; and as an Elder whose sons helped support their mother. Fish and marine resource significance is further exemplified in Katoo's comment, “I want my ashes to be down, when I die, by them Copper Bluffs, where I used to fish all the time.” Copper Bluffs are cliffs on Quadra Island, north of the village at Cape Mudge where Katoo grew up. Sadly, Katoo passed away in January 2017. At her service friends and family spoke of her life's passions: family, fishing and octopus hunting. They served fish sandwiches, using fish the family had caught and preserved and

they announced that as per Katoo's wishes, they would spread her ashes below Copper Bluffs, noting that, "this was her favourite place." In these ways, from her birth to her passing, Katoo's well-being rested heavily on marine resources and hers and her family's access to marine-based economic opportunities, and in her death, Katoo's relationship with fish, octopus, and her fishing grounds was respected.

Another of the self-identified fishers who did not self-identify as a "commercial fisher" is June. Born in 1946, the daughter of a well-respected fisher and later wife to a commercial fisher, fishing and fish has played an important role throughout June's life. Today June identifies as a fisher and as a culture and language teacher. When asked about her life as a fisher she explains,

I used to go with my dad when I was young, and the gillnetter, and then I went gillnetting with my husband, then out seining with my brother, who passed away, and then, then I went out cooking for Tony Roberts. [And with each of them did you always cook?] Yeah but I also worked on deck on Tony and my brother Sonny's boat, I worked on deck... When I first went with my dad I was probably, I don't know ten... Just him and I, we'd go up to Granite Bay, up that way and go fishing. And then I went cooking for my brother... I must have been 15, 16, I guess... [How old were you when you stopped going on the boats?] Um... my 30's... Um. Well my husband died when he was 41 so it must have been just before that... [Do you ever go out on the boats anymore?] Um, no. No jobs... It was kind of, it was a loss. Because fishing had really deteriorated, that there wasn't really very many of the boats, like a lot of them, they lost because of the fishing, but it was getting harder and harder to get fish, so it was a big loss when all our, like a lot of our fisherman that had boats couldn't make the payments and stuff and it was just, it really went down hill, a lot of it I blame the government. [JJ-003]

As June's story reveals, as a fisher, she, like many others in the community was forced out of the fishing industry in the latter part of the 20th century when fish stocks plummeted and state policy made it difficult to remain. As discussed in Chapter 4 fish stocks decline lead the Canadian government to implement plans that severely impacted

the industry and the fishers who relied upon it (Haig-Brown 2010). Hit the hardest were small, coastal communities; communities which were often also the ancestral home for Indigenous people who made their place in the Canadian economy through the fishing industry.

The third person to identify as a fisher but who only spent a small part of his life in the industry was Rod. Rod was a lawyer and often self-identified as “a fisherman who practises law” and consequently, much of his life was dedicated to fighting for and negotiating the rights and title of his Laich-Kwil-Tach community. In his younger years, as a youth and student he says he was,

definitely a fisherman. I learnt all about fish and water, how to make a net, the stages of the tide. I think I knew considerably more than most of the kids simply because most of the kids didn't grow up on a boat as much as I did. They weren't as fortunate as I was, plus you know my grandfather was a really good fisherman. [RN-021]

And later regarding his decision to attend law school instead of pursuing a career in fishing he says,

And everybody he [Harry Assu] taught to fish ended up becoming skipper. That's what I figured I was going to be, a skipper just like everybody else. Run a boat as soon as the guy who leaves company would back the person up to run a boat, and run a boat for half a dozen years, successful and catch [enough to] finance into a new boat you know, that's how it generally goes, that's what I thought I was going to be doing. That would have been my early twenties, early/late twenties.... I absolutely believe that I could make it work.... I guess my thinking was “well if those guys can make a living off of fishing then I can.” I knew more than them. I figure I just need a couple years experience under my belt and I would be just as good as anyone to catch fish. And I learned all about how to make a net and he taught me all of that, all his secrets and what to do.... He's the one who really brought me up and taught me all of the values I know. My work ethic and everything. He's the one who taught me all I know. Work hard and fast, that's the number one principle when it comes to work. “Work hard and fast and you will always have a job,” he said, no matter what you do.

In spite of his early intentions, Rod always said his Elders had other plans for him, and largely due to their influence and plans, Rod attended law school and was called to the Bar in 1978. In this way he became a “fisherman who practises law,” and in these terms Rod continued to acknowledge his relationship with fish.

Like Rod, Bill told me that his son also trained in a highly specialized career. He became a dentist. But, according to Bill, he continues to fish when he can and still holds a commercial licence. Until recently, like his father, he owned a salmon licence, a herring licence, several gillnet licences and multiple fishing boats. Each year he took a break from dentistry and fished herring on his boat and leased out his other licences. As he too aged he sold his boats and salmon licence but like his elderly father, he leases out the licences that he continues to hold.

These examples reveal how the connection between the people and fish remains strong and even when highly trained in an arguably lucrative and prestigious field, the pull to the ocean, the boats and the fish can be undeniable.

Of the 11 people who self-identified not only as “fishers,” but also as “commercial fishers,” each spent all or most of their life working on and running boats, the modern expression of their relationship with fish. Some were skippers, all were crewmembers and some of the women worked on deck and in the galley. One family is also proud to say that they had a woman skipper in their midst, Pat Piatocka (née Roberts), and by all accounts, she was a highly successful fisher. Everyone interviewed began his or her fishing career as a child because, like it had always been, fishing was a family affair,

I fished on my own, even when I was 12 years old. I had to make more money for the family. [BR-014]

But fishing is a big part of our family. That's how we survived. My dad's fishing career, and his time fishing. That's all he ever done. All my brothers. I have seven brothers and two sisters and all my brothers fish.... That's all our people ever done was fish. The whole family revolves around fish. [EC-027]

I was pregnant... I used to go out on the little *Raven* with Dan. [Would the whole family go?] On the seine boats, the bigger boats, they [daughters] would come. He even made a playground on the top of the cabin once. Remember? She had a swing up there, her little horse, all her toys. I remember the weather wasn't very nice. And then it came real sunny one day. I don't know why she thought she had to put all her toys in the water... [AB-004]

She threw them in, they were floating. The guys, the crew had to go get them on the skiff.... [DB-004]

She was four I think. [AB-004]

The success of the Laich-Kwil-Tach fishers throughout the middle and latter part of the 20th century was possible, at least in part, due to the work of those who came before them. Because the ban on Indigenous people owning a motorized boat (Tennant 1990:73) did not include the area around Cape Mudge and Campbell River, Laich-Kwil-Tach families were early boat owners on the coast. According to Harry Assu (Assu and Inglis 1989:61), his father, Billy Assu, was the first to own a gas boat in Cape Mudge, making his first purchase in 1912. Then, shortly after the first World War, Billy persuaded the cannery operator at Quathiaski Cove to allow Indigenous men to operate and skipper the seine boats (Assu and Inglis 1989:64; Newell 1993:109). Within a few years, largely due to their success in the lucrative fishing industry which was facilitated by their extensive fishing knowledge, most Laich-Kwil-Tach families owned their own gas boats (Assu and Inglis 1989:61-62). By the early 1920s the men at Cape Mudge built a boat works and almost everyone had a make-shift weigh in their front yard where they lifted their boats for repairs or construction. These boat builders, people like Sandy Billy, Johnny Chickite,

Bob Clifton Sr., John Dick Sr., Charlie Peters, Jeff Wallace and Jim Wallace are still mentioned regularly by many community members, as are a number of the boats they built. One Elder today remembered the time fondly,

Johnny Dick he built I don't know how many boats. He got lots of nice little boats. Beautiful little boats. There was 12 Elders in the village that could build boats. They were beautiful boats. He built really nice boats. Right on there [referring to a photo] I can see Johnny Dick and Charlie Peters. He built boats too. My dad and Ed Chickite, they built boats... and Berta's grandfather, Jimmy Hovell. He was a good boat builder.... I think there was one of Oscar's brothers used to build boats. Sullivan I think his name was. I can't remember.... Oscar probably did too. But out of the picture, this is one, two, three, four that built boats.... You know, right in the middle of the village where Ivan Dick's house is, that's where there was a big boat house. Right where Ivan's house is. A real big house, a real big one. And that's where the Eva D was built. He built all the small boats.... [when the Eva D was launched] all the kids were pulling on it and we were just pulling it over by hand and lots of rollers and rolling it steady up so that it wouldn't tip over. Beautiful little boat. A seiner, it was a seiner. It was a big boat [DB-004]

As a result of their success as both fishers and boat builders, by the late 1930s and into the 1940s “there were 16 or 18 boats–trollers–little ones [in the village]. We used to tie them to the wharf. My dad, every family had one I think” [DB-004].

As the industry grew, Laich-Kwil-Tach people grew with it, and arguably they contributed to its growth. Women worked in the canneries while the men worked the boats. Several Laich-Kwil-Tach men also played important roles in the canneries. Billy Assu, Oscar Lewis and Tom Price worked for different canneries as recruiters. This meant they traveled to other communities and recruited men and women to work for the cannery they each represented (Newell 1993:109). Between the wars women took on new jobs in the canneries and gained greater responsibilities. In fact, cannery operators hired Indigenous men to fish “in order to guarantee the seasonal labour of thousands of Indian women and girls” (Newell 1993:109). Then, especially during World War II, several

Laich-Kwil-Tach women took on important roles. For example, in a 1984 interview conducted by Colleen Hemphill, Ann Brotchie, a Laich-Kwil-Tach/'Nakwaxda'xw woman born in Campbell River, spoke of her work as the "floor lady," a supervisor on the canning line (Newell 1993:110). Her sister, and Colleen's mother, Lucy, at 13 years old had taken on the "reform line" job. In this job she made the cans, work that was formerly reserved for men (Newell 1993:110).

This work, done by the Elders of those Elders with whom I spoke for this research, grew from an intimate understanding of and relationship with salmon and set the stage for the Laich-Kwil-Tach contemporary fishery. As the commercial fishery grew, and family needs expanded, most of the fishers invested heavily in the industry, purchasing modern boats and equipment that combined with their knowledge of the waters and fishery established their prominence in the industry. In several interviews I collected a brief history of boat ownership. Several fishers owned multiple boats over their lives and often they owned multiple boats at once, representing significant investments during their careers. For example,

I started trolling when I was 11 years old. I ran the old "Tree Point...."
It was owned by the Japanese. Got confiscated during the war. So my brother Steve, he bought that boat when they put it up for sale. Well I bought and sold. The first one was, well my brother and I bought into it in 1959, the *Bruce Luck*. It was owned by a fella in Sointula....
[Eventually] we decided to separate and go our own, so he bought the *W11* and I bought the *W9*. '69. And I had that until '79. They were building these aluminum boats and the *Western Brave* and the *Western Eagle*, so we decided to go into those.... So that's when I had Brian move into the *W9* and I ran the *Western Brave*. We got rid of the *W9* later. Then sold the *Brave* to Brian about 1994. BC Packers was selling out completely so that's when I started working the four different steel boats. The *Mary Isle* was one of them. The *Van Isle*. BC Packers at that time gave me first choice on any one of them so I chose the *Mary Isle*. So that's still there today. Patrick [runs it today]. [DA-001]

This is Don's story. The first boat he ran, the *Tree Point*, belonged to his brother, Stephen. Don was 11 years old and Stephen was 15. Don's first purchase, the *Bruce Luck* was featured on the Canadian five-dollar bill for years. His father's boat, the *BCP 45*, was in the foreground of the photograph and the *Bruce Luck* was in the background. Don and his brother Stephen were operating the *Bruce Luck* at the time of the photo and their brother, Mel, was skipper on the *BCP 45*. The photograph was taken in 1958 (which means that Don owned the boat one year earlier than mentioned above) when Don was just seventeen years old. It appeared on the five-dollar bill from 1972 to 1986, and if you look closely, you can see the crew on the *BCP 45*: Mel Assu, Andy Dick, Fred Seville, Ron Forest, Ollie Chickite and Allan Mearns (Figure 11). Several of the crew were Laich-Kwil-Tach or married to Laich-Kwil-Tach women.

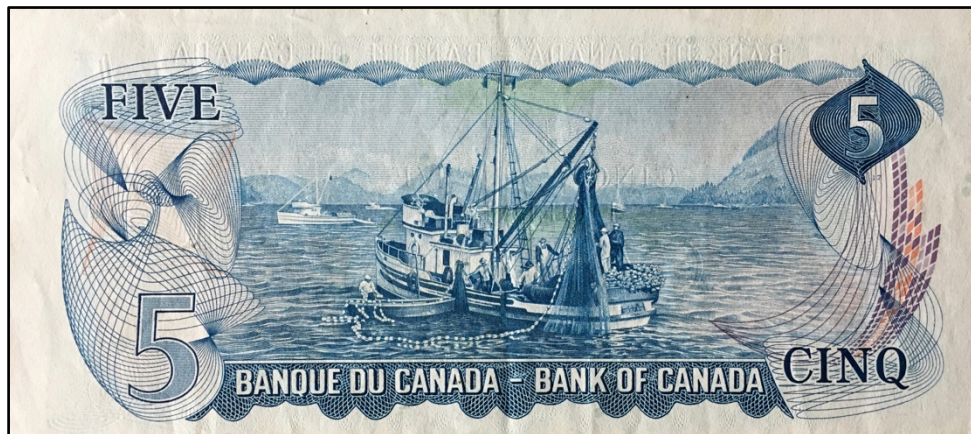


Figure 11: Canadian \$5 bill, 1972-1986, showing *BCP 45* and *Bruce Luck*, photo by Shelly Dale, 2017.

After the *Bruce Luck*, Don bought the *W9* and a decade later, the very modern *Western Brave*. As he notes, he sold “the *Brave*” in 1994, but he sold it to his son, Brian, keeping it in the family. In fact, it is with Brian on the *Western Brave* that I spent a couple of days during fieldwork for this research. I was fortunate to be with her, Brian and the crew on one of the most successful chum fishery days in memory.

The *Mary Isle* is also still in operation, and is run by one of Don's other sons, Patrick (Rick). In fact, much like in the picture on the old five-dollar bill, and much like their father and his brothers before them, Brian and Rick coordinate their fishing, setting their nets in tandem and in cooperation with one another, in a way that exemplifies Laich-Kwil-Tach fishing knowledge and continues to maintain the Laich-Kwil-Tach prominence in the industry.

Don's sister, Jean, married Tony Roberts across the water in Campbell River. Like the Assus, the Roberts are also a family of very successful fishers. Tony was born in 1929 and when asked about his boats and his age when he began fishing, Tony says,

1936. I was seven years old when my dad had the *Pluto*. I had my own boat. In 1964 or 1965. *Tereena-Louise*. Louise because my grandmother's name was Louise and my daughter was Tereena. It sank on the West Coast.... I don't know, they put it on the weighs for inspection and there are two planks or beams together, they were on there like this, maybe they didn't nail it. They were going to... and it took on water. Yeah. The inspector did that. There was nothing wrong with it before that.... I had the *Western King* before the *Tereena* sunk. I had two boats. [TR-001]

Although retired, Tony spent a lifetime in the commercial industry. Tony still owns the *Western King* but his grandson operates it. He goes on the boat as much as possible but after a stroke a number of years ago, he has been largely confined to the land. However, about this he says, "when I'm on the boat, I don't need anything, I walk all over the boat. But when I'm home my knees are bugged" [TR-001].

Many of Tony's brothers, his son and his grandson also continue to rely on the industry for their livelihoods. In fact, his son's boat, the *Northern King*, was recently condemned because of its age. Tony's son is married to Daniel and Alberta Billy's daughter and when they were interviewed for this research they described the loss of their

son's-in-law boat "like a death in family." In this way, the boat too is sentient in the relationship with fish, much like the fishing gear noted in Chapter 6.

Just a few years younger than Don and Tony, Daniel Billy, born in 1934, is also a fisher. He describes himself as "a commercial fisherman and food fish too" [DB-004]. His wife, Alberta, known as "Berta" and born in 1942, self-identifies as a "fisher person, mother, wife" [AB-004]. When asked about his life as a fisher, Dan says,

I was about 12 years old, I think. Probably even younger but I'll say 12. I first fished in a rowboat right in front of the village. I'll just tell you what happened one time. I was going to school – I used to get up so early – 3 o'clock in the morning. It used to be daylight. Before I was going to school I will quickly go fishing. I caught 50 fish once before I went to school. No bologna. It's not a bologna thing. People would say I was bologna but I wasn't. I was just right in front of the village and they were splashing all over....

My dad and I, he is the one who said that there was a little speed boat, one with a little engine, but it didn't have a little engine. It was wrecked. We towed it home and went to the police and the police said if no one comes for it in 90 days it is yours. So we owned it then. He ordered for it a little engine and he fixed it up, patched it up. My dad was a carpenter and a fisherman.... I didn't even put a name on it. That's awful. No name boat....

And I bought a boat when I was 14. A small one too. It was a real nice little one. I bought it off the people who used to come, native people from Cowichan. They used to come and live in [at] the lighthouse and our people let them. Billy Assu let them come and they fish, they come to fish. You know come to fish in the early spring for the blueback and the springs and they were real nice people. One of them was a boat builder. A beautiful boat builder. I can't remember his name. I think his last name was Wilson but I can't remember them too well. That's the thing, my mind, I can't remember from long ago. But I paid \$350 for that little boat, with an engine. An engine you know with it too....

I was 16 when I bought a good size boat, a 30 footer. That's when my dad said, well I had a hard time in school. He said, I started school so late because I went fishing with him and the chums you know. And the teacher said to me, that teacher was kind of mean to me, she said to me "I can't teach you anymore because you started a month and a half late...." The *Raven*. That was that boat's name, yeah.... I made a lot of

money on that boat. I used to catch really a lot of fish. The most I ever caught in four hours was 364 big springs, like this. In four hours. I was just sweating.

I stayed with Nelson Brothers until they, he was mostly the biggest owner of BC Packers, Richie Nelson his name was. He had two, three brothers. I was really lucky I got into the Nelson family. Sunny Nelson was Richie Nelson's son. I went to build our boat. We built the *Susan Laverne* and we had a real good season one year. We were using the company boat, *Rainbow Queen*. We had a real big season, I made 50 some thousand just on my share. And she made 37,000 in crew's share. And I said to her "let's look for a boat."

Seventy-four when we built the boat. It was launched in '74. I asked Berta. We both talked it over. We said let's look for a boat to buy. We went to Prince Rupert looking. We didn't find any so Billy Assu said to me "there's a boat being built in the boathouse. In Bowser BC." He said this boat and the, he was a real famous guy, native guy. Not the boat builder no, the guy he was building it for. He was a senator. Guy Williams. He was a senator. He had a real big name. In politics. And he was powerful but he couldn't get backing. No company would back him. And that's how I went.

I needed 200,000 to get the boat started. So I went to, Sonny Nelson was running BC Packers. One of the Nelson Brothers, one of the sons. He and I grew up together almost. I just walked in the office and said "I came here for a real good," "I want to build a boat," I said to him. "Could you help me?" And he said, "what do you need." And I said, "I need 200,000 for about six months." I got the Native Fishing Association – it was just getting started – all the great old guys were on there – Jimmy Sewid, all of them knew me. My name just passed real quick, you know. I was lucky because I knew them. But when I walked into BC Packers office, this is a real good one. Sonny Nelson, we were talking and he handed me a \$200,000 cheque. I said "don't you have to go to a board?" He said, "I've known you all my life," he said, "Dan I don't have to. We are friends." He just gave me 200,000 right there.

