Exploring Intertidal Stone Elements at ȾEL ̓IŁĆE/ c̓əl̓íłč

by

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“We acknowledge and recognize the original Cordova Bay village site ȾEL̓IŁĆE (in SENĆOŦEN writing system) / ċəl̓íłč (as written by Lekwungen speakers). In honouring the original village that stood in our community, we affirm that the material and cultural heritage and ancestral remains of the people who occupied ȾEL̓IŁĆE / ċəl̓íłč should be attended to with vigilance, care and respect, including recognizing their status under the Heritage Conservation Act. We recognize that Cordova Bay is at the heart of the South Saanich Douglas Treaty, signed 07 Feb 1852. That Treaty made several promises to the First Nations of the day, one of which included that "our village sites and enclosed fields are to be kept for our own use, for the use of our children, and for those who may follow after us and the land shall be properly surveyed hereafter" as well as that "we are at liberty to hunt over the unoccupied lands, and to carry on our fisheries as formerly". While the surveying of the original Cordova Bay village of ȾEL̓IŁĆE / ċəl̓íłč never happened, and the subsequent building of the community limits how these other treaty promises may practically be exercised – we can acknowledge the ongoing relationships that these treaty commitments embody into the future.”

(Thom 2018:1)

Land Acknowledgment

I would like to acknowledge that this work is taking place on the lands of the lək̓ʷəŋən and *W̱SÁNEĆ* peoples whose past and present heritage we discuss today as this project is based directly on their ancestral lands of ȾEL ̓IŁĆE. ȾEL ̓IŁĆE in its own right should be recognized as a significant place that holds memory, meaning, stories, and life-giving energies and has been part of the homelands of the W̱SÁNEĆ and lək̓ʷəŋən peoples who have lived, fished, hunted and gathered here since time immemorial. Personally, I come from British ancestry on both sides of my family and am a second-generation born Canadian. I have lived across Turtle Island growing up in the military, having spent the most extended amount of time living, working, and learning here on the lands of the lək̓ʷəŋən and *W̱SÁNEĆ* peoples.

Acknowledgments

First and foremost, I would like to thank the W̱SÁNEĆ and lək̓ʷəŋən peoples as I am a settler and guest on their unceded and ancestral lands. ȾEL ̓IŁĆE/ ċəl̓íłc should be recognized as a significant place which holds memory, meaning, stories, and life giving energies I would also like to thank elder Mavis Underwood for sharing stories, prayer rocks, and making connections to Tsawout Fisheries and her daughter Josephine Henry for her welcome to their homelands in SENĆOŦEN, and to the Tsawout fisheries team Reanne Askham, Jodi Rooke, and Richard Underwood for connecting with me and offering their time and energy to meeting me at ȾEL ̓IŁĆE/ ċəl̓íłc.

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Positionality Statement

To position myself within this work I am not an Indigenous person. I come from British ancestors on both sides of family, where my mothers side came to Canada from England in the late 1800s and my fathers' parents moved to Ontario, from England, in the 1950s. I myself, grew up on military bases all across Turtle Island. When I was younger, we moved rather frequently and lived on secluded bases where the majority of the people I knew were other predominantly white military families. Throughout school I was never taught about the Indigenous side of Canadas story. It was not until I was in the Child and Youth Care program at St. Lawrence College in Brockville Ontario on the territories of the Mohawk, Haudenosaunee/Rotinonhsho'n:ni, Algonquin, and Anishinaabek peoples, that I learned about residential schools and the Indian Act. During this time, I also lived in Kingston Ontario on the lands of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabek peoples. Here I remember an old mural that was painted on the street side wall of a parkade downtown Kingston. The image depicted the colonial history of the city of Kingston showing early Hudson Bay trappers in canoes and moving through the Victorian era showing white women dressed in their beautiful gowns walking throughout the city, moving into modernity, with very little to no representation of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabek peoples throughout that time. I always remember thinking "well where are the Indigenous people, where is their part of the story, why are they not part of this?" Since then, I have been doing my best to learn about the real history of Canada and the Indigenous peoples whose lands these have always been.