[Why only for six months?] Well because NFA, the Native Fishing Association, took over after that and I just kept paying them a little bit every year. They made it really easy. Native Fishermen's Association was, it helped us a lot. It help me anyway. But maybe I was lucky because I had the Elders that we work with in there.... It's still around. But it's not very strong anymore.... They try to help young people get back into the industry. They are just trying to start it up stronger to help younger people to get back in because, I think the fish is going to come

back. Big-time. That's what I think, yeah. Hardly any fisherman left.
[DB-004]

Daniel and Berta still run the *Susan Laverne*, a boat originally built for Guy Williams, Canada's second Indigenous senator. They raised their daughters on their boats and when they sold the *Raven*, one daughter cried. Another daughter loved to fish with her dad. He says,

When she got old enough she went fishing with me. Three of us went on the boat one year. We thought we would go trolling before seining. We used to go trolling's before seining every year. And Ruth came out with us. And she was really good at working the girdies and throwing the fish on. This one, she says "dad, this is the big one." She used to say, "big spring salmon." [DB-004]

At 83 Daniel is among the oldest fishermen still running his boat each year and each spring and through the long days in the summer, when you call to chat with Daniel, you are often told "he's on the boat, getting it ready." He loves fishing and cares deeply for the fish and marine resources. He is also grateful for the life that it provided for him and his family, and like Rod's comment indicates, the fish were vital to his family's well-being and prosperity,

We made good money. To me it was good money. You know, I want to say this too. When I was a young boy, when I had all those, when I have those little boats. I don't think in my whole life I was ever broke. Because money was really easy to make. Because there was a lot of fish. I could never remember a point in my life where I had no money.
[DB-004]

21st-Century Laich-Kwil-Tach Fisher Perseverance

The strong presence of Laich-Kwil-Tach fishers and families in the fishing industry is not surprising given their reputation for being excellent canoe builders and for their knowledge of Johnstone Strait and surrounding waters. Well known fishers from Puget Sound to Alaska, they dominate most in Johnstone Strait where for as long as anyone can remember, each Laich-Kwil-Tach family fished on their family fishing ground, collectively covering all of the strait. Although not an exhaustive list, the Quocksisters fish around Camp Point to around Kelsey Bay; the Lewis and Dick families from around Ripple Point to around Bear River; the Roberts family from around Humpback Bay to around “the Slide;” the Drakes from around “the Slide” to around Knox Bay; the Billys, Chickites and Assus from around Deepwater Bay to around Ripple Point and around Little Bear River; and the Hendersons in the south from around Deepwater Bay to around Granite Bay. Everyone knows these areas and can easily list them and although it is not a set rule, everyone agrees and respects the others’ right to fish in their family’s area. And if you are in another’s area and do not give way to the reigning family, there can be hell to pay. On one occasion, a particularly hot-blooded Laich-Kwil-Tach fisher ran his boat through another non-Laich-Kwil-Tach fisher’s net. It cost them each dearly, both in terms of damage and the loss of the catch, but it is a strong statement of tenure where trespass applies to both Laich-Kwil-Tach and non-Laich-Kwil-Tach alike.

In their place as one of the original fishing communities on the Northwest Coast and through their long-standing human-fish relationship, Laich-Kwil-Tach people have extensive experience and knowledge of fish and fishing in their waters. For millennia, like all Northwest Coast Indigenous peoples, Laich-Kwil-Tach people fished according to

their laws and practices, each informed by the relational world and their relationship with fish and other marine beings. As noted in Chapter 7, not only were they successful fishers, they were highly successful fish managers, likely contributing to the abundant fish stocks that caught the interest of European explorers and travellers. However, all of this was impacted by state and commercial industry intervention in the late 19th century and throughout the 20th century. The impact of these changes was significant, felt when they were no longer able to fish at their fish traps or practise their management processes, and when they entered a commercial industry that had rules that precluded their participation in planning and decision-making and stacked the odds against their success. Not only was this a disruption in their ability to fish, it was also a disruption in their ability to maintain their relationship with fish. Nevertheless, Indigenous peoples across the Northwest Coast shifted their fishing industry to the commercial industry, using the embodied knowledge gained from generations of a relational connection with fish and many prospered in spite of laws and regulations that arguably infringed on their fishing rights and on the relational world.

During interviews for this research, several fishers spoke of their experiences with the DFO and with large industry players. Some, like Daniel, had very good relationships with industry owners and buyers, and, as noted earlier, even obtained their support to purchase fishing equipment.

Don also had an excellent relationship with BC Packers in the 1970s and when the company was shifting to aluminum boats, they went to Don and gave him first choice on what boat he wanted to run,

BC Packers was selling out completely so that's when I started working the 4 different steel boats. The Mary Isle was one of them. The Van Isle. BC Packers at that time gave me first choice on any one of them so I chose the Mary Isle. [DA-001]

However, working with the fish companies and working with the DFO were two very different things. By the 1970s the fish companies had long realised the knowledge and skill of Indigenous fishers, employing them in all areas from skippers to crew bosses, but the management processes and policies of the DFO did not recognise their contributions and expertise in the same way. As Don notes, when he first started fishing commercially in the early 1940s, there were

no restrictions of where you could fish. You would just get up in the morning, head down the beach, get on the boat and start trolling. It's not the way it is now, you know, everything's shut down and you have to go to certain place they tell you. [DA-001]

Although much younger, Elvis agrees,

We used to fish in Rivers Inlet with my dad, longtime ago. But commercial fishermen aren't allowed back in there anymore. Just the sports are. The same as our territory down here. They kicked us out Deepwater Bay. We can't even go commercial fishing in there anymore. It's terrible. Somebody behind closed doors has done that one. [EC-027]

At the dawn of the commercial industry, and in the early years of Canada's assumption of management control, Indigenous fishing methods were greatly restricted or even prohibited. Tony was among the first to mention these restrictions and contrasted fishing with nets and fishing with fish traps, noting how easy it is to manage one's catch with a trap, while net fishing is indiscriminate,

They fish a lot. They fish day in and day out. They had no rules to follow....

My grandfather went to jail because they barricade the river. Well whiteman gave them nets... He wanted only 25 or 50 fish or so that day

but he got 500. Indians always barricaded for a time so they could fish and then they would leave them after that.... Chief of Salmon River... Homiskinis.... Everybody did that. How else could they do it? Like that before the white man, they never had nets. We had traps and they trapped....

From the beginning, they didn't want them nets. They didn't want them to net and get all the fish. They didn't need 500 fish, they might only want 50. They barricaded the river with the rocks and take them 50 fish and take the rocks out again. That's the way they worked. They didn't never worry about the fish coming back. [TR-002]

As Tony noted, there was better relationship with fish and better control over the fishery when one fished with a fish trap. Not only did fish traps allow one to selectively harvest, but they also allowed one to determine when the number of fish needed was met. Traps also provided ample opportunity for the fish to ascend the stream for spawning and was part of a respectful relationship that honoured choice. This kind of engagement with the fish is missing when fishing with a net. Although Tony does not say so explicitly, he also suggests that this selective fishery, practised for generations, had an important affect on fish populations because fish were taken in numbers that did not result in a harvest greater than the need. For this reason, prior to the commercial fishery nothing was overharvested, which would have been counterintuitive and contrary to the human-fish relationship, so there was never a need for concern about fish returning each year.

Picking up on Tony's comment, Don elaborates further:

The first people that fished with nets were the Scotchmen. Cause I know my dad talked a lot about the Scotchmen fishing cause when he started that's who he fished with. Cause he couldn't have a boat like they did, you know, you weren't allowed to. You couldn't have a licence. So that was when, in 1927 at least, the government of Canada legislated that the half-mile boundary to fish in the mouth of the river was taken away and boundary you can't fish within half a mile of the river. And that's when it started, the coastline fishery started. [DA-002]

In this statement, Don is referring to fisheries policy leading up to the 1920s. Although not part of a law or regulation, the fisheries department was not in the practise of issuing seine licences to Indigenous fishers (Newell 1993:54). This began to change through the 1920s when cannery bosses started capitalizing on the skills of Indigenous fishers by making them skippers of cannery seine boats. Harry records these memories in his book with Joy Inglis,

My first boat was a dugout canoe made of cedar. My father bought it for me from Oscar Lewis's father, who steamed and bent it in the old steaming shed in our village....

I caught a lot of fish from that little twelve-foot canoe fitted with oars. I'd take my canoe out in the morning and fish in the pass for salmon with just a hand-line and bring in a twelve- to fifteen-pound salmon. Then out in the evening again, and come in with maybe twenty fish.... I got paid fifty cents cash for each spring salmon at the cannery....

We continued to troll for the company right up to the time that W. E. Anderson took over as manager in 1912. After that we began to drag-seine, setting a net off the beach. We did that here in front of her village, in the mouth of the Campbell River on the spit, and at the mouth of the Nimpkish River....

On the tenth August 1921, my father called a meeting of our people with the cannery manager on the wharf at Quathiaski Cove. We had no quarrel with management; we wanted a federal government regulation changed so that native men could be seine-boat skippers. Up to then only white men and Japanese men could be seine-boat skippers. Yet Indians were top fisherman, and the company was in favour of giving us this right....

Alan W. McNeill, M. P. for Comox-Alberni, was at the meeting on the wharf, and he offered to take our grievance to Ottawa. Word came back that Indians could skipper seine boats. My father was a good seine-boat skipper, sure was! That first year he took the seine boat into Loggers Bay, two miles north of Deepwater Bay in Discovery Passage. That's a big deep pool where migrating salmon move slowly in and out again....

The company had around five seine boats at the time, and my father arranged that where the skipper was not Indian, two native men would

be taken on in every crew of six. That was when I was first taken on as crew on the seine boat along with Harry Moon, The son of the ranking chief at Salmon River. We all got along fine. McPherson was our skipper. They were all fine men. They used to laugh and call us “sunburned Scotsman”! (Assu and Inglis 1989:60-64)

As Harry’s recollection reveals, his father, Billy Assu, ensured that the young Laich-Kwil-Tach men were on the seine boats, likely as a step towards becoming the next operators. Such was certainly the case for Harry, who was about 17 years old at the time. This also explains Don’s comment about the Scotsmen, as Harry fished in his early seine days with McPherson, a Scottish fisher.

According to Rod, Harry was an excellent fisher who charted the tides, the weather, fish movement and his catch throughout his career. Having been on the water since his early childhood, Harry was familiar with it and it was an easy transition for him when he became a seine boat operator, later fishing and training many of the next generations of fishers,

You know my grandfather was a really good fisherman. He’s one of those guys who logged the times ...and the stage of the tide, the strength of the tide, how much he caught, and he would explain to me why he’s setting it this way and why he’s out at this time and what the tide is doing and what to watch for, and when you’re taking a chance at another spot, what to do, what to look for. [RN-021]

Although everyone interviewed for this research recognized the large role Laich-Kwil-Tach people have in the commercial industry as well as their role in its early success, they also recognize the external limits it placed on Indigenous fishers including the usurpation of their management processes and organization. Consequently, many people questioned and challenged the DFO policies, management practices and management decisions. Two Elders spoke about their fathers’ reactions to the concept of fishing licences for their communities,

My dad went in 1924 to the West Coast and the government sent an inspector and they wanted to know if he wanted to buy a licence. He said the "Indians don't need a licence, you have to have a licence. This is our fish." [TR-002]

Our fisheries department, they figure they can do anything. And dad always used to say, "where did they come from? Why are they doing this to us?" Because he couldn't believe that they were, that we had to get licences just to get our fish. This is something that dad was dead against. It sort of ruined our whole fishing industry. And even today we have fishermen talking about it. That it is not like it used to be. And it is because the fisheries have got their own rules. Where we never had it, our fisherman could go out there and fish seven days a week. And now they restrict them to maybe one day a week. [FQ-016]

Others challenged fisheries policies and decisions as well as the impact they have had in their lives. One fisher, among the younger generation interviewed, was particularly vehement about the control the DFO has in his life,

It's like DFO all my life, they were like bullies, that's all they were. Even through the 80s and 70s they were like that. They were bullying my dad and everybody else. [EC-027]

They complained to my cousin when he was out fishing at the lighthouse one day, "you guys aren't allowed to be out here food fishing" then of course they say, "how many food fish can you guys eat." It's just like one sided. It's like how many fish can you eat, you keep making money off our salmon that belongs to our people. [EC-027]

Now we don't have anything. And Jimmy Pattison¹⁴ diced up all the sockeye quota for himself. He left us with nothing and we got no jobs. Nothing. Like A-Tlegay, they only got a few licences. Not enough licences for all the people we have here. I think there's five gillnets or four gillnets for 2500 people. Not very many. One licence per 500. I think they have four seines, that's it. [EC-027]

The halibut quotas are nothing. There's no halibut quotas neither. [EC-027]

¹⁴ Pattison is a Vancouver-based businessman who owns Jim Pattison Group. The Pattison group owns the Canadian Fishing Company and Pattison himself is seen by many to have a strong lobby in the industry.

Back in the 90s. That's when Mifflin¹⁵ rolled into town. His fancy project. There's lots of new rules coming out this year too by the sounds of it. They want us to login our latitude and longitude when we catch a fish. Like if they're going to know where that is. [EC-027]

I would like to see them bring in the Boldt Decision¹⁶ though. The Americans have it and they are not complaining. [EC-027]

Daniel is also a vocal fisher and attends meetings when he has the opportunity. He will often say that the fisheries people do not listen, or they do not understand. During one of our early meetings he told me that he,

Got in trouble from talking about the salmon in a big meeting. Twice now, I really got in trouble. Scientists and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, it's really sad. I feel really bad about it. What made it really worse was that... [I was told] to go slow on it and I said I don't have much time. "Why," he said? He said, "the government will find a way to stop everything. They will stop putting money into the Cape Mudge Band." Things like that. That's why. They will do dumb things like all our band offices will be shut down. [DB-005]

Daniel's statement is important. It indicates that he feels his knowledge is not taken seriously, knowledge that like Harry's noted above comes from decades of being on the water, experiencing, observing, recording and building a personal knowledge. But knowledge that also comes from his Elders who also taught Daniel about a respectful relationship with fish. It is also clear in this statement that there is a fear that if the First Nation or any of its citizens become agitators that their funding and support from Canada could be jeopardized. While I did not find any example of reprisal from the DFO or government for a First Nation's demands in fisheries, the fact that the fear exists is important and speaks to a time in which the government did rule Indigenous lives with an

¹⁵ In 1996 the DFO announced the "Pacific Salmon Revitalization Strategy," commonly referred to as the "Mifflin Plan" after the Federal Fisheries Minister, Fred Mifflin. See Chapter 4.

¹⁶ The Boldt Decision is an American court decision that guarantees Indigenous fishers in western Washington 50% of the allowable catch of salmon (Newell 1993:149, 171-172).

iron fist. If Laich-Kwil-Tach people are afraid to speak about what they see as poor decisions and about the impact they see on the fish, opportunities for dialogue and knowledge sharing are stifled.

Later, following the significant chum return and fishery in October 2016, Daniel commented about the DFO again,

They predicted an under average run. It was 10 times the run it should've been. They don't know nothing about looking after. See that's why, I don't know where it came from. It seemed like it just came from nowhere. It's a gift again. [DB-020]

This comment, “they don't know nothing about looking after” encapsulates much of the problem that I turn to in my final chapter. Currently the DFO relies on science, its data, its models and its interpretations. There is no space for knowledge from the local fishers, as it is seen as embodied or subjective and not quantitative or objective. This lack of communication and respect results in much distrust and anger aimed at the DFO.

Also important in this comment is the concept of the gift, that salmon continue to be a gift to people, and that even when unexpected, the salmon can choose to present themselves as a gift to humans, and as sentient beings, they cannot be regulated or managed within western scientific paradigms exemplifying yet again a knowledge that continues to be informed by a relationship with fish who continue to be active agents in the human world.

Finally, as June's comment below exemplifies, Laich-Kwil-Tach people blame the DFO for poor management decisions that have changed their lives forever. When asked what it meant to her when she could no longer fish on the boats because it was no longer a viable career, June said,

It was kind of, it was a loss. Because fishing had really deteriorated, that there wasn't really very many of the boats, like a lot of them, they lost because of the fishing, but it was getting harder and harder to get fish, so it was a big loss when all our, like a lot of our fisherman that had boats couldn't make the payments and stuff and it was just, it really went down hill, a lot of it I blame the Government. [JJ-003]

Nevertheless, a number of Laich-Kwil-Tach people continue to persevere in the fishing industry. As interviews for this study indicate, the relationship with fish is strong and the call to the water is great. In an effort to gain a greater understanding of the relationships experienced by Laich-Kwil-Tach commercial fishers I spent some time on the *Western Brave* during a 2016 commercial opening. Not surprisingly, I witnessed how generations of embodied knowledge continue to keep Laich-Kwil-Tach fishers dominant in an industry that has seen decades of significant change.

The Current Generation of Fishers: A Day on the Boat

In 2016, I spent two days on board the *Western Brave* during the short chum season opening. Chief Brian Assu owns and operates the *Western Brave* and gave me full access to his boat and crew. Brian has been on fish boats since he was born and knows the waters and fish of Discovery Passage and Johnstone Strait as well as any and better than most. Much like an apprentice, he learned to fish from his father, grandfather and other family, all renowned fishermen in their day. In fact, as noted earlier in this chapter, his grandfather's and his father's boats, the *BCP45* and *Bruce Luck* appeared on the Canadian five-dollar bill from 1972-1986. From them he learned to attend to the tides, the currents, the winds and weather, his fellow fishers, the net, the boat, the crew and the fish.

Brian is the great grandson of Billy Assu, mentioned earlier because of his role in negotiating with cannery operators to ensure Laich-Kwil-Tach fishers could skipper

cannery boats following World War I. Brian is also the grandson of Harry Assu, a prominent fisher in his day, and he is the son of Don Assu, who was an important part of the commercial industry, continuing the fight for a strong role for Laich-Kwil-Tach fishers. Don was also an important contributor to this research and it was his and Harry's boats that appeared on the Canadian five-dollar bill discussed previously. Brian is currently the elected Chief of We Wai Kai and is still a well-respected fisher in his own right, both among the commercial fishing community and among the decision makers with the DFO.

The time I spent on the *Western Brave* with Brian and the crew brought new meaning to many of the things I had learned working with Laich-Kwil-Tach Elders. Over the years I worked with fishers and Elders to help record setting sites on maps and in the community's traditional use study, but it was not until going out onto the water on the *Western Brave* with Brian and his crew that I began to better grasp the importance of these places not only as resource sites, but as historical fishing locations. These setting areas are also an issue in treaty negotiations during which Laich-Kwil-Tach negotiators and chiefs seek protection and control of these places.

Today, Laich-Kwil-Tach fishers continue to use these fishing places and, although the number of boats is far fewer than previous years, many families still have someone in or connected to the fishery. Some people still own fish boats, and are commercial fishers who employ other community members and who supply the community and/or their extended family with fish. Some people are employed on the boats, while others are children, grandchildren, wives, grandparents, etc. of those who still make a living in the fishing industry. Of those who still fish, there is great loyalty to the industry, their skipper

and the boat. For example, on the *Western Brave*, three people have more than 45 years of fishing experience each. Another fished with Brian for 14 years before becoming a heavy-duty mechanic and then returning to fish in 2016 when he was laid off at the local mine. Brian himself was born in May and was on his family boat by June. He has never missed a year since. Brian, like other fishermen, learned the trade from those generations before them, who in turn learned from the generations before them. Each is intimately familiar with the waters and fish of Discovery Passage and Johnstone Strait but each is also closely connected with their particular family area. When asked why, the answer is simply “my family has always fished here.” Given what Daniel Billy says, this is probably quite literal:

My grandfather said we were the luckiest people on earth. Fish just come to us. We didn't have to chase them. For the Chief in them, in them days, we all had a Chief and they used to send their people all over the place, families to look after it. That's why we had so many spots, all the way to Kelsey Bay. [DB-005]

People will tell you “it's always been like that. And families guard their areas” (Brian Assu Oct. 17, 2016). These traditions run deep and have been kept alive by the generations of fishers who work together to pass knowledge down, knowledge that not only ensures family fishing sites are known and kept alive, but that also ensures that Laich-Kwil-Tach fishers continue to know intimately the Discovery Passage and Johnstone Strait waters and the fish who return each year.