I started my undergraduate at Camosun college, where I studied psychology, social work, and anthropology (aiming to get in to a counselling program), and continued on at the University of Victoria in anthropology. To me anthropology is a discipline that provides tools for

understanding humanity and how we come to do what we do in a way that seeks to find the truth. Albeit, we must recognize that anthropology has a dark history especially when it comes to working with Indigenous peoples. As we progress as human beings, anthropology can be significant in building good relationships between Indigenous and non- Indigenous. For instance, the work of Dr. Brian Thom and the W̱SÁNEĆ leadership council as they implement the new Cordova Bay local area plan in which this project is associated with has the potential to have treaty rights recognized such as the right to fish as formerly, it also begins to bring W̱SÁNEĆ community members into the decision-making processes for the District of Saanich. To me this work is about acknowledging the land that we as settlers have taken and walked all over disrespectfully. As uninvited guests on the lands of the W̱SÁNEĆ and lək̓ʷəŋən peoples, we carry important responsibilities in educating ourselves about the historical (and current) interactions that have and continue to displace Indigenous peoples from their homelands, languages, and cultural practices.

As this project focuses on an area considered to be within one of the Douglas Treaties of the 1850s, known as the South Saanich Treaty of 1852, we must acknowledge that we are also treaty members with responsibilities for sharing these lands in the most respectful way (which has not been the case), lands we are extraordinarily privileged to call home. This responsibility comes in the form of acknowledging the colonial government's oppressive acts, which stripped Indigenous peoples of their rights to access land, traditional foods, and important cultural practices. This must be done in a good way, where we are truly listening, paying attention, and being allies. Indigenous peoples have lived on the lands since time immemorial and have a much greater understanding of how to live with the land and the non-human beings that settlers can only hope to aspire to.

So, my goal with this project is to work in a good way with the W̱SÁNEĆ peoples and Dr. Brian Thom to bring recognition to the W̱SÁNEĆ rights to fish as formerly as clearly laid out in the Douglas Treaties. Accordingly, to also acknowledge ȾEL ̓IŁĆE/ c̓əl̓íɬc as an important and cultural keystone place within the W̱SÁNEĆ territory. I am here to learn, listen, support in the ways I can, and grow myself as a settler in order to walk in a better way here in the traditional territories of the W̱SÁNEĆ and lək̓ʷəŋən peoples, as well as throughout the rest of Turtle Island.

Abstract/Keywords

W̱SÁNEĆ and lək̓ʷəŋən First Nations territories span throughout the southern part of Vancouver Island, where their connection to space and place has never diminished. Significant places throughout the landscape of their territories have been sustained and managed by their families since time immemorial. This project aims to support the work of Dr. Brian Thom and the W̱SÁNEĆ First Nations in recognizing ancient intertidal stone elements at ȾEL̓ IŁĆE / c̓əl̓íɬc (Cordova Bay, Victoria, British Columbia) as part of an integrated sea garden. Although the South Saanich Treaty of 1852 resulted in the movement of lək̓ʷəŋən and W̱SÁNEĆ ancestors to new locations, the living remnants of their fishing technologies and lasting legacy on the land is still present. Through the lens of sociocultural anthropology and archaeology, this project aims to substantiate the physical remains of intertidal stone elements and their connection to lək̓ʷəŋən and W̱SÁNEĆ sea garden and fishing technologies.

Keywords

W̱SÁNEĆ First Nations; lək̓ʷəŋən First Nations; Songhees; (list W̱SÁNEĆ); Sea Gardens; Fish Traps; Clam Gardens; Douglas Treaties; South Saanich Treaty 1852; Archaeology; Resurgence; Revitalization; Coast Salish Fishing Technologies; Intertidal zones

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Introduction

Fishing has always been part of Coast Salish lifeways connected to subsistence practices and ontologies (Losey 2010, 17). This research project focuses on an area called ȾEL ̓IŁĆE / c̓əl̓íɬč, also known as Cordova Bay in Victoria, British Columbia. ȾEL ̓IŁĆE in SENĆOŦEN and c̓əl̓íɬč in lək̓ʷəŋən representing both W̱SÁNEĆ First Nations and Songhees First Nation, whom all have ancestral ties to this area (Thom, 2018). Ancient intertidal stone elements at ȾEL ̓IŁĆE/ c̓əl̓íɬč are represented by two semi-curved alignments (see figure 1) that work with the ebb and flood of ocean tides and possibly relate to an entire ecosystem of sea gardens that enhance the environment for harvesting marine species.

This research is an association with the ongoing work of W̱SÁNEĆ communities and Dr. Brian Thom, an associate professor of Anthropology at the University of Victoria; as the W̱SÁNEĆ Leadership Council and Dr. Thom work with the District of Saanich in implementing a new Local Area Plan. This research will contribute to their ongoing work while recognizing ancient intertidal stone elements in relation to a sea garden feature and supporting the W̱SÁNEĆ rights to fish as formerly clearly laid out in the South Saanich Treaties of 1852.