To be a successful fisher in Discovery Passage and Johnstone Strait, one must know many things. Knowledge of the tides is vital for many reasons. Mariners know these waters to be treacherous and one must know and be aware of the tides before navigating Seymour Narrows in Discovery Passage. Daily tides here run at six knots and

rapids and whirlpools can be dangerous to slower and/or smaller vessels on a good day. During the full and new moons, tides can run up to 16 knots, just under 30 km/hr. Further up Johnstone Strait, near Kelsey Bay, the tides can run up to seven knots, and with any added wind, the waters are dangerous (Richards 1864:155-160). Furthermore, when fishing, knowledge of how the fish work with the tides is important. For example, several times throughout the day, Brian said, “we need to wait for the tide” meaning several things: 1. that the movement of the fish will change with the tide; 2. that the floating debris can impede the net when it moves with the tide; and 3. that the tides will move the nets in directions that can help catch the fish, or in ways that will cause the net to fold back upon itself, causing net failure. For these reasons, having an intimate knowledge of and working with the tides and the net is vital to safety and success. This is one of the reasons why Rod stressed his grandfather’s wit and foresight in recording the tides over the years [RN-021]. In many ways, the tide too is a sentient being that must be understood as its cooperation is important.

Haig-Brown who fished with Herb Assu, another prominent Laich-Kwil-Tach fisher also described the embodied knowledge required for setting in these waters, especially in the early days of smaller wooden boats with less horse power. He says,

The Slide [is] a place of tricky tides in lower Johnstone Strait. The way that Herb set his net 57-foot *Departure Bay No. 3* and worked that 1,200 feet of net in the tide, with only the old *Cat 77* thumping out its few horsepower, had all the beauty and majesty of the captain of a square rigger setting his sails to fill with air. Herb had many other sets that he could make in the waters that his father Dan and his grandfather Chief Billy Assu had also seined, but the slide was special. (Haig-Brown 2010:179)

Fishing these waters also requires an understanding and knowledge of the fish. Countless generations of knowledge, passed down to current fishers means that people

know that the fish hold in Plumper and Deepwater bays while they wait for slack tide in Seymour Narrows, or that the fish, on a particular tide, come down the west side of Johnstone Strait and over the shallows in Little Bear Bay, and further south, along the opposite shore of Loggers Bay, or that particular runs of sockeye pass between the narrow channel between Howe Island and Sonora Island for example. Watching the fish and their behaviour is also important. In October, as we waited for the chum opening to begin, the entire crew watched the fish. Reports from those who had gone out early to assess the number and location of fish before the second opening were good – there were a lot of fish. People were talking about the number of fish passing the village at Cape Mudge, and were anticipating a good October fishery. Judging by the activity and movement of the fish on opening day, the reports were right and the chum were still present. Fish were jumping and finning all around, everywhere we looked. But I soon learned there is a “science” behind watching the fish. We had to watch for numbers of fish, but importantly, we had to assess the direction of their movement. Every time a crew member spotted a fish he would yell something like “Brian, off the bow, going south.” Brian’s job as skipper is to determine the best spot and to work with the boat, the tide, the net and the fish to maximize the catch. Once in position, hopefully in front of the school of fish, Brian reaches up and sounds the buzzer. Immediately the skiff is launched and the net is pulled off the drum. The end of the net is tied on shore at a “tie up,” locations used for generations of fishers to tie their nets. The boat slowly stretches the net in front of the school of fish and for about eight minutes the crew waits in anticipation. Then Brian sounds another horn and the net is untied and the large boat slowly turns toward the net end to enclose it in a large circle. In the meantime, the skiff operator runs the skiff on the

open side of the net to keep fish moving toward the net. As the net closes the crew watches for any sign of fish in the net. When seen they yell, "inside!" On a good set, this is heard many times over. On a good set, the crew also uses oars and hammers to bang the aluminum boat to stop the fish from exiting the net at the stern of the boat. All the time, yelling "inside!" at any sign of fish. Once encircled, the fish are completely enclosed by closing the bottom of the net, after which the net is rolled back onto the drum. As the end of the enclosed net approaches the side of the boat, the crew quietly leans over the rail in anticipation. They are looking for bubbles and scales. The more bubbles and scales, the more likely it is that the catch is significant.

On October 17, 2016 our second set went just as described above. And when the crew looked for bubbles, there were a lot. Then they all got back to work, manually pulling the net over the rail using the winch to assist when possible. As the net got tighter, so did the fish, being packed into a shrinking net. The skiff operator pushed the oar through the fish feeling for the bottom. There was not one to feel. This made Brian think the fish ran at least 20 feet deep and the net could come in no further because it was so full. Another crewmember looked up at me, held up five fingers, and said, "it's a big one darlin'," meaning he was guessing there were 5000 fish in the net. He was right. Another smiled and quietly said, "best one yet." It took two and half hours to empty that net and by the time we were done, all the other boats had moved up Johnstone Strait, waiting for the tide and salmon to shift again, and to prepare for their next set.

By all accounts, this was a good day. The boat and crew caught 1000s more fish than any other chum run in recent memory. Earlier in the month, a long-time fisher, now retired, told me that his biggest catch in one set for chum was 3000 fish. Our set was over

5000 and one Laich-Kwil-Tach boat that day caught more than 20,000 chum in one set and was at risk of losing the net. Another Laich-Kwil-Tach boat came to help and together they emptied the net into both boats.

At the end of the day, I travelled back to Campbell River on the A-Tlegay boat. The A-Tlegay crew was out all day. As unofficial guardians, they are on the water during every opening collecting “hails,” or the unofficial number of fish a boat catches in a day. They are also another set of eyes on the water for both safety and enforcement, and their work is highly regarded by the DFO and commercial fishers (Chapter 10). Laich-Kwil-Tach fishers rely on them and they have become an important part of the Laich-Kwil-Tach fishing community. The A-Tlegay crew, like everyone else, was also enthusiastic about the day’s catch. They knew everyone’s numbers, how many boats were already full and heading to the buyers, and they were optimistic about the catch. According to them, there were 55 boats in the water, and 35-40 of those were Laich-Kwil-Tach boats or operators. Undoubtedly, ancient local knowledge of family fishing and the relationship with fish that was established generations before is incorporated into contemporary practice. While fish traps, arguably a powerful fishing technology, caught fish in the thousands for previous fishing families, today the seine or gillnet operate in a similar way. Some, like Daniel, continue to offer thanks to the fish and virtually all Laich-Kwil-Tach fishers are activists in the industry, continually advocating for better management practices and a stronger role for Laich-Kwil-Tach involvement in management and decision making. This, I argue is connected to 19th-century Laich-Kwil-Tach ontology and the human-fish relationship and is part of 21st-century Laich-Kwil-Tach ontology in which there are efforts to provide for a strong salmon population that will support many

Laich-Kwil-Tach families. Such a vision fits well with long-standing practice and facilitates an ongoing relationship with salmon in the 21st-century context. It is to the effort to regain a management role in Laich-Kwil-Tach waters that I next turn.

Chapter 10 “A-Tlegay” – Revitalization as Practice

The country belongs to me and was given to me by the Creator from olden times; and this is what I ask of the Commission that they may take my words to the Government and be friendly in that way and that I may get my land there all along the river... Our forefathers used traps all around that river but we are afraid to use them anymore; although we know it is better for catching the fish than the net. These traps were used in former times; the traps were taken out of the river and were put back again—they were not used all the time—the longest time would be about ten days in the river, and then we would take them out again.
(Charles Homiskinis to the Royal Commission Canada 1914)

Charles Homiskinis was a Laich-Kwil-Tach man from Salmon River who testified to the Royal Commission on Indian Affairs for the Province of British Columbia in 1914. Although the focus of the Commission was to affect a final decision on Indian Reserves, in many of the testimonies, the community’s representatives listed grievances and demands much like Homiskinis’ comment above in which he clearly indicates a knowledge of salmon use and management that was informed by the relational world and that was usurped by colonial policy. The statement exemplifies the importance of fish and shows that Laich-Kwil-Tach people were not only fishers but that they also managed fish and fishing.

Fish, fish habitat, fish well-being and fisheries management continue to be of great Laich-Kwil-Tach interest and in an effort to revitalize research and management processes, in 1999 the Laich-Kwil-Tach nations, along with two other First Nations, formed a non-profit society. They named it “A-Tlegay,” which means “inside waters” in Liq’wala and refers to the waters between what is now Campbell River and the north end of Johnstone Strait. These inside waters are important to all Laich-Kwil-Tach families and form a vital part of Laich-Kwil-Tach territories. As discussed in Chapter 9, each

family has its fishing area and to this day, many fishers rely on Johnstone Strait and their family fishing spots to support their family and thus it seemed apropos to name the society that works to protect and manage their fish and fishing places after the place that has sustained Laich-Kwil-Tach people for so long. According to the A-Tlegay Fisheries Society Constitution, the purpose of the Society is to:

- a) Assist and facilitate our Member First Nations in the preservation and exercise of their aboriginal fishing rights throughout their territories;
- b) To regulate and administer those responsibilities incurred in the management of all marine resources and foreshores within the territories of its Member First Nations;
- c) To assist its Member First Nations to enhance and protect all marine resources of their territories for the future benefit and livelihood of their citizens; and
- d) Under the direction of its Member Nations make representations to governments and organizations on behalf of the Society and Member First Nations with respect to all marine resources. (A-Tlegay 1999)

As their Constitution outlines, A-Tlegay's role is to advocate for their member nations' fishing rights while enhancing and protecting the resource wherever possible. This is not dissimilar to the role Laich-Kwil-Tach people have always played in their relationship with fish and marine beings.

In an effort to better understand the role and purpose of A-Tlegay I conducted two interviews with its Administrator and Biologist. Kim Duncan, the Administrator, is Laich-Kwil-Tach and has worked with A-Tlegay since its beginning. In fact, she was its first employee and was tasked with setting up the Society and establishing its place in the local community, the fisheries community and within the DFO. The Biologist, Jim Meldrum has been with A-Tlegay since 2014, and though not Laich-Kwil-Tach, he was

raised in Campbell River. From Kim and Jim, I learned about A-Tlegay operations, the numerous programs it runs, how it manages licensing and some of the challenges A-Tlegay faces on funding and working so closely with the DFO.

Since 1999, A-Tlegay has grown to include 12 employees, at least half of whom are full time year-round. Seasonally, at least two summer students are hired. Other technicians and support people are hired as needed for various projects. Staff include three biologists, one of whom is a Laich-Kwil-Tach citizen; the Administrator; office staff; and three permanent, full-time technicians. The “technicians” fulfill the role of “guardian” found in many other First Nations. This includes being the human resources behind the projects, spending a lot of time on the water to safeguard the marine resources and providing an official presence on the water when others, like the RCMP or the DFO, are absent. Building capacity in its personnel, A-Tlegay supports staff and technician training and often takes advantage of training and coursework in fish and aquaculture programs provided by Vancouver Island University (VIU). For example, several of the technicians have completed the Environmental Technicians Certificate through VIU’s Natural Resources Extension program. This program is 200 hours long over a series of week-long courses that are often delivered in communities throughout western Canada. The course is designed to train and certify Indigenous people in environmental monitoring skills and to provide a skill set enabling graduates to support and assist biologists, environmental technicians, engineers, hydrologists, site restoration and environmental monitoring professionals and others who may work in Indigenous territories and programs (VIU 2017).

A-Tlegay owns and operates two aluminum boats, both of which are used to support their programs and their members' initiatives. The official role of the technicians is summarized in each of the programs below. Unofficially, A-Tlegay also supports the communities' fishers. Their boats and technicians are a constant presence on the water and, given their training as youth by knowledgeable fishers, the technicians know the waters well. They travel quickly around the territory and between their experience and speed, they provide a trusted safety net for anyone who is on the water, including myself when I am tasked with projects that take me into the territory.

A-Tlegay crews also support the fishers' success. For example, during one opening in October 2016 I was returning with A-Tlegay to Campbell River after spending a day on the *Western Brave*. After I was picked up we made our way down Johnstone Strait, stopping at each commercial boat to record their catch numbers (the "Hail Survey" discussed below) and to see how everyone was doing. We got to one boat whose owner is a Laich-Kwil-Tach man from the Wei Wai Kum Nation. We learned that the outboard motor for his skiff, a vital piece of equipment for a successful fishery, was running poorly. This was serious because by all accounts, the current chum run was the largest in anyone's memory and timing was very bad for the skiff's engine to stop working. So the skipper on the fishing boat asked the A-Tlegay crew to bring the skipper's spare motor the next morning. This was agreed to as a matter of course. It did not appear to be an unusual request or an inconvenience. Accordingly, it is in ways like this that A-Tlegay continues to support its fishers and for this and many other reasons, the A-Tlegay technicians and boats are always a welcome site on the water.

The remainder of this chapter includes a brief description of some of the programs A-Tlegay manages and in the following chapter I turn to collaboration and opportunities for joint management that organisations such as A-Tlegay present in the modern context.

A-Tlegay Fisheries Society Programs

Food, Social and Ceremonial Fishery I

A-Tlegay manages many different programs, some of which are funded through an agreement with the DFO and some of which are carried out through separate contract. Perhaps the most important program A-Tlegay oversees is the food, social and ceremonial fishery (FSC) because it is through this program that the community gains access to fish.

In terms of fish, Indigenous Canadians stand in a different legal relationship to the fisheries than non-Indigenous Canadians (Harris and Millerd 2010:82). The concept and later policy of a “food, social and ceremonial” fishery was borne out of the 1990 Supreme Court of Canada decision *R. v. Sparrow* (Supreme Court of Canada 1990), which determined that the aboriginal right to fish superseded all other fisheries and that it is second only to conservation. The court, however, did not determine the scope or extent of the fishery, and from this space grew the Federal government’s Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy (AFS) (Harris and Millerd 2010:87). The result is that, although the right to fish is constitutionally protected, any agreements between the Crown and a First Nation are not (Harris and Millerd 2010:95). In some cases First Nations have negotiated harvest agreements “that allocate either a percentage of the total allowable catch of a particular species or additional fishing licences to the signatories” (Harris and Millerd 2010:96). There are, however, relatively few harvest agreements of this kind and, for those without

a treaty or harvest agreement, the First Nation exercises its right through the DFO's AFS program (Harris and Millerd 2010:96).

On behalf of its member nations A-Tlegay negotiates a Comprehensive Fisheries Agreement, under the AFS program. The agreement covers financial management, payments and reporting, cash flow projects, reporting procedures, FSC fishery, communal commercial fisheries, fishery guardians and monitoring and enforcement (A-Tlegay and Canada 2012). However, in terms of the FSC, "negotiation" may not be an accurate characterization as, according to A-Tlegay, the DFO dictates the terms. This FSC "agreement" is granted to A-Tlegay in the form of an XFSC Licence that is shared with "an aggregate of Johnstone Strait First Nations" (Canada 2016a). Included under this agreement are 14 First Nations who are not politically affiliated but who together once formed the Kwakiutl Territory Fisheries Commission (KTFC). Over the years the KTFC splintered into other organizations but to date, the DFO has continued to keep the XFSC Licence for the aggregate. In this way, the agreement is an artefact from another time but the machinations of the DFO move slowly. The 14 Nations represented through various organizations in the XFSC Licence are:

- A-Tlegay Fisheries Society (We Wai Kai, Wei Wai Kum, Kwiakah, K'omoks, Kwiakah)
- DMT Fisheries Society (Da'naxda'xw/Awaetlala and Mamalilikulla/Qwe'Qwa'Sot'em)
- Gwa'Sala-Nakwaxda'Xw Nation
- Kwakiutl Indian Band
- Musgamagw-Dzawada'enuxw Tribal Council (Gwawa'enuxw Tribe, Kwikwasut'inuxw Haxwa'mis First Nation, Dzawada'enuxw First Nation)
- Namgis First Nation
- Tlatlasikwala Indian Band

Although the right to fish is constitutionally protected, the DFO continues to issue these licences to First Nations with a defined maximum harvest for a number of species

with no publically accountable and justified process or baseline for establishing those numbers. The implication is that these maximums are set to minimize the impact of the FSC fishery on the commercial fishery. The agreement does not provide for management involvement and limits the role of A-Tlegay and the First Nations. In this way, the ability for people to maintain their relationship with fish continues to be impeded.

In the case of the licence for the “aggregate of Johnstone Strait First Nations,” under which A-Tlegay falls, the defined maximum harvest must be shared among all 14 licencees. The 2016 Johnstone Strait First Nations licence has the following maximum harvests:

- Sockeye salmon: 80,000 individual pieces
- Coho salmon: 1000 individual pieces
- Pink salmon: 2500 individual pieces
- Chum salmon: 35,000 individual pieces
- Chinook salmon: 2000 individual pieces
- Herring spawn on kelp or boughs: 35 short tons
- Pacific herring (*Clupea pallasii*): 11 short tons
- Pacific halibut: 26,000 pounds
- Sablefish: 50,000 pounds
- Groundfish (excluding Pacific Halibut and Sablefish): 18,000 pounds
- Clams (Manila [*Venerupis philippinarum*], Littleneck [*Leukoma staminea*], Butter [*Saxidomus gigantean*]): 100 pounds/day/person
- Abalone: closed for conservation
- Harbour seal: 15 individual pieces
- Prawn (*Pandalus platyceros*), Dungeness and Red Rock crab, Eulachon, Pacific oyster (*Crassostrea gigas*), shellfish excluding those noted above: no limit. (Canada 2016a)

The combined population for the 14 First Nations is 7995 people (Canada 2016c). When considering the maximum harvest allowed per person in the licence for an entire year, it is quickly apparent that the amount of fish for food allowed impacts ones ability to maintain any kind of ontological relationship with fish (Table 1). Assuming each person gets their maximum allowance, they are allowed 117 pounds or 53.5 kg of fish each year

and less than a pound of herring spawn. These food sources provide not only an important link to one's history and heritage, but they also provide a vital protein source that many households rely upon. Generally the meat to weight yield on a fish is 40-60% so if allowing for the maximum, the actual weight of fish that is consumable is approximately 70 pounds or 32 kg per person. The bulk of that amount is allowed in sockeye and chum salmon. For the other salmon species only a fraction of a fish is allowed while for bottom fish (halibut and groundfish), the maximum harvest is 5.5 pounds or 2.5 kg per year. While this might meet nutritional needs, it does not meet a level required for people to maintain a relationship with fish, nor does it enable people to maintain an identity as fishers and fish caretakers. Granted, these figures are based on every citizen of each Nation getting his or her maximum allocation, which simply does not happen, meaning others who do have access to fish might get more of the allocation, but that is arguably irrelevant. The fact is that every citizen has the right to the fish if he or she chooses to exercise it.

Furthermore, while 10 sockeye each year is the allocation, because of the plummeting sockeye stock and the numerous challenges in catching the fish (fewer boats, expensive gear, fewer professional fishers, etc.) people often do not get their allocation. When A-Tlegay or the First Nation governments hire community fishers to catch the allocated fish, the internal allocation is generally 10 sockeye per household and not per person, and it is usually limited to those living on reserve. The same is true of chum, which even fewer people seem to get each year. Furthermore, the allocation of pink salmon is interesting. Generally the pink salmon population is doing well in the Johnstone Strait region. Every other year, the run of pink salmon in the Campbell River is

large and is now regularly deemed as having excess spawners [JM-019]. The return of pink salmon in other rivers that feed Johnstone Strait is the same (Canada 2015). Yet the maximum harvest allowed in the licence is low at .31 fish per person.