Through the lens of social-cultural anthropology and archaeology, I represent how these alignments are part of an Indigenous sea garden where the stones work with the ebb and flood tides to enhance the environment for harvesting marine life. Archival archaeological research represents the materiality of fishing practices and showcases ȾEL ̓IŁĆE as a settlement area. The archaeological findings provide documentation of W̱SÁNEĆ and lək̓ʷəŋən First Nations ancestral tools, cooking and processing areas, and remains of marine life. All of which represent

an Indigenous connection to the importance of fishing and management of a marine ecosystem at ȾEL ̓IŁĆE / ċəl̓íłč.

My research is led by the desire to show how these ancient intertidal stone elements are connected to W̱SÁNEĆ traditional fishing practices that are embedded within the landscape. Stone and wood fish traps are found throughout the Pacific Northwest Coast, where they interact with the tidal currents and or streams to retain fish behind the walls (Caldwell 2012; Langdon 2006; Losey 2010; Pacific 2022; Pomeroy 1976; Hobler 1970; White 2006). ȾEL ̓IŁĆE / ċəl̓íłč is a known village site relating to the W̱SÁNEĆ and lək̓ʷəŋən First Nations, and through archaeological findings, Indigenous knowledge and scholarly work, ethnographic material and aerial photographs I aim to answer the following questions:

1. How does the shape of the intertidal stone features relate to fishing?
2. How are these ancient intertidal stone features embedded within an Indigenous food system?
3. How do the intertidal stone elements at ȾEL ̓IŁĆE/ ċəl̓íłč (also known as Cordova Bay) compare to other intertidal stone alignments throughout the Northwest Coast?

Argument

Through this essay, I argue that the intertidal stone features at ȾEL ̓IŁĆE / ċəl̓íłč are part of an Indigenous food system; where the intertidal area is used and maintained as a type of sea garden. In particular, the stone features act as a fish trap or site that fosters an environment for the sustainable harvesting of marine resources.

The argument I propose is that the intertidal stone elements present at ȾEL ̓IŁĆE / ċəl̓íłč are part of a longstanding W̱SÁNEĆ and lək̓ʷəŋən First Nations interaction with the land. The creation, maintenance, and usage of these elements as part of an intertidal sea garden to enhance the environment for marine harvesting. I will mostly refer to W̱SÁNEĆ peoples, whose communities include SȾAU,TW̱ (Tsawout), W̱JOŁEŁP (Tsartlip), W̱SÍKEM (Tseycum), and BOḰEĆEN (Pauquachin) as this project is in association with Dr. Thoms work with the W̱SÁNEĆ leadership council. My argument builds on Megan Caldwell's et al. (2012: 220) work regarding intertidal stone features as a typology of elements related to Indigenous ways of modifying intertidal environments. By incorporating ethnographic materials from early anthropologists who wrote about Coast Salish fishing practices as well as fishing practices in the W̱SÁNEĆ and lək̓ʷəŋən territories, we gain an understanding of the importance of places like ȾEL ̓IŁĆE / ċəl̓íłč to the W̱SÁNEĆ and lək̓ʷəŋən peoples and subsistence practices. (Boas 1891; Duff 1969; Jenness 2017; Tout 1907; Suttles 1951). Furthermore, the zooarchaeological analysis of material from a village site (DdRu 81) at ȾEL ̓IŁĆE / ċəl̓íłč connects the use of the stone elements to the cultural fishing practices specific to the area (Bowie 2010; Caldwell 2012; Thom 2018).

In addition, to situate this knowledge within an Indigenous framework, I draw from Nick Claxton (2003; 2015) and his work on the resurgence and revitalization of W̱SÁNEĆ food systems through reef net fishing practices. Claxton's work touches on the impacts of the Douglas Treaties and the right to fish as formerly and the importance of community-led initiatives to revitalize traditional knowledge (for further Douglas Treaty information, see Duff 1969). *The Saltwater People* by Dave Elliot Sr (1990) from the Tsartlip Nation is an essential piece of literature on the W̱SÁNEĆ peoples providing background information on their history, territories, fishing practices, language, and treaty agreements or lack thereof. In combination

with the work of Nick Claxton, this provides a depth of knowledge to orient the understanding of fishing technologies at ȾEL ̓IŁĆE / c̓əl̓íɬč. While Claxton talks about treaty rights and reef net fishing practices, Elliot shares how fishing and harvesting were done throughout the year—noting how the tides informed their knowledge of the time of year.