Table 1: Allowable Harvest: FSC, BC Sports Fishery, Commercial Fishery

| Fish Species | FSC Allocation 2016 | | | BC Sport Fishery 2017 | BC Commercial Fishery |
|------------------------------|---------------------|---------------|--------------|--|-----------------------|
| | Per Person | lbs/yr* | Kg/yr* | Area 13** Allowance per licence | All of BC (2015) |
| Sockeye salmon | 10.00 fish | 55.10 | 24.99 | 0 fish | |
| Coho salmon | 0.12 fish | 0.79 | 0.36 | 4 possession, no annual limit | |
| Pink salmon | 0.31 fish | 1.02 | 0.46 | 8 possession, no annual limit | |
| Chum salmon | 4.38 fish | 43.36 | 19.67 | 8 possession, no annual limit | |
| Chinook (Spring) salmon | 0.25 fish | 4.68 | 2.12 | 15 annually | |
| Pacific herring | 0.28 lbs | 0.28 | 0.13 | 40 kg possession, no annual limit | |
| Pacific halibut | 3.25 lbs | 3.25 | 1.47 | 6 annually | |
| Sablefish | 6.25 lbs | 6.25 | 2.83 | 8 possession, no annual limit | |
| Groundfish | 2.25 lbs | 2.25 | 1.02 | No annual limit except for Lingcod (10/year) | |
| Herring spawn on kelp/boughs | 0.88 lbs | 0.88 | 0.40 | prohibited | |
| Total Weight | | 116.98 | 53.46 | | 130,000 tonnes |

(*average weight taken from Canada 2016b:5.5)

(**Area 13 extends from the northern Gulf of Georgia from Mitlenatch Island north through Discovery Passage and Johnstone Strait to Salmon River/Sayward, and includes the channels and inlets to the north east)

Contrasted with the sports fishery, the disparity in allocations is more apparent. Sports fishers in Area 13, which is the Johnstone Strait/Campbell River area, are allowed 15 Chinook salmon annually, but they are also allowed to possess up to eight chum salmon, eight pink salmon, and two wild coho with no annual limit. No annual limit means that as long as one person does not hold more than their possession limit, they can catch more fish. Arguably, Indigenous people can fish recreationally but that is not the point; the sports fishery is not about the Aboriginal right whereas the FSC fishery, as per *R. v. Sparrow* (Supreme Court of Canada 1990), is. Significantly, recreational fishers have access to more fish annually than Laich-Kwil-Tach people have under their Aboriginal right to the fish. This does not address the commercial industry, which of course is the biggest fisher on the coast. In 2015, almost 130,000 metric tonnes of fish were caught in provincial waters (Canada and Fisheries and Oceans 2017). None of this catch can be used for food, social or ceremonial purposes in the community, as that catch must count against the FSC allocation.

Complicating the situation is that the 14 nations who share the licence are not formally connected in any way, yet they are expected to monitor and report on each other's catch in order to stay within the maximum harvest determined by the licence. The reality is that this kind of internal report sharing is not done and would be logistically difficult, potentially leading to internal controversy if one nation is seen by another as taking more than its allocation. For these reasons, the licencees do not attempt to monitor amongst themselves and only keep track of their own internal numbers.

This breakdown of allocation figures suggests that currently regulating and limiting a constitutionally protected right is problematic, and while my research did not include a

formal “needs assessment,” by all accounts nutritional needs as understood in this research far exceed the limits of the FSC allocation. This assertion is supported by the First Nations Food, Nutrition and Environment Study conducted in 2008-2009, which found that 36% of on-reserve households ran out of food before they had the funds to purchase more (Chan, et al. 2011:84). This also meant that for this time period 10% of the households were unable to provide enough food for their children (Chan, et al. 2011:84). Perhaps opportunities to exercise fishing rights and to utilize those resources for both food use and economic gain (e.g. through sale), free of an allocation program, would do much to provide greater food security for First Nations families. However, currently the FCS licence explicitly states that fish caught under FSC are for FSC purposes only and the catch cannot be sold, although traditional exchange or distribution is allowed. This means that while families can use the fish for food, they are not allowed to use the fish for profit in order to purchase other food or items the family needs. This fact was a common cause of frustration among those interviewed for this research, and understandably so given that the results of my research clearly reveal how people have relied on fish for their well-being for countless generations and how the relationship with fish has long been part of Laich-Kwil-Tach ontology. In defense of their right, several people noted that a Port Alberni First Nation negotiated a pilot sales project that allowed them to sell their FSC fish (a similar program was negotiated for a few Fraser River First Nations in 1992 but suspended in 2003, English *et al.* 2011). Although this agreement is long expired, a drive through the Port Alberni Tseshaht reserve on Vancouver Island in July reveals a number of families still selling their fish. Many Laich-Kwil-Tach people also want to sell their fish without fear of repercussion from the DFO authorities.

Through its Comprehensive Fisheries Agreement, A-Tlegay issues permits to its member nations' citizens. This includes issuing permits to fishers with commercial-sized boats, fishers who own small pleasure crafts and even youth who fish from the local pier. According to the A-Tlegay Administrator, fishers' catch reports on these permits are excellent and everyone, even the youth, appear willing to report their catch to A-Tlegay. In turn, A-Tlegay willingly reports this catch information to the DFO. However, these reports generally come at the end of the season or opening, and during the fishery A-Tlegay does not attempt to monitor internal fish catches. Furthermore, catch reports from member fishers reveal greater numbers of fish caught than the maximum harvest numbers allowed in the FSC licence. This is because, as noted above the allocation is not high enough to meet community needs and according to the Administrator, "there is never going to be excess" [KD-22]. In fact, by A-Tlegay's reckoning, even with exceeding the allowable catch, too many families get little to no fish. Finally, each year A-Tlegay reports on the actual catch, showing that when the fish are available in their waters, the Nations named on the FSC licence regularly exceed the allowable catch. While I was not told explicitly that this is a political manoeuvre, there is a sentiment that it is important to continue to show the DFO that allocations are inadequate and to continue to assert a right to a fishery in which the DFO must have a limited part. Furthermore, to monitor catch numbers against the FSC licence would require cooperation with the other First Nations on the licence. Then, once the maximum allocation was reached, the fishery could potentially close, causing considerable internal problems between communities, fishers, and families, and for those organizations like A-Tlegay who are tasked with reporting. To date the DFO has not questioned any overages on the maximum allowable harvest.

Another challenge in the FSC program was addressed by some of those interviewed, as outlined in Chapter 7. When the FSC fishery was first established it was perceived as a program in which fishers would fish for their own community. However, that was never the reality. Years ago every family had a boat or a close family member who did, but by the 1990s, too many families were out of the commercial industry and no longer had easy access to a boat or the fishery. In a significant way, Laich-Kwil-Tach people appear to be better off than many other First Nations, as there are still 25 commercial boats owned privately by Laich-Kwil-Tach citizens and families, and another 10 that are operated by Laich-Kwil-Tach people for other owners (A-Tlegay 2013). Thus while other First Nations have all but lost their capacity (e.g. the Hul'qumi'num, who have but a few boats, Thom 2005:70-71), Laich-Kwil-Tach people have been relatively successful in maintaining capacity, albeit in dramatically reduced numbers over previous generations. Their success in capacity maintenance is due in large part to their position within Johnstone Strait providing access to fish, their ongoing role in the commercial fishery throughout the coast, FSC-contract work and sheer tenacity in their unwillingness to step away from fishing as a livelihood. Since the Laich-Kwil-Tach fleet is still viable, Laich-Kwil-Tach fishers are often hired by other First Nations to fish their FSC salmon allocation to supply their community. Because the industry has become so lean, Laich-Kwil-Tach fishers are forced to accept the contracts and as a result, there is less Laich-Kwil-Tach FSC salmon caught by the large vessels. This means that the Laich-Kwil-Tach nations, through A-Tlegay, are forced to compete and must also pay their fishermen at a cost of approximately \$40,000/year. This high cost makes it virtually impossible to ensure an allocation to all citizens, a cause for concern and complaint by

many off-reserve citizens, and a subject to which I will return shortly.

To further complicate the issue, as fish populations decline in other parts of Vancouver Island, many First Nations turn to the Johnstone Strait region for their salmon allocation. Because their allocation is meant to come from their own territory, in clear conflict with Indigenous land and marine tenure, they must first apply to the DFO, who, managing on a communal fisheries basis, does not deny the request. In the past this meant that many First Nations were either in Laich-Kwil-Tach territory fishing or they hired a Laich-Kwil-Tach boat. This took fish away from the Laich-Kwil-Tach community and it became a regular occurrence for many families to go completely without salmon in a season. This changed in 2016. After a poor salmon season in 2015 A-Tlegay negotiated with the DFO to allow the FSC salmon allocated to A-Tlegay's member nations to be accessed two days earlier than any other in Laich-Kwil-Tach territory. With this advanced access, Laich-Kwil-Tach fishers did not need to choose between working as a hired boat or fishing for their community. The result was that in 2016, there was a much greater quantity of fish available in the community and at least most on-reserve families received some salmon, although it may have resulted in less fish in other communities. A-Tlegay arranged this agreement with the local fisheries managers and they hope the agreement will be repeated in upcoming years.

These FSC allocations, licences, and agreements with DFO run counter to the reciprocal relationship between humans and fish within Laich-Kwil-Tach ontology. Rather than being the decision makers in an ongoing relationship, Laich-Kwil-Tach people are now forced to fish only when another, outside authority allows. This creates barriers to maintaining an ongoing and reciprocal relationship with fish in which the fish

and the people support the others' well-being. Significantly then, not only does the FSC infringe on the right to fish, but it infringes on the right to maintain a relationship with the lands and “resources,” or the landscape that is central to Laich-Kwil-Tach being.

First Nations Protocols and DFO Amended Licences Workshop

Even though the FSC allocation is exclusive to First Nations, the problem of competition for salmon under the program has become so great that there is now a need for First Nations to rely on each other to obtain their allocations. For this reason in March 2017 A-Tlegay hosted its first Inter-Nations fisheries workshop to support protocol development. Held in a large hall, the meeting included fisheries representatives from the three Laich-Kwil-Tach nations (We Wai Kai, Wei Wai Kum, and Kwiakah) as well as representatives from Quatsino, Namgis, Klahoose, K'omoks, Squamish and Songhees, revealing something of the legal and technical networks. The A-Tlegay team included its three biologists and its Administrator. There were three objectives for the meeting:

1. To build, repair, and strengthen relationships among representatives of the DFO, A-Tlegay member nations, and other First Nations with an interest in salmon fisheries in the traditional territories of the A-Tlegay members;
2. To build awareness, understanding, and respect for A-Tlegay protocols, and the DFO core mandate / accountability mechanisms;
and
3. Collaborate to address and begin resolving issues of common concern by exploring the needs of both parties.

Another objective was to identify the common problems each participating First Nations faces when working with the DFO, and to establish a mutual response, particularly in terms of allocation. A-Tlegay's approach was to seek agreement on “traditional protocol” in which every First Nation requests permission to fish in another First Nation's territory. While this goal is challenging, perhaps the bigger problem is that

even if a protocol is in place, the DFO makes an independent determination and decides to issue or not issue an amended licence. I turn to issues of shared decision making later but of note here is the unwillingness of the state to enter into agreements that, while recognizing Indigenous management authority, are seen as fettering the Minister's authority. In other words, if two First Nations have a fishing protocol that honours Indigenous tenure and allows one into the other's territory, the DFO can deny the agreement by refusing to issue an amended licence. If the fishery goes ahead, the fish caught by the visiting First Nation is counted against the home Nation's allocation. Or, if there is no protocol in place, the DFO can issue a licence granting access to another First Nation's waters, in which case it does not count against the local allocation, but it does potentially impact the available fish and fishers for the local First Nation and violates Indigenous tenure. Identifying this problem, one participant said, "these protocols are between us and not with DFO. We need something for when they come in the room, we need a control mechanism that is respected by Canada but that reflects our needs." Another said, "this meeting opens a door to a united approach where we speak with a common voice and deliver a common message."

After several hours of discussion about how to bring the separate and distant First Nations together in a protocol, five DFO representatives were asked to join the meeting. Following the direction of the morning discussion, the facilitator opened this part of the meeting by telling these DFO representatives that the goal is to develop First Nation protocols so that amended FSC licences will not be required. The DFO representative responded by outlining the "Access and Allocation Framework," a process that was developed in 2006 and shared in November 2014 at the First Nation Fishery Council

Annual General Meeting in Prince George. Held in the interior of the province, well outside of the coastal fishery and the territories of those Nations most impacted by reallocations and amended licences, the Regional FSC Fisheries Access Framework Procedures were shared. The procedures consist of six steps:

1. Request received from Chief or official representative of the band;
2. DFO evaluates the request;
3. DFO obtains as much information as possible from the First Nation and offers to meet;
4. DFO consults with First Nations potentially impacted to
 - Determine the scope of the duty to consult (ranges from give notice to proposed accommodation) by completing an assessment of the strength of claim to aboriginal or treaty rights and the seriousness of the potential impact on those rights;
5. DFO makes its decision; and
6. Area staff to notify First Nations of decision. (Canada 2014)

As identified by the First Nations at the A-Tlegay Protocol meeting, the steps of this “procedure” do not provide room for any protocols established among First Nations. Instead, each First Nation is consulted, which means they must present their “strength of claim”¹⁷ to the area in question and then the DFO makes the decision. Furthermore, it appears that the procedure was outlined in 2014 but that it was never part of a ratification process, and according to the DFO representative at this protocol meeting, it still remains in draft form after 11 years. Nevertheless, at this most recent meeting, DFO staff recognised that their amended licence process makes First Nation protocols difficult to develop and respect, and they expressed an interest in protocols as an alternative approach, suggesting that it would make their internal processes simpler. They also suggested that the new Canadian government, a Liberal majority elected in 2015 after ten

¹⁷ Currently both First Nations and the governments compile information that lays out a First Nation’s rights and title to an area. The government uses their document to assess the “strength” of title and rights claims. First Nations often develop their own document and will use it to refute decisions that are implemented by various ministries. Indigenous land and marine tenure systems often inform the First Nation reports.

years of a Conservative government, is looking for ways to affect reconciliation. In this light, the DFO representatives stated several times that they are looking to First Nations for solutions and that they want to have greater transparency in their decision-making process. However, it was unclear what transparency really means and it remains to be negotiated. If it means that the information informing decisions will be shared while the DFO continues to make decisions to “allow access,” it is a small step in reconciliation, because these First Nations are looking for a seat and a real voice in the decision-making process. One person at the meeting captured this concern when he said, “the First Nation Fishery Council is still only a voice and decisions come from above.... Work with our fishery organizations, they will suffer without a voice. It’s time, Canada, it’s time. Allow our First Nations organizations to work with you.”

At the end of the first day of the meeting participants decided that the second day would be better served if the DFO staff were not present. The day began with feedback from the participants and the impressions from day one seemed divided. While some acknowledged the statements from the DFO about working together and looking to First Nations to help provide answers, others were less convinced and felt that the DFO is still in the business of allocations as the assumed resource owner and manager and that they guided the day’s discussion to their benefit. Regardless of the impression, everyone agreed that the most important steps to ensure that their right to the fish is secured are to work with one another and to develop First Nation protocols. To this end, the rest of the morning was spent developing a work plan that would guide protocol development. Perhaps the greatest challenge to this goal, which is to have a protocol in place by the start of the 2018 salmon season, is engaging with those First Nations who, although

invited, did not attend the meeting. Those who did not attend did not necessarily give a reason, but the decision may have been informed by many factors including a lack of internal resources to commit to protocol development or an opposition to protocol development because the status quo benefits their First Nation.

Within the work plan, A-Tlegay committed to asking those First Nations with whom they share their fisheries agreement to meet independently of the DFO during their next annual agreement review. According to Kim, there was little interest, so A-Tlegay hopes to develop an internal protocol with its own fishers. This protocol will focus on Laich-Kwil-Tach fishers fishing for other First Nations in Johnstone Strait in an effort to better position Laich-Kwil-Tach fishers to support the Laich-Kwil-Tach communities while also maintaining their livelihood and their very expensive fishing gear.

Of great interest to me was that during this two-day workshop no one challenged the allocations within the FSC agreements. Instead, discussion focused on how to divide the First Nation allocation and improve the relationship with the DFO. Clearly everyone recognises that marine resources are at risk and that compromise is needed on a reduced resource, but other than a comment or two about the recreational fishery, no one questioned their limited access. Perhaps it is because of a common recognition that marine resources are at risk. Or perhaps it is believed that gaining a voice at the decision-making table will help increase allocations, although as Nadasdy (2003a:207) points out, change to something like allocation generally requires what is considered to be solid and rigorous scientific research in which there is little room for other forms of knowledge. What also seemed clear to me at this meeting was that, although the DFO is talking about opportunities to affect reconciliation, there is still an entrenched attitude in which the

DFO remains in control and retains absolute decision-making authority. This continues to oppose Indigenous land and marine tenure systems and continues to usurp opportunities for First Nations to practice the care and respect grounded in ontological relationships.

Food, Social and Ceremonial Fishery II

Although salmon is the most important part of the A-Tlegay fisheries agreement, other species of fish are also addressed. For example, prawns and groundfish are caught under FSC but their harvest amounts are quite different. In terms of prawns, although there is no limit on quantity, there is a limit on how they can be caught. Harvesting is done by a prawn trap but they cannot be caught on a commercial vessel or with commercial fishing gear unless specific permission is obtained from the local DFO Resource Manager. If one seeks such permission, he or she must provide details on when and where the fishing will occur, the number of traps that will be used, how the fishery will be monitored, how the catch will be reported and the amount to be harvested. This means that if a family is planning a feast or potlatch, in order to use the few community members who fish prawns commercially, they and/or the fisher must justify their need and fishing plans to the local DFO office. Such a requirement disregards Laich-Kwil-Tach autonomy, self-determination and rights, and intentional or not, creates a form of state control over the ceremonial.

In terms of groundfish, any significant distribution is met through an allocation of licences because, unlike FSC salmon, the FSC groundfish can be caught at the same time as the commercial catch. Essentially, when A-Tlegay issues the commercial groundfish licence, a condition of the licence is that 1500 pounds be given to A-Tlegay. This number is determined by A-Tlegay's capacity to process and circulate the fish and by their

capacity to store it. Because storage or freezer facilities are limited, the A-Tlegay crew must dispense the fish immediately. A-Tlegay has three freezers in a storage unit to store a small amount but what it needs is a large, walk-in freezer for longer and greater capacity storage so that it can help support the community's needs when A-Tlegay is asked for resources for community events.

To distribute fish the A-Tlegay crew goes door-to-door, visiting Elders first. Those who are home get fish. However, word travels quickly, and A-Tlegay makes phone calls to Elders, so in most cases, Elders get some amount of the distribution. The result is that most Elders have a small supply of fish and seafood that, as one man recently told me, contributes significantly to his winter meals and saves him a great deal of money at the grocery store.

Thus, although A-Tlegay's role in the FSC is supposed to be simple—they provide and manage permitting and reporting—the reality is far different. They are an important part of the Laich-Kwil-Tach community (and their other member Nations' communities) and contribute significantly to the community's well-being by ensuring that as many people as possible have fish each year. Nevertheless, due to funding limitations, high costs and logistics, many Laich-Kwil-Tach families and individuals do not have access to this communal distribution of fish. This fact is well known to A-Tlegay and community leaders who struggle to explain the gap and to find solutions to fill it. In the case of sockeye, extended distribution is difficult because A-Tlegay and fishers have very little notice before the fishery opens and openings are very short. In the case of chum, notice is longer so there is potentially an opportunity for off-reserve citizens to access fish, but they must travel to Campbell River to get it because there are no easy, affordable or

efficient distribution mechanisms. Another option is for A-Tlegay or the nations to have the fish canned and then distribute it. The obstacle in this case is once again, cost. For the three Laich-Kwil-Tach Nations, 64% of the population does not live on their own reserve lands (Canada 2016c). The general goal is to get each on-reserve household a minimum of 10 fish per year. If this was to extend to off-reserve citizens, the cost would more than double, even before processing fees. These numbers currently make it impossible for the communities to expand their distribution. However, upon discussion with the current elected chief of one of the Laich-Kwil-Tach nations, he noted that it has never been intended that the distribution be for on-reserve households only, just that neither A-Tlegay, nor the bands, can be responsible for the costs of distributing the fish beyond reserve boundaries. This means that any citizen can obtain fish if they are on reserve on the day of distribution. However, in my conversations with community members on distribution day and later reveals two things about distribution day: 1. off-reserve citizens do not know that they can get their distribution of fish if they go to the reserve, and 2. on-reserve citizens do not know that their off-reserve relatives have the right to get fish. For this latter reason, if fish is limited, it is likely that on-reserve citizens would dispute the right of the off-reserve citizen, further complicating distribution.

Communal Commercial Fishery

Through the terms of its AFS Comprehensive Fisheries Agreement with the DFO, A-Tlegay currently holds 14 commercial licences that are “communal” and are leased out to individual community fishers:

- Salmon seine licences (x3)
- Herring seine licence (x1)
- Herring gillnet licences (x8)
- Halibut licence (x1)
- Rockfish licence (x1)

Communal commercial licences are only allocated to Indigenous governments or organizations that have multi-year AFS agreements with the DFO, but they are limited in time to the term of the agreement. Furthermore, terms and conditions that apply to the licences are laid out in the AFS agreement. These AFS terms are in addition to the regular terms and conditions of a commercial licence such as those set out by the DFO (e.g. fishery openings and closures). For example, while a regular commercial licence is transferrable, a communal licence is not and is held directly by the First Nation for the duration of the agreement. While the intent of these licences is to provide economic opportunities to First Nations in advance of treaty settlements, and they may become part of a treaty “package,” there are not accompanying authorities or decision-making opportunities. These licences are also part of the AFS package and are not guaranteed as part of the Aboriginal right to fish, which the state limits to a food, social and ceremonial fishery and the allocations discussed above. Some of the communal licences through the Comprehensive Fisheries Agreement come to A-Tlegay at zero cost and others come at a cost but are leased out at a marginal profit. For example, the three salmon seine licences are a zero cost because there is no guarantee that the fishery will open in any given year. In the lease process, an interested fisher applies for the licence. A-Tlegay determines the successful applicant using criteria set out in their licencing policy and the cost of the leased licence is based on the industry average. Plus a condition of many of the lease agreements requires the fisher to provide A-Tlegay with a small amount of its catch for

distribution among the community. This process does allow some local fishers to access a commercial licence and it does create income opportunities for A-Tlegay, the monies from which benefit the larger community. The program, however, is not large enough for all Laich-Kwil-Tach fishers to benefit and it does not address in any way self-determination or a role in decision making, nor does it respect ontological values informed by the relational world. So, while managing the FSC and communal licences are a big part of A-Tlegay's mandate, it also actively seeks a role in the scientific process and decision-making. In doing so A-Tlegay's team builds capacity within the modern scientific paradigm while bringing knowledge and practice from the community and Elders who inform A-Tlegay's decisions and direction. In this way I see this revitalization as practice. In other words, while A-Tlegay purposely seeks to revitalize management processes, practice follows.

Charter Protocol

Charter protocol usually sees both A-Tlegay boats on the water in the early morning during commercial fishing openings. Each boat is crewed by a pilot (one of the full-time technicians) and a second crewmember, and the teams patrol the upper and lower reaches of Johnstone Strait between the north end of Seymour Narrows and Robson Bight. They watch the fishers, ensure that the commercial opening's regulations are followed, provide support to the fishers and collect the data on estimated numbers of fish caught by each boat. This last responsibility is called "hails." The crew stops at every boat in the Strait that is operating in that commercial opening. They collect the estimated numbers from all boats and report them immediately to the DFO. The DFO decision-makers use the information to make ongoing and immediate decisions about the opening.

For example, in October 2017 the second chum opening was set for October 17, with a possible third opening on October 18. October 17 was a 10-hour opening, from 8 am to 6 PM. October 18, if it was to open was shorter, beginning at 10 AM. However, throughout the day no one knew if the additional time would be added. It was not until later in the day, after the A-Tlegay crews had reported the catch numbers that the DFO decided to re-open the next day. Thus, although A-Tlegay is on the water, witnessing the run of fish and its catch, it is not in the position of decision-maker but is limited to data collector. Very early in the day, everyone on the water realised the size of the run and volume of fish, yet all fishers were kept in limbo until early evening regarding an opportunity to fish the next day. This makes planning for the fishery difficult and requires that the fishers, who are predominately Laich-Kwil-Tach in Johnstone Strait, be positioned to respond quickly to the DFO decisions.

Creel Survey

A-Tlegay bids annually on a creel survey contract. Thus far they have been successful, largely because they keep their bid low and because they are in the area and have all of the equipment on hand. A creel survey collects information used by the DFO to assist in their overall fisheries decisions. It focuses on recreational fishers and includes angler interviews, fish measurements, hours of fishing, boat counts, angler counts, etc. The data is given to the DFO who uses it to run statistical analyses that inform harvest numbers, fish size, etc.

While A-Tlegay carries out the survey work, it does not run the statistical program nor does it have a role in any decisions related to the recreational fishery. Furthermore, an angler's participation in the survey is voluntary; however, over the years, the local fishers

have come to know the A-Tlegay technicians and usually cooperate fully with the interviews.

Black Creek Coho Enumeration

Although coho that spawn around Vancouver Island are not officially “at risk” or “threatened,” their survival rates have been poor since the 1980s and their success continues on a downward trend [JM-024]. Ironically, although this trend exists, there is only one stream in the Strait of Georgia that is monitored as an “indicator stream” for coho escapement, spawning and well-being. A-Tlegay does the monitoring and reports the information to the DFO.

There are two programs at Black Creek, one that focuses on the exiting juvenile coho and another that focuses on the returning adults. Work at Black Creek begins in the spring, and from April to June the A-Tlegay crew works with the juvenile coho. Because Black Creek is an enumeration site, the DFO built a fish fence. The A-Tlegay crew works at this fence where the juvenile coho are trapped as they migrate downstream to the ocean. A subset of the migrating fish are caught, measured and weighed. These combined measurements are used to help determine overall fish health. Scale samples are also collected and are used to understand the age structure of out-migrating fish. Fish scales reflect seasonal growth patterns, much like tree rings, and the pattern can be seen under a microscope. Seasonal growth is an important piece of the data because, although typically juvenile coho spend their first year in their natal creek, others spend two or even three years. It is not yet understood why or the implications of an extended stay, so this information is meant to help inform this particular fish behavior and contributes to the understanding of fish movement and survival rate of juvenile fish. Once the

measurements and scales are gathered the young fish is given a “Coded Wire Tag” or CWT, and the adipose fin is clipped to mark the fish as “tagged.” This CWT is a tracking device specifically designed for fish. It is a small, magnetized wire that is inserted into the nose or cheek of the fish and is used to help understand marine survival and exploitation rates (see below).

The second program at Black Creek concerns the incoming adults between October and December. Adults are intercepted at the fence on their way upstream to spawn. In a subset of the returning fish A-Tlegay crew record the sex and length and the fish are examined for the presence of a CWT. Scale samples are taken and the tested fish are marked with a “spaghetti tag,” a streamer-like tag that hangs off the fish but clearly marks it as a surveyed fish. These tags work well over short periods, like the time between the fence and spawning. Again, each tag has a unique number that links the data collected to that fish at the fence. Furthermore, the fish are counted, noting the proportion of those tagged fish among the returning run.

After spawning is complete, the A-Tlegay crew walks the stream to conduct a “dead pitch,” a survey that identifies the proportion of fish with a spaghetti tag. Together, the data collected on the exiting juveniles, the returning adults and the dead pitch are used by the DFO to establish indicators of exploitation rates and to determine “percent marine survival,” which, as noted, is low and in decline [JM-026].

All of the data from the coho survey are shared with the DFO. They run the data through their system and extrapolate to estimate productivity, survival rate and escapement of all coho in all streams in the Strait of Georgia. Management decisions are

then made by the DFO based on the results and for A-Tlegay to be involved at all, they must work within the scientific program designed by the DFO.

Snorkel Survey Stock Assessments

Between July and December, A-Tlegay technicians and biologists conduct snorkel survey stock assessments in 13 stream systems throughout Laich-Kwil-Tach lands. Each river is assessed multiple times in an attempt to survey numerous periods during each salmon species' migration upstream. However, success varies depending on water level, with the late season migrations getting less time due to high water (Meldrum and Duncan 2015).

Donning a wetsuit, snorkel and mask the team swims the length of the waterway that is covered by anadromous fish. In other words, they survey from the highest point in the river where salmon spawn to the intertidal area in the lower reaches of the river. In some cases, this is more than 10 km of river. Much of this work is arduous as the crew must work its way safely through the swifter sections of the rivers and swim long lengths of the quiet ones.

While in the river, the team counts the fish it sees, recording the species. Like the other surveys, the information is given to the DFO who use the data in their decision-making processes. In this case, the data are uploaded into the DFO database system (Meldrum and Duncan 2015:25) and are included in the A-Tlegay annual report. In this way the DFO can use the data for both in-season and post-season escapement estimates that again inform part of the Government of Canada's decision-making framework.

Clam Beach Surveys

Clam beach surveys are an important program conducted by A-Tlegay and there are aspirations to expand it. Currently covered by the DFO base budget funding, this program identifies a set of beaches that will be revisited regularly. Beaches are “determined based on the interests of member nations, accessibility and traditional usage” and the goal is to “monitor and quantify important clam beaches... and turn over beach substrate” (Meldrum 2016b:6). Upon each visit a biomass survey is completed following current DFO protocol. First a grid system is established over the beach. For butter clams the grid is one metre by one metre, while for other species the unit is smaller. Then, depending on the size of the beach and the species of interest, a minimum number of randomly selected plots are examined by digging 20-30 centimetres deep over the full extent of the unit—depth depends again on the species of interest. The general goal is to test a minimum of 30 - 100 cm x 100 cm quadrats to a depth of 30 cm within that part of the beach that is suitable clam habitat. All of the shellfish from the plot are put into bags and tagged with the plot number, time, temperature, etc. and then set aside. Shellfish from a number of plots are gathered in this way until the tide is too high. Then analysis begins. Each clam is identified by species, weighed and measured. Clams are not kept because these surveys are done during the summer low tides when clams cannot be eaten due to the presence of “red tide,” a naturally occurring phytoplankton upon which clams feed that is toxic to humans if ingested. The results of the clam surveys provide an understanding of productivity for the beaches by providing density and biomass estimates, and over time trends become visible. The data is shared with the DFO who uses the information to support its decision-making process within shellfish management. Once again, while A-

Tlegay's data is utilized, it does not have a voice in decisions nor is Indigenous knowledge readily included.

Dungeness Crab Survey

Two important areas of Laich-Kwil-Tach territory are included in the Dungeness crab survey. The first is Phillips Arm, an area that is key to the Kwiakah Laich-Kwil-Tach. Phillips River is a productive salmon stream with numerous robust fish traps in its estuary. The bay that is fed by the river is well known and prized by the community for its productive crab fishery. However, this productivity is also well known to commercial and recreational crab fishers who have long set traps in the bay, raising alarm and concern. This alarm led to an agreement between A-Tlegay and the DFO to begin a five-year study on crabs in the area. Shortly thereafter, a second agreement was struck to expand the study to Topaze Harbour, the homeland and origin place for Laich-Kwil-Tach people.

Surveys began almost 5 years ago. "The objectives of the survey were to provide an index of relative abundance of sex and size, information about moulting patterns, injury rates, upcoming recruitment, long-term population trends and fishing effort. This information will be used to inform and guide the Nations on the health of this important species within the territories" (Meldrum 2016a:5). Following the protocol set by the DFO, the A-Tlegay crew visits both of these locations eight times throughout the year. Each time they set 30 traps in the same, geo-referenced locations. Each trap is baited with a specific amount and type of bait and each trap is left to "soak" for 24 hours. Any crabs caught are counted, measured and otherwise recorded (e.g. size, sex, spawning, moulting, carapace condition, sexual maturity, etc.). Once measured, if the crabs are of legal size,

they are kept for social and ceremonial needs in the community, but generally there is not enough to establish a formal distribution in the larger community. Data are also gathered on the commercial users in the area. A buoy marks each commercial trap and each buoy is marked with the licence number. In 2015 the majority of the buoys in Phillips Arm belonged to three different licences. Two of the three were First Nation, owned by individuals from the Nanoose and Namgis First Nations who, while in Phillips Arm, were well outside their traditional waters (Meldrum 2016a:20). In Topaze Harbour, commercial use was greater with the majority of buoys belonging to four different licencees, only one of whom was First Nation from the Namgis Nation (Meldrum 2016a:31), who again was well outside Namgis territory.

The crab survey data are shared with the DFO, who, after five years, will begin to use the data in its management decisions, for that is policy: there must be five years of data before it can be used. One assumes this is to establish a baseline. The potential problem in this plan, at least in this case, is that the stocks are already severely impacted or even collapsed. For this reason, basing management decisions on recent data can be problematic and it is for this reason that the long-term knowledge of the fishers and users is so valuable.

Prawn Surveys

Beginning in 2013, prawn surveys comprise a very small part of the overall A-Tlegay program, largely due to funding restrictions. Although it is included in the DFO base funding, there is only enough money to conduct one survey each year. For this reason, it is looked upon more as a capacity building project than a data collection project. Nevertheless, each year's survey location is selected "based on the interests of

member nations... [in order to obtain] an index of relative abundance of sex and size, information about life stage/maturity and long-term population trends” (Meldrum 2016c:3). The goal is to use the data to “inform the management of FSC, commercial and recreational fisheries for this important species within the territories” (Meldrum 2016c:3).

Much like the Dungeness crab survey the prawn survey is done at a specific, GPS-determined location, the bait and bait quantity is standardized and the trap is set to “soak” for 24 hours. Once complete the life stage and size of the captured prawns is recorded and reported to the DFO. Like with the crab, if the catch is legal, the prawns are kept, but it rarely amounts to much.

Plankton Testing

In partnership with the Centre for Aquatic Health Sciences in Campbell River A-Tlegay supports plankton testing to measure productivity as well as pelagic habitat properties. The crew uses a large, round net that filters water into cups at different depths. Ocean water properties are recorded while collecting the samples and data are used in fishery stock assessments.

Fresh Water Projects

In 1947 the John Hart Generating Station came into operation in the Campbell River watershed. According to numerous Laich-Kwil-Tach Elders, the impact of the dam, the reservoir, and more accurately, their operation, devastated fish habitat and spawning grounds, contributing significantly to the loss of fish productivity in the river (Cullon 2011). Recently A-Tlegay branched out to include fresh water in their research and monitoring interests. Largely driven by the effects of hydro operations in the Campbell River watershed and water use planning completed in the early 2000s, BC Hydro

established a number of monitoring projects. Monitoring responsibility is contracted to A-Tlegay who is responsible for nine different monitoring projects including water flow rates, temperature, recreational use, littoral productivity, fish spawning bed health and spawning success on the rivers and reservoirs affected by BC Hydro operations. This work also includes collaboration with the Quinsam River hatchery, a hatchery on a large tributary of the lower Campbell River. BC Hydro has interests in the health of the Quinsam fish because its operations affect the lower Campbell River and it diverts water from the Quinsam system. One role of A-Tlegay staff is to prepare the Passive Integrated Transponder (PIT) tags used to tag coho salmon in this system. A PIT tag “consists of an integrated circuit chip, capacitor, and antenna coil encased in glass” (Roussel, et al. 2000:1326). Energy for the tag is generated by the coiled antennae when the reading unit, in this case the fish fence, creates an electromagnetic field (Roussel, et al. 2000:1326-1327). In other words, the only time the unit creates or requires energy is when the data from the tag is being recorded at a collection station. In cooperation with the hatchery, A-Tlegay staff assemble the tags that are later inserted into the adult fish in the lower part of the river. The fish are then counted at three locations along the river contributing to the understanding of fish movement and survival.

A-Tlegay crews also monitor the river itself, conducting many snorkel surveys over the year, monitoring fish movement, fish numbers, spawning beds, productivity, etc. The information they gather is used by BC Hydro and the DFO to make reservoir and dam decisions.

Excess Spawning Salmon in the Campbell River System

When the DFO determines that there is an excess of spawning fish migrating to the Quinsam hatchery A-Tlegay is given permission to harvest the fish. They in turn sell the fish to a cannery and the funds are used as a source of income to support ongoing programs. A-Tlegay has no authority in this decision. Simply, the DFO requires 190,000 pink salmon to spawn, and once that number is reached the remaining fish are considered “excess” [KD-019; JM-019]. However, A-Tlegay has generally agreed with the assessment because it is only made for pink salmon, which were artificially enhanced in the Campbell River system. It is not anticipated that similar decisions will be made for any of the other salmon species.

Chum Salmon Test Fishery

In partnership with the Namgis First Nation, a Kwakwaka'wakw group on northern Vancouver Island, A-Tlegay administers and conducts the chum salmon test fishery, reporting the catch numbers to the DFO. This fishery sees A-Tlegay and Namgis hiring two seine boats to do a number of sets over a given period of time to get a sense of the size of the run. Each set is documented and the fish are counted. The information is given to the DFO who uses the data to help ascertain the size of the chum run and to inform its decisions on commercial openings.

Herring Dive Surveys

Like salmon, herring is very important to the Laich-Kwil-Tach people. Although only prized as a food source by a few today, in former times herring was likely an important part of the diet (Caldwell 2008; Caldwell 2011; McKechnie 2014; Speller, et al. 2012). Its import today is largely for Laich-Kwil-Tach commercial fishers. Because of

these historic and contemporary connections to this fish A-Tlegay is building capacity to take over herring dive surveys by providing dive training to its staff. Currently most technicians have their diving certificate and four technicians have their commercial dive certificate. A-Tlegay has invested in all of the necessary gear and equipment and it will soon be ready to bid on the herring dive survey contracts.

Herring dive surveys are done to collect data on stock size to help assess the abundance of spawning populations and to produce estimates on total egg deposition. The information is used to help assess stock numbers for commercial harvest. Like the other programs A-Tlegay manages, the herring dive survey would be a good fit because its member nations include a number of commercial herring fishers who depend on the fishery for their livelihood, and A-Tlegay is geographically situated to easily respond to herring arriving in and moving throughout the region.

Sockeye Salmon Test Fishery

Currently, A-Tlegay does not manage or administer this test fishery, but there are plans afoot to take it over. Managed through the Pacific Salmon Commission, this test fishery in Johnstone Strait is presently conducted by a Laich-Kwil-Tach fisher who is also the current chief of the We Wai Kai Nation and the Chair of the A-Tlegay Board of Directors. Conducted much like the chum salmon test fishery, this test fishery helps document the number and health of the sockeye salmon returning to the Fraser River. The information is shared with the DFO who uses the data to assist with stock assessment and to determine FSC, commercial and recreational openings and closures. Given A-Tlegay's involvement in the industry, its track record of providing good, reliable data, and its

capacity to manage and conduct such programs, it makes perfect sense for A-Tlegay to assume responsibility for the sockeye salmon test fishery.