To further my argument, I utilize aerial photographs of ȾEL ̓IŁĆE / c̓əl̓íɬč to represent a comparative approach of other intertidal stone fishing elements found throughout the Northwest coast. To corroborate these images, I engage with the work of Elroy White (2006) and his Heiltsuk home community, particularly regarding the function and shape of intertidal stone features for harvesting fish and marine species, along with the importance of fishing practices within his home community. Furthering the comparative approach of intertidal features related to Indigenous fishing technologies, I incorporate the work of Robert Losey (2010) and Steve Langdon (2006). Langdon and Losey focus on Northwest Coast fish traps throughout Washington, Oregon, and Alaska. The fish traps represented in Langdon and Losey's work show similar shapes and intertidal locations to the stone elements present at ȾEL ̓IŁĆE / c̓əl̓íɬč. The work of Hilary Stewart (1982) is an invaluable resource to represent the innovative technologies of Coast Salish peoples related to fishing practices. My essay also considers the work of Jonathan Pomeroy (1976) and Phillip Hobler (1970), specifically representing their examples of shape typologies and how they work as fish traps within intertidal areas. Combining archaeology and sociocultural perspectives gives this research a valuable knowledge base to support the W̱SÁNEĆ and lək̓ʷəŋən First Nations moving forward in recognition of their fishery practices at ȾEL ̓IŁĆE / c̓əl̓íɬč.