The Challenge of DFO Interference

As noted throughout this chapter, the policies set by the DFO not only create barriers to self-determination but they also set up challenging dynamics between First Nations. One of the biggest challenges was one of the primary reasons for the protocol meeting hosted by A-Tlegay—how to develop a protocol for fishing respectfully in one another’s waters. Such discussions are grounded in Indigenous tenure, ownership and management systems and are little regarded by the DFO. Furthermore, as I review the scientific programs designed by the DFO, I am reminded of a comment an Elder made to me in 1995 when I first began working in Kwakwaka’wakw territory. He said that the whale watchers harassed the orcas (who are also the whale form of past human chiefs). In a similar way, while the scientific process is recognized for providing valuable data, ontologically based relationships may inform other ways to understand and examine “marine resources” that can also support an ongoing, respectful relationship. For example, knowledge about clam gardens and clam beach maintenance could be highly useful (Groesbeck, et al. 2014; Lepofsky, et al. 2015). However, in a paradigm in which science is hegemonic, the DFO is slow to act on Indigenous knowledge. As a result, while one First Nation, such as Kwiakah raises its concern about crab population health in Phillips Arm, because the DFO will not act on the concern, delegate authority to do so, or respect First Nation decision making and authority, other fishers (including Indigenous fishers) continue to catch crab. The inability for the First Nation to make management decisions and the unwillingness of the DFO to respect such decisions creates tension

between Indigenous communities and fishers who, while wanting to respect Indigenous ownership and rights, also need to make a living in the modern economy. Furthermore, as protocols are developed, communities who do not have a long history of cooperation come together to reconcile their communities' needs but they must do so within the limiting parameters and rules set by the DFO. Such a process is challenging and will likely take a series of time-consuming and costly meetings, as well as the dedication of a few individuals, to make such protocols a reality.

The Road to Laich-Kwil-Tach Fisheries Management

Each year the DFO funds \$270,000 to A-Tlegay for its contribution to DFO programs (A-Tlegay and Canada 2012). This funding covers the costs of the snorkel survey stock assessments, Dungeness crab surveys, prawn survey and clam beach surveys. In order to support the large staff and infrastructure, as well as to ensure on-going, full-time employment, A-Tlegay seeks and bids upon other contracts. For example, the creel survey, Black Creek coho enumeration, charter patrol and plankton testing are each separate contracts. The contracts are won through a competitive bidding process and because A-Tlegay is in the area, has the infrastructure and capacity to successfully manage and complete the many different projects, and because they have a good reputation for producing reliable results, their bid is competitive and they are often successful.

Furthermore, recently two Laich-Kwil-Tach members of A-Tlegay formed a partnership called Laich-Kwil-Tach Environmental and A-Tlegay has been tasked with its management. Laich-Kwil-Tach Environmental focuses specifically on environmental assessment issues and large upland developments, such as BC Hydro dams and

reservoirs. This is an excellent fit for A-Tlegay and the Laich-Kwil-Tach nations as they assume a greater role in monitoring the use of their lands and as they work to revitalize their management position in their territories.

In such ways, A-Tlegay board members, elected chiefs, fishers, A-Tlegay staff and negotiators continually demand greater involvement and greater respect for their knowledge and input into decisions. However, all management decisions are made by the DFO with very limited input by community organizations such as A-Tlegay. As I have discussed in my previous chapters, 19th-century Laich-Kwil-Tach people lived in a world of beings, many of whom commanded respect that translated into action and informed concepts of Indigenous land tenure, ownership and Aboriginal rights. With a focus on fish who were partners in a reciprocal relationship of mutual well-being, the consequences of the 19th-century relationship between humans and fish today mean that people continue to feel strongly about their right to make management decisions for fish and marine resources to ensure their long-term well-being. The contemporary relationship between Laich-Kwil-Tach people and salmon continues to command a need for care and respect and is exemplified in the demands of the Elders at the Christmas luncheon discussed in Chapter 3 through which the community's determination to become a greater part of the management process is revealed. And as an organization, A-Tlegay itself is key to assuming greater management control. While its current role in the scientific paradigm that informs the DFO decisions could be seen as a further subjugation of Laich-Kwil-Tach rights, I see it as a logical step in an ongoing effort to regain management and decision-making rights in their territory. Under the current DFO policies, it seems unimaginable that one day First Nations will be included as partners in

management and decision making, let alone having complete control over their fisheries. However, as the legal field of rights and title expands the possibility increases and when that day comes, A-Tlegay will be ready with its people, knowledge, data, determination, community support and infrastructure. It is to creating opportunities for inclusion that I next turn as I offer concluding thoughts on my research.

Chapter 11 Overtowering, Outshining, Surpassing All; I the Salmon: Relational Ecology, Vying Knowledge and a Path to Reconciliation

I just think that nearly all natives, even the river people, they wait for the salmon. I think they are salmon people too. The whole coast is salmon people. Right from, right up, maybe even the Americans, the American natives, the Tlingits. They wait for it too, we are the same way. [DB-005]

I began Chapter 1 with two quotes. The first was a translation about dancing salmon who were returning to the human world to give themselves to deserving humans. This return was a celebration for the salmon who were dancing to the shore in great numbers. As I later showed, it was also a celebration for humans who honoured the return with a First Salmon Ceremony and who greeted the salmon with words of welcome, praise and prayer. The second quote with which I open Chapter 1 is from the licence that Canada issues to A-Tlegay that allows Laich-Kwil-Tach people to fish legally, at least within Canada's terms. It is this licence that sets salmon and other marine species up as a resource under the control of humans, but not just any humans, the colonizing community, according to its terms and conditions. As a resource, the intimate relationship is lost and salmon no longer dance but instead are enumerated. Instead of an annual celebration of their return, First Nations now count and report the number of fish they catch, and once they reach their "allocation" they are supposed to stop. And with this allocation, they are limited in its use. No longer are salmon the bases of well-being for the community. Instead people wait each year to know if there will be enough returning to even support a fishery that will provide them with a small number of salmon. Some people speak of a fear that their grandchildren will not know a life with salmon.

When I began working in the Laich-Kwil-Tach community I became acutely aware of the juxtaposition exemplified in Chapter one's opening quotes and through this dissertation research I worked to understand its substance by examining 19th-century Laich-Kwil-Tach ontology specifically and the relational world generally. I began to see that for many of the world's people, how other beings see us and the relationship we share matters (Kohn 2013:1; Theriault 2015), and in the process of mattering, we are changed. If this is the case, then as anthropologists we cannot limit ourselves to humans, their world and their interactions but we must also acknowledge how humans are entangled in a world of sentience and how that entanglement affects and is affected by the social and physical world replete with countless beings. And if we acknowledge that other beings interact with humans in a relationship that has meaning and agency then we must also endeavour to understand that thinking and knowing are not the exclusive domain of humans (Kohn 2013:1). It is here where the theoretical concepts behind animism, historical ecology and political ecology intersect in relational ecology. And it is from this intersection that I attempt to gain a better understanding of the 19th-century Laich-Kwil-Tach relationship with fish persons; how the relationship is written on both the landscape and the human person/fish person; and how the relationship is productive of knowledge in the 21st century. This approach enlightens both the understanding of the present relationship, as well as the rights that this relationship and an entangled history inform.

While taking steps to understand the history and relationships behind contemporary relationships is important, the ideal is not to reconfigure an ethnographic study of old and report on facts about things. Instead, I seek to elevate meaning into practice as I consider

the role of relationships in Laich-Kwil-Tach knowledge production and how 21st-century Laich-Kwil-Tach knowledge, informed by its attending history, 21st-century experience and by Western science can be acknowledged and respected in management and decision making. In this I consider how concepts of respect and relationships that are informed by a relational world can be conveyed to decision-makers, who live and/or work according to an ontology that is different from the lived world of many of those affected by their decisions, where processes, connections and responsibilities “exceed the ‘tick boxes’ and tidy mathematical formulae of modernist environmental management” (Green 2013:5). In this we must urge decision-makers to see the products of science as knowledge that is ontologically informed by a separation of nature from culture rather than as fact or truth by which all other knowledge must be judged. As such, the use of numbers and math, as in the approach to allocations in the Comprehensive Fisheries Agreement for instance, is not objective but is informed by western ontology (Anderson, et al. 2013:187), and hegemony is assumed by decision makers who feel duty-bound to manage a resource. Instead we must seek a space for multiple knowledge informed by multiple ontologies. This is a challenge amplified by the fact that often those resources that are affected by decision-makers are also the same beings whose relationship with the affected humans informs responsibilities of care and respect today.

Much work has focused on “traditional knowledge” and how to “incorporate” it into management and decision making (Anderson, et al. 2013; e.g. Cruikshank 2003; Hunn, et al. 2003; Menzies and Butler 2007; Moss 2003; 2003b; Nadasdy 2003c; 2007; Peacock and Turner 1999; Turner 2005). But as long as “incorporation” means asking Indigenous communities to share their knowledge and attempting to reconcile it with

Western science, Western science remains hegemonic and the duality of nature/culture is left intact (Blaser 2013:20). In such ways we select parts or pieces of other knowledge that might align with scientific knowledge. Such alignment is complicated in a world of social relationships that expand beyond the human world (even if such relationships are obscured by modernity, state policy and practice in the present) and contrast sharply with a bureaucratic approach that delineates discreet land and resource practices and regulations (Therriault 2015:124). Furthermore, embedded in this hegemonic approach are assumptions of “race,” coloniality (Anderson, et al. 2013:187; Green 2015b), fact and belief. As noted in Chapter 2, “Indigenous knowledge” or “traditional knowledge” is frequently misunderstood as facts about things, set in a moment of time. It does not allow for the dynamic properties of the “Others” knowledge, nor does it make space for coevalness. For example, I attend meetings regularly where the First Nation is asked for “any traditional use information that decision makers should be aware of.” Never are they asked if they have information to contribute. The difference is subtle: in the first request, knowledge is stalled in time and space; in the second, knowledge is dynamic and in the present. And often, when presented with the second form, surprise is expressed. I experienced this recently when a large corporation asked if there was any traditional use information the First Nation would like to share that might inform an archaeological study of a reservoir. The response surprised corporate representatives and archaeologists when the First Nation provided maps not of “traditional use sites” but of layers showing the reservoir system, overlaid on the original watershed, and those overlaid in turn with the potential for archaeological sites noted throughout the watershed. The construction of the map and layers was informed by many things, including the 19th-century relational

world, Cartesian maps, computer models, and Elder's input. The result is a tool used in modern-decision making. This exemplifies why attempting to incorporate "traditional knowledge" as an extension of Western scientific practice or as a series of "facts" that can be plugged into the check boxes of a consultation process fails. Any attempt to do so strips knowledge of its meaning, for it is by virtue of its context that it gains meaning (Huntington and Watson 2012:59; Nadasdy 2003b:62). In other words, forcing knowledge to stand outside of its lived context, or of the ontology that configures it, and keeping it within a moment of time, forces it into the separate boxes of Western dualities, and in the process strips its meaning and renders understanding nonsensical. This forced separation in turn disqualifies knowledge informed from relationality, and silences "much of what life brings into being" (Escobar 2016:29).

For example, many years ago the Laich-Kwil-Tach origin site was at risk of being logged by a forest company. We met with the company and with what was then the Ministry of Forests. Community leaders explained the importance of the place, its history, and its meaning in their history as a people. While the forest company remained quiet, the Ministry of Forests Aboriginal Liaison struggled with understanding. She repeatedly asked what the impact on rights or title would be, clearly separating the people from the place and the enlivened world from the resource. Finally, it was suggested that they log it, then provide a boat for all the Elders to travel to the logged site at the base of their origin mountain. They were told they could read the impact on their faces.

While this area has yet to be logged, the example reveals the inability for most resource managers to grasp the entanglement people have with their lands and their attending relationships. The kind of empathy needed to grapple with the relationship as

well as an understanding of how knowledge is constructed and given meaning by virtue of the relationship is difficult to impart to students through Indigenous articles and books and is unlikely to be learned in a corporate or government position where Western ontology is enmeshed with the power of the state. This makes it very difficult for non-Indigenous decision makers to “incorporate traditional knowledge” in their considerations and it is for this reason that we must move beyond “incorporation” and instead encourage an examination of Western scientific hegemony in light of concepts of knowledge production and urge an exploration of how such an examination can invite and open dialogue with other intellectual heritages.¹⁸

Laich-Kwil-Tach engagement through A-Tlegay, discussed in Chapter 10, is a good example. Clearly, A-Tlegay’s team is highly qualified. They have access to the equipment needed to gather the necessary information and according to their biologist, the information they collect is highly respected and valued [JM-019] but the DFO still retains full decision-making authority and remains entrenched in the Western scientific paradigm. For example, currently the DFO science operates under what it calls the “ecosystem approach to fisheries.” The public booklet that describes this approach states that,

Since it is impossible to study and understand all the processes and relationships in an ecosystem, ecosystem science focuses its efforts on identifying and understanding the key relationships in nature, and their links to human needs and actions. (Canada 2007:1)

¹⁸ This contrasts sharply with the ease with which governments and corporations appropriate “traditional knowledge” when it suits their ends. For example, Indigenous medicine is appropriated and sold commercially, world-renowned “Cowichan sweater” designs are appropriated and sweaters are made cheaply elsewhere to flood the souvenir market and the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver used the Inukshuk design as its logo.

Thus, although the professed intention is to study key relationships and interactions of an ecosystem, defined as “all living organisms (humans, plants, animals, micro-organisms), the physical, chemical, and climatic environment, and the processes that control the dynamics of the system,” nature is plainly delineated in a effort to develop what the DFO calls “sound scientific foundations for policies and programs” (Canada 2007:1).

Furthermore, the word “science” is used 159 times in the document while Indigenous, First Nation, Aboriginal, ontology, ancestor, and even traditional knowledge, a common state “buzz word,” are not used at all. Clearly, “integrated management” within the ecosystem approach to fisheries does not include efforts to engage with any forms of knowledge other than one formed by Western scientific practice. Nor is it clear how the relationships of “all living organisms” including humans really includes humans (or any of their sentient counterparts) who in this paradigm are rendered biological objects whose actions can be predicted and modelled (Anderson, et al. 2013:192).

Furthermore, A-Tlegay, and by extension, Laich-Kwil-Tach people, are treated as data collectors in a cog of a larger scientific machine, which denies them as legitimate knowers, a denial that is not useful for fostering relationships or trust, nor is it representative of reality. There remains a huge gap in management control or even input from Laich-Kwil-Tach people in any decisions over their lands and resources. For example, a search on the WAVES website, the online catalogue of fisheries files, reports and agreements maintained by the DFO, reveals that A-Tlegay does not appear to be acknowledged for much of its work. When “A-Tlegay” is used as a search word in the online catalogue, only the creel reports and the Comprehensive Fisheries Agreements

between A-Tlegay and the DFO are identified. Thus, even when providing information in the scientific process, they continue to be denied as legitimate knowers.

In the meantime, as A-Tlegay builds its capacity as data collectors under the DFO, it maintains its capacity to include Laich-Kwil-Tach knowledge, knowledge that is productive of a 21st-century ontology that is informed by many Western practices and by the responsibilities and respect that were enrolled in 19th-century ontology. While one can argue that data collection does include Laich-Kwil-Tach knowledge (for example the need to conduct Dungeness crab information in Phillips Arm and Topaze Harbour was guided by such knowledge), the fact remains that the DFO does not appear to act on Laich-Kwil-Tach knowledge alone in its management decisions. This is because nature and “traditional knowledge” continue to be objects within the data, and in this case it can be inserted into the scientific paradigm and studied to determine its fact-ness. As an object, knowledge is extracted and reported as “traditional.” Using the crab survey example again, the DFO requires five years of data before it will act. It will not act on the concerns of the Elders and leaders alone in this case. In this process, management decisions are based on the data collected by scientific means and once a “truth” is established action might occur. There is no room in this paradigm to act on the collective knowledge from dozens of people. This example clearly shows why it is important to include Indigenous knowledge holders and leaders in decision-making. While the DFO will have only five years of data, the knowledge holders have decades of personal knowledge and experience and generations of embodied knowledge upon which to base their decisions. Furthermore, arguably the data from the crab surveys is problematic even within the scientific paradigm. If it is used as a baseline from which to base decisions, the

baseline data is collected after the Indigenous knowledge holders have raised concern, suggesting that the baseline data reflects a crab population already in poor health. In this example, even if the Elders' knowledge was taken more seriously and resulted in action, the knowledge continues to be objectified and placed into a decision-making process that is based on the dominant paradigm. So, although at times other knowledge is tolerated by decision makers (Green 2013:1), the hegemonic division is maintained and privilege is granted to Western knowledge and to "those who claim to have a true apprehension of it [the world] thanks to scientific investigation" (Blaser 2013; Descola, et al. 2013:61).

In terms of fish, the DFO and fisheries science has documented declining fish stocks and has developed strategies for its management but like elsewhere, several of its decisions have been strongly opposed by many fishers, including Laich-Kwil-Tach fishers. How would this narrative change if Laich-Kwil-Tach involvement expanded from data collection to decision-making whose knowledge not only contributes to a discussion but also has a meaningful place alongside other knowledge? Could it happen if "logics were not limited by what can be seen and measured" (Green 2013:6) through the scientific process and thus juxtaposed with Western knowledge? While not advocating for or against science, I suggest that part of the process requires science, environmental managers and government decision-makers to view Indigenous knowledge differently; to accept it as legitimate (Anderson, et al. 2013:187). One step is to accept the multiplicity of knowledge in the world and in doing so act upon the notion that one's reality and understanding of the world is not a static, universal fact, nor is it based in truth but is instead the product of ontology, which is not universally the same (Descola, et al. 2013:31). Science, like all knowledge, is not free of social dimensions, public life,

politics, subjective feelings, popular agitation, etc., and to assume that it is and that as such it is well situated to seek the “truth,” is myth (Latour 2004:12). When its place, embedded in the social life of the lived world, is denied, Western science separates its knowledge from the Other’s knowledge, categorising the former as fact and the latter as belief, culture or myth (Blaser 2013; Green 2013:1; Latour 1993), and therefore not legitimate knowledge, willing only to concede that the Other believes it to be true. In this scenario, Western knowledge cannot be belief and non-Western knowledge cannot be fact—the Other’s knowledge remains a mistaken interpretation of reality. In designing a space for multiple knowledge, the goal is not to challenge the legitimacy of scientific work, but it does challenge the “conventional epistemological framework” from which much scientific work is conducted as well as its “pretention to serve as the standard for judging what appears to differ from it” (Descola, et al. 2013:77). In other words, we must question the “versions of nature that circulate in environmental political debate” (Green 2015b:345), call for the cessation of the hegemony of Western knowledge and grapple with notions of truth or fact and belief and how a faith in science occludes its human element (Latour 2004:4). In doing so we concede that knowledge is constructed in a lived and perceived world and not grounded in a natural fact or truth and we accept that “no ontology is better or more truthful in itself than another. Each of them must be examined not in terms of its plausibility or its moral virtues, whether or not it authorizes a more authentic life or a more complete unveiling of its mechanisms, but for the variations that it manifests in regard to all the others and its manner of formatting a common experience of the world” (Descola, et al. 2013:66). In such ways we rethink the divisions between science and alternative ways of knowing the world (Green 2013:1), grapple with the

limitations of the modernist vision of the world (Green 2013:2) and make space for multiple knowledge and dialogue that is interest-based. Such an approach “explores points of congruence and partial connections” that can create a basis for dialogue (Anderson, et al. 2013:192) and such dialogue opens doors to collaborative efforts that can be highly successful and generative of ethical knowledge (Green and Green 2013:vii). In this approach, Anderson et al. (2013:194) argue that by “tracing the intersections of various forms of knowing, doing, human and ecological shifts and technological choices, we begin to see the ways... to challenge the apparent divide between sciences and fishers.” Challenging the divide also creates opportunities for local fishers to participate in and contribute to the scientific process, much in the way A-Tlegay currently does, but also makes room for knowledge formed when learning from one’s Elders as well as for embodied knowledge gained through relationships that fishers have with one another, the fish, the water, the boat, etc. With this challenge, we can shift from state science and explore opportunities to incorporate fishers’ knowledge, “making it possible for them to operate in parallel with scientific knowledge and processes” (Anderson, et al. 2013:198).

Making space for multiple knowledges also includes making space for using multiple knowledges in collaborative decision and policy making. Recent studies suggest that co-management and community-based management programs empower local people (Sultana and Thompson 2007:527) and can be successful if they include enduring relationships among partners, adequate resourcing for all parties in the collaborative process (Harmsworth, et al. 2016:10) and formal recognition of the community-based organization or institution (Cudney-Bueno and Basurto 2009:6; Sultana and Thompson

2007:544). Furthermore, research on sustainability finds that “recognizing the... resource rights of Indigenous communities, acknowledging Indigenous resource management systems, providing tenure security, [and] encouraging communities through legal and financial incentives” (Nath, et al. 2016:101) are important not only for sustainability but also for human well-being (Cudney-Bueno and Basurto 2009:1) and to this I would add nonhuman well-being.

One step down from community-based management is co-management in which there is an effective process in place that acknowledges and respects the community’s choice and creates an opportunity for true “joint-decision making” (Castro and Nielsen 2001:230; Moore, et al. 2017:8) in management matters. Although in British Columbia the right to be included in management decisions, especially fish, has been long fought for by Indigenous people with limited effect, models elsewhere show the potential for success when Indigenous peoples and resource users are included (Castro and Nielsen 2001; Cudney-Bueno and Basurto 2009; Harmsworth, et al. 2016; Moore, et al. 2017; Nath, et al. 2016). However, I contend that for partnerships and collaborations to be successful in the long term there must also be a de-privileging of western scientific knowledge and an expansion of what scientific knowledge entails through an understanding of knowledge as a process. Furthermore, we must examine and address how power aggrandizes some forms of knowledge to create a space that enables mutual and respectful regard for all knowledge.

To exemplify how this mutual respect of knowledge can work in practice, I turn briefly to the concept of Epistemologies of the South (Escobar 2016; Santos 2014). Framed as “theoretical-political projects that aim to reinterpret contemporary knowledges

and struggles oriented towards the defense of life and the pluriverse” (Escobar 2016:28), I look to the south because they have grappled with inclusivity and are structuring their world in a way that has space for more than human persons. This social and political movement is called *Buen vivir*. Loosely defined as post-neoliberal “alternatives to development focused on the good life in a broad sense,” the term is widely applied in South America (de la Cadena 2010:336; Gudynas 2011:441; Radcliffe 2012:240; Villalba 2013:1427; Villalba-Eguiluz and Extano 2017:1). The movement and concept highlight “ecologies of knowledge” and it is argued that the movement itself is “a veritable political activation of relationality” (Escobar 2016:28). But such activation depends on “humans’ determination to rejoin the unending field of relations that make up the pluriverse” (Escobar 2016:28). In other words, human persons must once again step forward and honour and respect the relationship between themselves and their nonhuman counterparts in order to move beyond “development” or “management” (Escobar 2016:28) concepts.

In neoliberal economic policy, it is common for development to be declared ecologically unsound, yet promoted as the only way forward. This paradox is the source of many grievances by Indigenous and local peoples. In response, in South America there has been

an insurgence of indigenous forces and practices with the capacity to significantly disrupt prevalent political formations, and reshuffle hegemonic antagonisms, first and foremost by rendering illegitimate (and, thus denaturalizing) the exclusion of indigenous practices from nation-state institutions.... The current moment represents a unique historical conjunction. (de la Cadena 2010:336)

This “insurgence” combined with social movement resulted in the officially recognised policy of *Buen vivir*. With the “potential to radically shake up mainstream thinking and

social development” (Radcliffe 2012:240), *Buen vivir* offers alternatives to development that move beyond scientific hegemony (Gudynas 2011:441) and offer opportunities for transformation (Villalba 2013:1439). With its roots in Indigenous South American traditions (for example *Kichwa*, *Aymara*, *Quechua*, *Shuar* and *Mapuches*), including animistic relationships, *Buen vivir* is also known as *Sumak kawsay* in Ecuador, the *Kichwa* term for “fullness of life in the community, together with other persons and Nature” and as *Suma qamaña* in Bolivia (Gudynas 2011:442; Radcliffe 2012:242). Although difficult to translate as a concept, it includes ideas of quality-of-life, but a life in which well-being is only possible within the context of the community, which includes both the human and nonhuman person (Gudynas 2011:441). Essentially, it “embraces the broad notion of well-being and cohabitation with others and Nature” (Gudynas 2011:441).

There are two primary concepts associated with *Buen vivir* that set it apart from the development process that was dominant for the past two centuries: 1. the inclusion of critical reactions to classical Western (and colonial) development theory; and 2. the inclusion of alternatives to development that emerge from Indigenous traditions in order to explore options beyond the Eurocentric tradition (Gudynas 2011:441). In a relatively short period of time, *Buen vivir* received much attention in South America and was written into both the Ecuadorian and Bolivian Constitutions in 2008 and 2009 respectively. The Bolivian use of the concept describes ethical and moral principles that are linked to harmonious living. The concept has much greater depth within the Ecuadorian Constitution, although some suggest it has been more “rhetorical than operative” (Villalba-Eguiluz and Extano 2017:1). Nevertheless, it is celebrated as an

Indigenous concept that is translated into a set of rights including “health, shelter, education, food, environment and so on” (Gudynas 2011:443). In short, *Pachamama*, the place “where life becomes real and reproduces itself,” often referred to in *Buen vivir* discussions as “nature,” has rights and all development must respect those rights (Radcliffe 2012:241). The Ecuadorian Constitution states: “Nature, or Pacha Mama, where life is reproduced and occurs, has the right to integral respect for its existence and for the maintenance and regeneration of its life cycles, structure, functions and evolutionary processes” (Ecuadorian Constitution Article 171, cited in de la Cadena 2010:335; Radcliffe 2012:244). In this way, *Pachamama* is a living being with agency in the lived world. Thus, although animism has been accused of being unacceptable to modern governments (Clammer 2004:102), *Buen vivir* offers hope in opening doors to create a space in which it can have meaning and agency. Although the future effect of *Buen vivir* remains to be seen, it has already contributed to the success of local opposition to development. For example, in Ecuador a mine was proposed after the passing of the new Constitution. Local Indigenous people opposed the mine because the mountain upon which it would operate is sentient and would oppose its own destruction. The local people argued that the mountain presides over their community and that if mined it would be angry and exact retribution upon people. In the end, the operation was cancelled and there was no need for the mountain to retaliate against human indiscretion (de la Cadena 2010:338-339).

Buen vivir legitimises non-Western reactions to neoliberal development projects, creating a space for multiple knowledges to converse and removes the hegemony of western science. As such, it reinforces cultural identity and supports alternatives to

modernity (Gudynas 2011:444). Importantly *Buen vivir* must not be viewed as based on “traditional knowledge” that is part of or limited to a knowledge that is an essentialized snapshot in time of indigenous knowledge. It is instead about learning from and an openness to all forms of knowledge (Gudynas 2011:443-444). For example, many traditions do not practice gender equality while Western tradition values it. Within the process that is *Buen vivir*, the Western approach to gender equality can provide valuable insight and as such has influence in decisions and policy-making. This illustrates how various aspects from various traditions, including the Western tradition, can come together within *Buen vivir* to create the “good life” that is its guiding principle (Gudynas 2011:445).

While *Buen vivir* is an old concept it is applied in a new way. Although very much a developing theory that has yet to widely transform practice (Radcliffe 2012:247), and that is arguably refuted in practice (Villalba-Eguiluz and Extano 2017:2), its proponents argue that it presents strategies for reform to support efforts to build the good life locally and regionally rather than support a neoliberal, global market (Gudynas 2011:446). It is an example of how Indigenous and local pressure through social movement can unseat and promote the dissolution of the Cartesian nature/culture dualism, as well as the epistemology/ontology dualism discussed above, and incorporate all humans as well as nonhumans into decision-making processes. It is a way to move beyond the Eurocentric idea that progress is a unidirectional, linear path, guided best by Cartesian science (Gudynas 2011:447). It is a move away from efforts to simply incorporate “traditional knowledge” while maintaining Western hegemony (Barrett 2013:180; Nadasdy 2003b) and is the shift called for above in which knowledge is recognised as engendered by

multiple ontologies. In this way, making space for and incorporating multiple ways of knowing and being can result in holistically beneficial and respectful development projects, management regimes and decision making. In the process we begin to “see anew the social and ecological devastation caused by dualistic conceptions, particular [sic] those that divide nature and culture, humans and non-humans, the individual and the communal... and so forth” (Escobar 2016:28-29).

Turning to a consideration of rights, the right to maintain a spiritual connection with a resource is recognized in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Article 25 states: “Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinctive spiritual relationship with their traditionally owned or otherwise occupied and used lands, territories, waters and coast seas and *other resources...*” (United Nations 2008:10, italics added). My research takes this “spiritual connection” as a starting place by attending to the relationships of the 19th-century Laich-Kwil-Tach relational world. In terms of linking to the United Nations Declaration, this relationship most certainly fits concepts of Aboriginal rights. Furthermore, within Canadian law, an Aboriginal right is an inherent right, practiced prior to European contact that flows from Aboriginal peoples’ continued use and occupation. In the Supreme Court of Canada case, *Tsilhqot’in Nation v. British Columbia* (Supreme Court of Canada 2014:para 14) the court ruled that the Indigenous “perspective” must bear weight equal to that of the common law in evaluating the claim and that the court must “be careful not to lose or distort the Aboriginal perspective by forcing ancestral practices into the square boxes of common law concepts” (2014, para 32). Although this particular case was focused on Aboriginal title and its test within Canadian law, I expect that this

case will also weigh heavily in future cases regarding Aboriginal rights. It is here, in terms of the Aboriginal “perspective,” (which includes Indigenous ontology and the legal principles grounded in it) and its contrast to “common law concepts,” which in this case is informed by Western ontology, that my study has the capacity to open conversations about a broader framework to recognize and implement Aboriginal rights within Canadian law. In a world of multiple beings whose relationships are guided by reciprocity, how a “right” is defined must be informed by relationships and not by the duality of nature/culture. In modern terms, this not only means access and use rights, but in order to respect the responsibilities that are informed by relationships, it also means decision-making and management rights. Furthermore, it suggests that through membership in the relationship fish too have rights. The question is whether or not Canadian courts and our neoliberal management systems and decision makers are ready for such a broad-minded approach to and a perspective of this Aboriginal right. Certainly the recent court decision is a step in such a direction.

Finally, my study engages alterity. In doing so I challenge ontologically entrenched Western categories that have so long been hegemonic and I advocate for taking Laich-Kwil-Tach knowledge seriously. Furthermore, it exposes new ways to consider the Laich-Kwil-Tach right to fish, both in terms of access and management. This study shows that while the practice that defines the right has its foundation in 19th-century relational ontology, contemporary Laich-Kwil-Tach people continue to have a strong relationship with fish. In the 19th-century Laich-Kwil-Tach people lived in a world of relationships, of multiple sentient beings, who were each agents in the other’s world and who were all citizens in a constant state of being and becoming. A key figure in this

relational world was salmon, who in his various forms had significant reciprocal relationships with his human counterparts and through practice and landscape construction had agency in shaping the human world and informing Laich-Kwil-Tach knowledge. Relational ecology engages this difference by considering animism and the relational world, historical ecology and the reciprocal state of being and becoming with landscape and political ecology and the colonial and settler history that affected Laich-Kwil-Tach people. In this approach, not only is the 19th-century Laich-Kwil-Tach relationship with fish better understood, but so too is 21st-century Laich-Kwil-Tach ontology informed through practice and teachings that are productive of knowledge. Twenty-first-century Laich-Kwil-Tach ontology and knowledge production then is informed by its attending history as well as by Western ontology. In the 21st century, we have witnessed a shift in which ontologies like Laich-Kwil-Tach ontology have begun to inform Western ontology. The next step is to secure its place through implementing Aboriginal rights and Indigenous jurisdictions in decision making and management.

When I began this research, the Elders believed that it would support their ongoing right to fish, both in terms of access and management, and while not wishing to speak for Laich-Kwil-Tach people or other Indigenous people, I hope that I have represented what I have learned in a way that meets their expectation. Realizing the relational world, its role in the construction of the lived world, and how it informs 21st-century knowledge is a move toward decolonization of environmental management processes in which space is made for multiple knowledge and practice. This way forward that can improve dialogue and, I believe, decision-making practice. It requires a de-privileging of science and asks non-Indigenous decision makers to recognize that “scientific fact” is a form of knowledge

that is generated through the dominant ontology, but that its dominant position does not make it a truth. Such acknowledgement promotes engagement with local practices (including an engagement with local people), and exposes discrepancies in power relations (Heatherington 2012:175).

In the spirit of reconciliation, decolonization and a renewed understanding of ontological multiplicity we are challenged to create analytical frameworks that include both human and nonhuman interests and relationships. Doing so requires engagement with any number of ontological propositions, and it requires a confrontation with hegemonic ontological assumptions. However, in the process, we recognize that our attempts to understand the world is affected and informed by all relationships and that our world is inhabited by more than the human players we long thought created it. Perhaps it is time we all seek to experience dancing salmon.

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Appendix

Appendix A: Biographical Notes on Laich-Kwil-Tach Consultants

Compiled and Edited by Shirley Johnson and Deidre Sanders Cullon

Assu, Donald "Maxmawis": Born in 1931 (-2015) to Harry Assu and Ida Assu (née Dick), Don was an avid fisher. Don began fishing as a young boy and started fishing independently at age 11 on the *Tree Point*, a Japanese boat purchased by his brother Stephen when Canada interned Japanese-Canadians during the Second World War. He married Louisa Sewid of the *Mamalillikulla* Nation in 1958 and had four sons. Don also started his sons fishing at a young age and was a life-time member of the Native Brotherhood of British Columbia. Don lived almost his entire life in the *Tsakwakluten* village at Cape Mudge and was an active We Wai Kai member, serving as the Nation's Band Manager for almost 40 years. Don also actively supported the Nuyumbalees Culture Center at Cape Mudge, serving on its Board since 1979 and as its President for many years. Don and Jean Roberts are siblings.

Assu, Leoda (Mitzi) (née Roberts): Mitzi was born May 4, 1922 to William Roberts (née Quocksister but his name changed to his father's first name when he enlisted during World War I) and Francis Waugh (*Walitsama* from Salmon River). She married Herbert (Herbie) Assu from We Wai Kai. Together they had many children but Mitzi also found time to be on the boat and assist with the family's livelihood. Many of Mitzi's sons also fish. Long retired but as one of the few remaining fluent Liq'wala speakers, Mitzi now supports the Mentor-Apprentice language program. Mitzi, Bill Roberts and Tony Roberts are siblings.

Billy, Alberta (Berta) (née Hovell) "Wadzeek": Born in 1941 to James (We Wai Kai) and Louise Hovell (*Walitsama*), Berta lived all her life at *Tsakwakluten*. Raised by a fisherman and boat builder, Berta and her family have always been strongly connected to the fishery. Married to Daniel Billy with three daughters, Berta and the girls spent many fishing seasons on the *Raven* and later on the *Susan Laverne* with Daniel. Now retired, until recently Berta was active in "The Village," a cultural awareness program, but continues to visit local schools to tell stories to the children.

Billy, Daniel "Masmooseaxghamae": Daniel, born in 1934, is the son of Sandy and Mary Billy (née Price) and the grandson of Tom Price (Kwiakah) and Daisy Price (née Powell). Daniel started fishing at a very young age in front of his home village *Tsakwakluten* (We Wai Kai) and when he was 12 he and his father found and repaired a speed boat. Fishing enabled Daniel to buy his first boat at age 14 and at 16 he purchased a 30-foot boat, the *Raven*, that he owned for many years. Later, he bought the new *Susan Laverne* on which he continues to fish each year. For Daniel, it is very important to ensure that there is salmon, halibut, cod and other marine foods for his grandchildren in the future. To this end, Daniel has been an active We Wai Kai elected Councillor and he attends all meetings about fish. Daniel is a knowledge keeper and holds many stories told to him by his grandfather, uncles and other Chiefs long since gone.

Chickite, Elvis: Elvis was born in 1957 to Arthur and Maggie Chickite (née Seville) and was raised at *Tsakwakluten*. Elvis' father and grandfather were fishers as is Elvis, who began fishing at age 10, and his seven brothers. His great grandfather was Chief Johnny Chickite, a well-respected fisher, boat builder and chief.

Duncan, Kim: Kim is currently the Administrator for A-Tlegay. The daughter of a *Tenakteuk* fisher, Jack Duncan and a We Wai Kai mother, Delavina “Dolly” Dick, Kim has lived in Laich-Kwil-Tach territory most of her life. As the A-Tlegay Administrator, Kim’s role in the fishery is different than most as she is at the forefront of an ongoing push to have Laich-Kwil-Tach knowledge recognised in fishery and marine decisions. Kim is also an active member in the community and has been on the We Wai Kai Council for a several terms.

Hansen, Sophia (née Dick): Sophia was born in 1940 to George Dick (Kwiakah) and Louisa Quatell (Wei Wai Kum). Following her mother’s death from tuberculosis in 1942, Sophia was raised by her maternal grandmother, Mary Quatell, and her father George. George was from Phillips Arm and the village of *Na’sinux’w*, a village once so large that people say their Elders did not know everyone who lived there. Although never a fisher personally, Sophia’s father was a fisher, which required her to live with her grandmother. Her maternal uncles and grandfather owned small boats that they rented out to tourists and Sophia learned fish processing from her grandmother. Today Sophia works with preschool children and teaches the Liq’wala language.

Henderson, Allan (Ollie): Ollie was born in 1944 into the Quocksister family at *Tlamatook* (Campbell River) but was adopted as a baby by James and Ida Henderson (née Seaweed). As a child, Ollie spent much time with his father on the boat, travelling the coast both fishing and doing small jobs such as engine repair. From this experience with his father, Ollie describes himself as a “Jack of all Trades” and has been well prepared for careers both in and out of the fishing industry. Now retired, Ollie continues to process and preserve large numbers of fish each season for his immediate and extended family.

Johnson, June "U'magalis" (née Peters): June was born in 1946 and was raised at *Tsawkwkluten* by Charles (*Walitsama*) and Elizabeth Peters (née Dick). Elizabeth "Ono" was the sister of Johnny and Major Dick, both well-known fishers and boat builders. June was given the name "U'magalis" from her grandmother Louise Dick who was Wei Wai Kum, born at Greene Point. June began fishing with her father at age 10 and continued this work with her husband, Gary Johnson. June loved school and attended for hair dressing and later ethnobotany at Royal Roads University, but finally found her calling when she obtained her language teacher's certification. June continues to teach culture and language in the community and is currently the Elder in Residence at North Island College, Campbell River.

Johnson, Shirley "łiʔnilakw": Shirley was born in 1955 to a *Musgamukw* man, Glen Johnson, and a We Wai Kai woman, Mona Dick. Raised at *Tsawkwkluten*, and now living in Campbell River, Shirley has lived in Laich-Kwil-Tach territory almost all of her life and has spent most of her career working with Elders and knowledge holders. Shirley currently works with the Liq'wala Language Committee and is the Collections Manager at the Laich-Kwil-Tach Research Centre and was a very important person for supporting the research and interviews that went into this dissertation.

Matilpi, Diana "Mayanił" (née Dawson): Diana was born in 1944 at Bones Bay to Charles and Annie Dawson (née Flanders) while Annie worked at the cannery. Diana's father was a fisher and worked as a logger in the off season. As a teenager, Diana moved from Kingcome (*Dzawada'enuxw*) to Campbell River to attend highschool. As an adult she attended the University of Victoria receiving a diploma in linguistics and later she attended the University of British Columbia where she earned a teaching certificate.

Diana has taught at the University of Victoria and North Island College and continues to work with the local school district in First Nations education. Diana's knowledge of the language helped me to understand some of the words and concepts used in this dissertation and she worked with me while interviewing Mitzi, one of the oldest people interviewed. Diana is also a mentor to a Laich-Kwil-Tach teacher in the community's Mentor-Apprentice language program.

Meldrum, Jim: Jim is the staff biologist at A-Tlegay and also serves as the society's safety officer. He holds a B.Sc. from the University of Victoria and facilitates training and education for A-Tlegay's technical field staff. Jim also authors the scientific and technical reports for A-Tlegay and provided detailed information about A-Tlegay's programs for this research.

Naknakim, Roderick "*Cuxwca?is*": Rod was born in 1948 (-2017) to Audrey Assu and Jack Naknakin but was raised by his mother and step-father, James (Gu) Wilson. Rod later legally changed his name to Naknakim to properly reflect his grandfather's name, Johnson Naknakim. The grandson of Harry Assu, Rod began working on Harry's boats at a young age and began receiving a crew share at age 12. He later went to university to become a lawyer and was called to the Bar in 1978. With his law degree in hand, Rod returned to his community to support land claim negotiations and dedicated his life to supporting his people. Rod was one of my biggest supporters during this research and it is regrettable that he did not get the opportunity to see its completion.

Roberts, Anthony (Tony) "Tsungtlacum": Tony was born in 1929 to William Roberts (née Quocksister but changed to Roberts, his father's first name when he enlisted in World War I) and Francis Waugh (*Walitsama*). Tony is a well-known Wei Wai Kum fisher from *Tlamatook* (Campbell River). He started fishing with his father in 1936 when he was seven years old and travelled throughout the British Columbia and Alaska coast. When not fishing, Tony also served several terms as the elected Chief of the Wei Wai Kum Nation. His love for fishing was passed to his son and grandsons, one of whom now operates Tony's boat, the *Western King*. Tony, Bill Roberts and Mitzi Assu are siblings.

Roberts, Jean (née Assu): Born in 1935, Jean is the daughter of Harry Assu and Ida Assu (née Dick), both from *Tsakwakluten*. Jean married Tony Roberts and together they had five children. Jean fished alongside Tony for much of their fishing career working both as a deckhand and a cook. Jean and Don Assu are siblings.

Roberts, William "Wamish": Bill was born in 1921 to William Roberts (née Quocksister but changed to Roberts, his father's first name when he enlisted in World War I) and Francis Waugh (*Walitsama*). As a child, Bill spent much of his time with his paternal grandmother, Mary Wamish. He began fishing with his father at a very young age and spent some of his fishing career abroad. Bill, Tony Roberts and Mitzi Assu are siblings. Bill's wife Lillian was also part of Bill's interview for this research. Their son William also became a fisherman and later went into dentistry but kept his fishing boats and licences throughout his career.

Scow, Alice (*Katoo*) (née Chickite): Katoo was born in 1925 (-2017) to Johnny Chickite and Lucy Chickite (née Assu) both of We Wai Kai. After her mother died when Katoo was still an infant, she was raised by her grandfather, Chief Billy Assu. Katoo later

married Alvin “Abbie” Scow and together they fished to support their family, which included Katoo’s octopus fishing. Together Katoo and Abbie had four sons, all of whom are currently part of the fishing industry. Before her death Katoo was a mentor in the Laich-Kwil-Tach Mentor-Apprentice program, teaching Liq’wala to her apprentice.

Quocksister, Frances (née Bell): Frances was born in 1937 to Henry Bell (Village Island–*Mamalillikulla*) and Eliza Walas (Fort Rupert–*Kwakiutl*). In 1954, Frances married Joe Quocksister from *Tlamatook*. They lived at Village Island for a time, then moved to Vancouver Island, eventually retiring in Campbell River where she resides today. As the daughter of a fisher and later the wife of a construction worker who continued to fish every season, fishing has always been important in Frances’ life and to her and her family’s well-being. Frances is currently a mentor in the Mentor-Apprentice language program.

Sewid, Tori: Tori is the daughter of Ralph Chickite and Thelma Price and the granddaughter of Tom and Daisy Price and the great granddaughter of Robert Quocksister and Mary Wamish and the great granddaughter of Chief Johnny Chickite. She comes from a family of fishers and continues to be active in the industry with her husband Rick. Tori supported Katoo during her interview for this research.

Simkin, Jodi: During her interview, Jodi was the Executive Director at the Nuyumbalees Cultural Centre at Cape Mudge. Jodi provided detailed information about the 2016 First Salmon Ceremony hosted cooperatively by the Nuymbalees Cultural Centre and the United Church.

Melanie Stapley (née Chickite): Melanie was born in 1986 to Gerald Chickite and Helen Dionne. She is We Wai Kai from Cape Mudge, and she is the great granddaughter

of Chief Johnny Chickite. Melanie is in the Mentor-Apprentice language program and supported her mentor, Frances Quocksister, during her interview for this research.

Appendix B: Indices Used For Coding and Data Analysis

Indices

Access to Fish Currently

Access denied by DFO

Adequacy

FSC Supply

Get from Commercial fishery

Gift or free

Impact of fewer fish

Importance of Fish Each Year

Inadequate

Private Boat

Purchase from family

Purchase from friend

Access to Fish in Past

Ease of Acces-Past

Importance of access

Birthdates

Boat builders

Ceremonial

Big House Spirituality

Dlugwe

First Salmon Ceremony

Sacredness of Herring

Sacredness of Eulachons

Sacredness of Salmon

Salmon Dance

Salmon served at feast

Symbolic fish at potlatch or ceremony

Transformation

Twins

Under Sea Kingdom

Colonial Policies

Denied Access to fish

Policies to limit fishing by FNs

Unequal Policies

Commercial Fishing Experience

Days of Old

DFO Management-thoughts on

Early Mismanagement
 Encroachment on resource
 Experience of cutbacks
 Fish Farms
 Sport Fishery Pressure
 Start to feel Control of DFO

Commercial Fishing Occupation

Age Began Fishing & retirement
 Boat Company Owned or Ran It For Another Owner
 Boat Ownership
 Cannery Work
 Children on Boat
 Crew Member Experience
 Experience with the Company negative
 Experience with the company positive
 Family Fishing as a team
 Family history as fishers interrupted
 Family in Fishing
 Fishing Process Description
 Identifies as fisherman
 Native Brotherhood
 Reason for leaving industry
 Success in fishing

Concern of loss for future generations

Fish Connections

Empathy
 Fish (other than salmon) as person
 Fish (Salmon) as person
 General beliefs
 Human Characteristics of fish (not salmon)
 Human characteristics of salmon
Kumugwe
 Management practices exposed
 Origin of other marine species
 Rights of the fish
 Salmon living or behaving as humans
 Salmon Taboo
 Salmon's connection to *sisiutl*
sisiutl
 Spiritual Connection with
 Supernatural power of other fish
 Supernatural power of salmon
 Supernatural power of twins

Twins are salmon in human form
 Twins as other fish (not salmon)
 Water of Life

Fish Management

Fish conservation
 Fish Management
 Fish Ownership
 Laich-Kwil-Tach Role in Modern Management
 Management Spiritually
 Modern Conservation Comments
 Retribution for poor management
 Salmon Conservation
 Salmon familiarity (tell different sockeye runs apart)
 Salmon Management
 Salmon Ownership
 Understanding Salmon Behaviour
 Values exposed

Fish Traps - archaeological reference

Fish Trap - box shaped
 Fish Trap - Chevron shaped
 Fish Trap - Estuary location
 Fish Trap - heart-shaped
 Fish Trap - Herring bone shaped
 Fish Trap - Linear
 Fish Trap - Longshore location
 Fish Trap - Riverine location
 Fish Trap - Stone
 Fish Trap - wooden stake
 Fish Trap date
 Fish Trap Location
 Fish Trap recorder
 Fish Trap state of preservation

Fish Traps-oral or written reference

Aware of
 Trap Construction and Maintenance
 Trap Function
 Trap in a story
 Trap Location
 Trap name
 Trap Ownership
 Traps and Conservation
 Traps and Ontology

Herring

- Herring medicine
- Herring Origin Story
- Herring Taboo
- Human connection with herring
- Regrets of how it was fished
- Supernatural power of herring
- Knowledge of herring
- Waste-herring

Human Connection with Salmon

- Feel helpless to manage marine resources
- Feel Responsible to care for marine resources

Consultants

- Alberta Billy
- Alice Katu Scow
- Allan Olie Henderson
- Bill Roberts
- Daniel Billy
- Diane Matilpi
- Don Assu
- Frances Quocksister
- Jean Roberts
- Jim Henderson with K Drushka 1983
- June Johnson
- Lillian Roberts
- Melanie Stapley
- Mitzi Assu
- Rick Assu
- Shirley Johnson
- Sophia Dick
- Tony Roberts
- Tori Sewid

Legends

Loss

- Loss of ceremonial
- Loss of knowledge
- Loss of values

Medicinal

- Medicine-Catfish
- Medicine-Eulachon
- Medicine-Salmon

Other marine animals in medicine

Name reference to salmon

Eulachon

Optimism for future fishers

Optimistic about salmon increasing again

Oral Stories

Laich-Kwil-Tach Specific

Masks

Oral story - conservation

Oral story - management practices

Oral story - ownership

Oral Story - powers from *sisiutl*

Oral Story about salmon

Oral Stories - none

Origin Story

Origin of animals other than fish

Origin of salmon oral story

Origin story involving fish other than salmon

Origin story involving fish traps

Origin story involving salmon

Other Marine Species Interactions With

Perspectivism

Prayers

Prayer for Rain

Prayer to animal trap

Prayer to Copper

Prayer to Creator to thank for salmon

Prayer to fish (not salmon)

Prayer to fish trap (not salmon)

Prayer to fish trap (salmon)

Prayer to fishing gear

Prayer to Obtain Another's Power

Prayer to Other than fish or sun

Prayer to Salmon

Prayer to Salmon for good health

Prayer to Sun

Prayer to Twins

Prayer when in danger
 Prayer when migrating animals arrive (of birds, salmon, etc)
 Prayers-General

Processing

Consumption
 Cutting process
 Entrail and bone treatment
 Fish Drying
 History of the knowledge
 Smoking
 Treatment during processing
 Waste

Quotable Quotes

Reincarnation or Afterlife Transformation

After life human
 After-life Nonhuman persons active in human world (non-fish)
 Afterlife-humans in other nonhuman forms
 First Ancestor Transformation
 Masks
 Reincarnation of fish (not salmon)
 Reincarnation-human
 Reincarnation-Salmon
 Resurrection
 Transfer of power or ability after death
 Transformation

Respect of Fish (& disrespect)

Greed
 Respect (& disrespect) for salmon
 Respect during processing
 Respect for fish other than salmon
 Respect for various forms of salmon (eg copper)
 Respectful (disrespectful) Humans

Salmon Form Variations

Copper as Salmon

Salmon or Trap Sentience

Expression of Salmon Emotion
 Expression of Salmon Independence or Self thought
 Fish Trap Sentience
 Trap (not salmon) sentience

Secular

sisutl - mention but not tied to fish directly

Trade

Watchman

Words

Appendix C: University of Victoria Ethics Approval



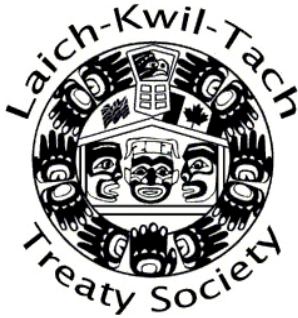
Office of Research Services | Human Research Ethics Board
 Administrative Services Building Rm B202 PO Box 1700 STN CSC Victoria BC V8W 2Y2 Canada
 T 250-472-4545 | F 250-721-8960 | uvic.ca/research | ethics@uvic.ca

Certificate of Renewed Approval

| | |
|---|---|
| PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Deidre Cullon | ETHICS PROTOCOL NUMBER 14-269 |
| UVic STATUS: Ph.D. Student | Minimal Risk Review - Delegated |
| UVic DEPARTMENT: ANTH | ORIGINAL APPROVAL DATE: 25-Aug-14 |
| SUPERVISOR: Dr. Brian Thom | RENEWED ON: 30-Aug-16 |
| | APPROVAL EXPIRY DATE: 24-Aug-17 |
| PROJECT TITLE: Fish Are Persons Too: Human-Fish Relationships on the Northwest Coast | |
| RESEARCH TEAM MEMBER None | |
| DECLARED PROJECT FUNDING: SSHRC: Joseph Armand Bombardier Award (2013-216), Canadian Anthropological Association: Richard F. Salisbury Award (2015) | |
| CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL | |
| This Certificate of Approval is valid for the above term provided there is no change in the protocol. | |
| <p>Modifications To make any changes to the approved research procedures in your study, please submit a "Request for Modification" form. You must receive ethics approval before proceeding with your modified protocol.</p> <p>Renewals Your ethics approval must be current for the period during which you are recruiting participants or collecting data. To renew your protocol, please submit a "Request for Renewal" form before the expiry date on your certificate. You will be sent an emailed reminder prompting you to renew your protocol about six weeks before your expiry date.</p> <p>Project Closures When you have completed all data collection activities and will have no further contact with participants, please notify the Human Research Ethics Board by submitting a "Notice of Project Completion" form.</p> | |
| Certification | |
| This certifies that the UVic Human Research Ethics Board has examined this research protocol and concluded that, in all respects, the proposed research meets the appropriate standards of ethics as outlined by the University of Victoria Research Regulations Involving Human Participants. | |
| <hr/> Dr. Rachael Scarth Associate Vice-President Research Operations | |

Certificate Issued On: 09-Jan-17

14-269 Cullon, Deidre

Appendix D: Laich-Kwil-Tach Letter of Support**LAICH-KWIL-TACH TREATY SOCIETY**

**1441 Old Island Highway
Campbell River, BC V9W 2E4
Phone: (250) 287-9460
Fax: (250) 287-9469
Toll free No. 1-888-900-5720
email: rnaknakim@lkts.ca**

Jan. 11, 2011

University of Victoria
Graduate Admissions
Victoria, BC

To Whom It May Concern:

Re: Deidre Cullon, application to the UVic Anthropology, Ph.D. program

Please accept this letter as an offer of support for Deidre Cullon (Dee), who has applied to the Ph.D. program in Anthropology. The Laich-Kwil-Tach Nation is comprised of the We Wai Kai (Cape Mudge Band), Wei Wai Kum (Campbell River Band) and Kwiakah (Phillips Arm) First Nations and is represented here by the Laich-Kwil-Tach Treaty Society. We have been in Treaty Negotiations since 1994 and Dee has worked with our office since 1997.

During this 14 year period, Dee has been involved in many research projects to support our negotiations and initiatives. These include ethnohistorical research to support our Aboriginal title and rights, the development and completion of a comprehensive TUS; research to support treaty negotiations and treaty chapter development; research to develop our chapters on Culture and Non-Timber Forest Products; genealogical research; and archaeological research on fish traps within Laich-Kwil-Tach territories. Dee is also very much a part of our referral process and works with us in our discussions and negotiations with government, corporations and private land owners.

Over the years Dee has become a part of our community. For example, we hold regular Elder luncheons and community meetings, which Dee always attends. At these meetings, it is obvious that the community has accepted Dee and feels free to share their experiences with her. The fish trap and ethnohistoric work that she has conducted is very much appreciated by the community and they always enjoy hearing updates on her work. Many people will often go to Dee to learn more about our history and culture and to obtain information that might help them in their own personal and economic endeavors.

People also share freely in their interviews with Dee. This is a testament to the trust that has been established.

Finally, Dee has discussed her proposed dissertation work with us. We are pleased with the direction of that work and fully support her efforts. We will support the field work that is required by assisting her with access to our citizens and fishermen. We anticipate that this research will be beneficial to our Nation and will support our on-going efforts to secure our rights.

We look forward to being a part of Dee's academic future and strongly recommend her for your Ph.D. program. If you have any questions about Dee and her work with us, please feel free to contact our office at the above number. Thank you.

Yours truly,

Signature Removed

Rod Naknakim
Chief Negotiator

Signature Removed

Chief Ralph Dick, Wewaikai First Nation

Signature Removed

Chief Bob Pollard, Weiwaikum First Nation

Signature Removed

Chief Steven Dick, Kwiakah First Nation

Appendix E: Community Announcement

Announcement placed in community and treaty newsletters in August 2014

Gilakasla,

As many of you know I returned to school in 2011 to begin work toward my PhD in anthropology. After these first three years I have completed my on-campus requirements and I am now ready to begin my dissertation research. My research will be about the relationship that Laich-Kwil-Tach people traditionally had with fish, particularly salmon, and how that relationship supports your Aboriginal right to fish today.

My research will include working and consulting with Elders and fishers in the community and I will coordinate this with Shirley Johnson at the Laich-Kwil-Tach Research Centre. All the materials arising from this research will also be housed at the Research Centre.

If you have any questions or concerns you can call me at XXX-XXX-XXXX or email me at XXX.

Thank you and I look forward to continuing to work with you on this new research project.

Gilakasla,

Dee Cullon



Dee on a fish trap survey

Appendix F: Key to Five Orthographies

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------|---------------|----------------|--------------------|----------------|----------------------|----------------|--------------------|----------------|----------------------|----|--------------------|-----|
| U'mista | a | <u>a</u> | b | d | dł | dz | e | g | gw | g̥ | gw | h |
| Grubb | a | e | b | d | dl | dz | eh | g | gw | g̥ | gw | h |
| Liq'wala | a | ə | b | d | λ | dʒ | e | g | g ^w | g̥ | g̥ ^w | h |
| IPA | a | ə, a, ɪ, ʊ | b | d | dl | dz | ɛ, e | g ^j | gw | G | G ^w | h |
| Boas | a, ā | E, ǎ, î, ũ | b | d | Ł | dz | ä, ê | g• | gw, g ^u | g | gw, g ^u | h |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| U'mista | i | k | kw | ќ | ќw | <u>k</u> | <u>kw</u> | ќ | ќw | l | l | ł |
| Grubb | i | k | kw | k' | kw' | <u>k</u> | <u>kw</u> | k' | kw' | l | l' | lh |
| Liq'wala | i | k | k ^w | ќ | ќw | q | q ^w | q' | q' ^w | l | l' | ł |
| IPA | ɪ, e | k ^j | k ^w | k ^j | k ^w | q | q ^w | q' | q' ^w | l | l' | ł |
| Boas | ı, ī, e, ē, ě | k• | kw, k ^u | k•! | k!w, k! ^u | q | qw, q ^u | q! | q!w, q! ^u | l | ɛl | ł |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| U'mista | m | m | n | n | o | p | p' | s | t | t' | tł | tł |
| Grubb | m | m' | n | n' | o | p | p' | s | t | t' | tl | tl' |
| Liq'wala | m | m' | n | n' | o | p | p' | s | t | t' | λ | λ' |
| IPA | m | m' | n | n' | ɔ, o | p | p' | s | t | t' | tł | tł |
| Boas | m | ɛm | n | ɛn | â, ô | p | p! | s | t | t! | L | L! |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| U'mista | ts | t's | u | w | w | x | xw | <u>x</u> | <u>xw</u> | y | y | ' |
| Grubb | ts | ts' | u | w | w' | x | xw | <u>x</u> | <u>xw</u> | y | y' | 7 |
| Liq'wala | c | ć | u | w | w' | x | xw | ǰ | ǰ ^w | y | y' | ? |
| IPA | ts | t's | u, o | w | w' | x ^j | xw | χ | χ ^w | j | j' | ? |
| Boas | ts | ts! | u, ũ, o, õ | w | ɛw | x• | xw, x ^u | x | xw, x ^u | y | ɛy | ɛ |

From Nicolson and Werle 2009:32 .