ȾEL̓ IŁĆE/ ċəl̓íłč

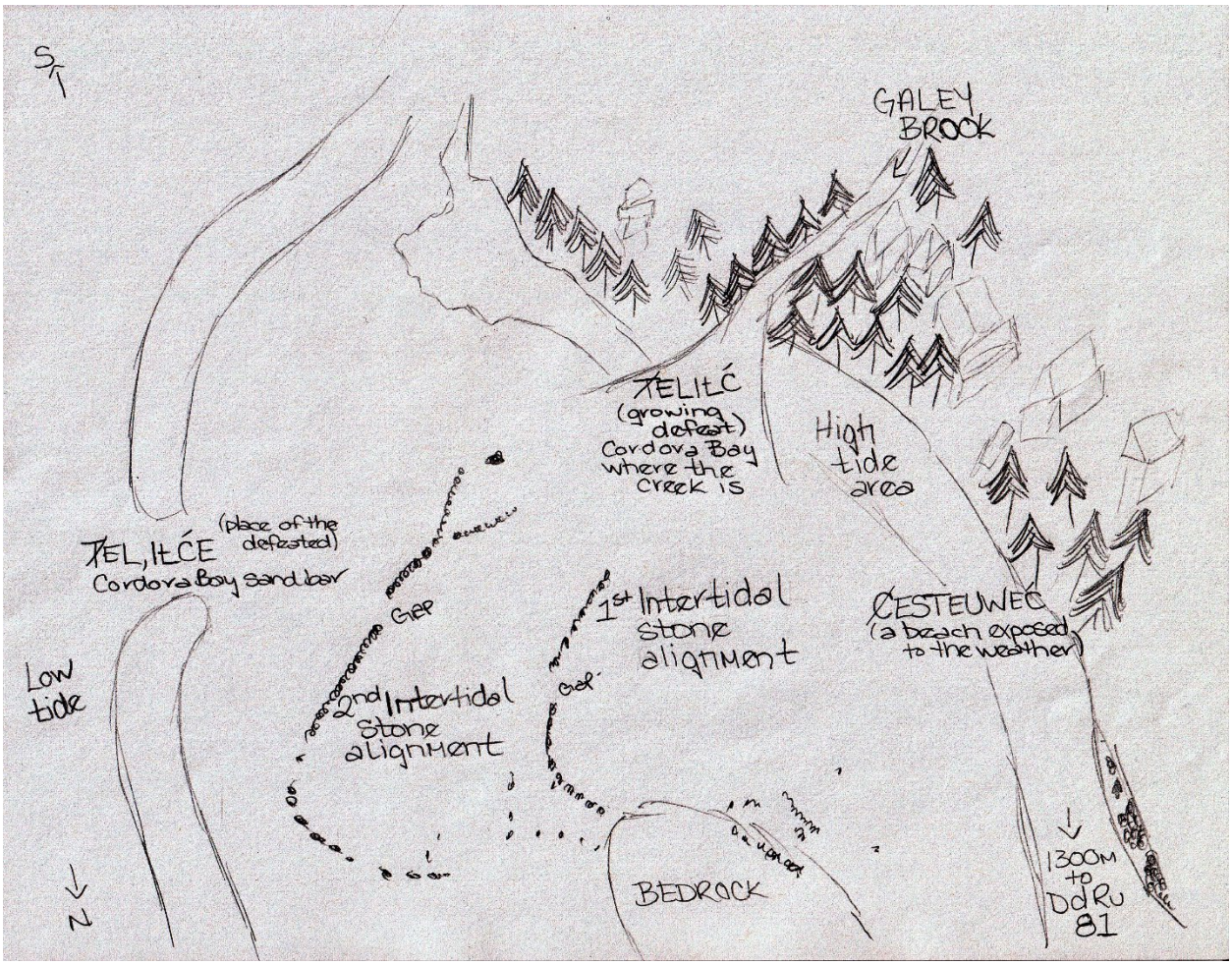

Figure 1 Sketch of intertidal stone alignments at ȾEL̓ IŁĆE/ ċəl̓íłč. Courtesy of Rachel Hooton 2022

SENĆOŦEN	Translation/Meaning	English
ĆESTEUWEĆ	a beach exposed to the weather	Cordova Bay beach
ȾELIŁĆ	growing defeat	Cordova Bay where the creek is
ȾEL,IŁĆE	place of the defeated	Cordova Bay sand bar

Table 1: Language and meaning. Source: Elliot 1990:26

ȾEL̓IŁĆE/ ċəl̓íłč in its own right should be recognized as a significant cultural place to the W̱SÁNEĆ and lək̓ʷəŋən First Nations, as it was a place where their ancestors lived, hunted, fished, harvested, played and grew as people. The table above notes the importance of placenames specific to this location as told by Dave Elliot Sr., a member of the Tsartlip Nation. As you walk along the coastal waters looking out towards the San Juan Islands across the Haro Strait, you are looking out onto only a tiny portion of W̱SÁNEĆ territories. The ocean waters are ever so important to the W̱SÁNEĆ way of life, as they are known as saltwater peoples, who live, play, and fish in and are surrounded by saltwater (Elliot 1990:15).

Looking at the sketch in Figure 1 you can you can situate yourself on the beach looking out at the intertidal stone features at ȾEL̓IŁĆE/ ċəl̓íłč to place yourself in space as you read along in the following paragraph. W̱SÁNEĆ fishing technologies are embedded in the landscape as you travel down the beach 1300 meters south from the village site (DdRu 81) into the elbow of the bay. Once there, looking out to the ocean, at low tide, you can see a long wide sand bar at the lowest tide line mark creating an intertidal area that is a highly inhabitable environment for all kinds of sea life. Two semi-curved stone alignments within this intertidal zone are the remnants of a once fully functional fishing site. It could be called a fish weir or trap, however, not to limit the functionality of these stone alignments; for now, we will refer to them as intertidal stone elements. If you follow the open end of the trap up into the high tide area, there is the mouth of Galey Brook, a stream where freshwater flows out into the ocean, which potentially, at one point, was a salmon-bearing stream. As settlers, it is easy to walk along this beach and not think for a second about its significance of this place. However, suppose you spend some time here and really look at the surroundings. In that case, you can see how the landscape is manipulated and was once an area cared for and managed by the loving hands of the

W̱SÁNEĆ and lək̓ʷəŋən ancestors, whose descendants today are working to have their lands and fishing practices recognized. This area, although densely packed with the development of settlers, is still an important piece of W̱SÁNEĆ and lək̓ʷəŋən past, present, and future.

Methodology

An Embodied Presence

Spending time as a settler at ȾEL ̓IŁĆE/ ċəl̓íłč I have come to appreciate this place far beyond the contours of the etymology of the English word for beach. Beach, in old English, denotes a place along the seashore or a pebbly or sandy area along the sea. However, Cordova Bay beach is much more than just a beach, as the colonial name would imply. Richard Atleo (2004: 25) says, "English is a low context language", most likely as it is detached from its roots and lands, making the language a vague description of experience and places. In SENĆOŦEN, words and phrases hold a more significant meaning to what a term is talking about. Therefore, the beach becomes more of a place of stories, histories, and ways of living. For instance, ȾEL,IŁĆE refers specifically to the sand bar out in the lowest tide area, which also lines up with the stone alignments. ȻESTEUWEĆ (Cordova Bay beach) means “beach exposed to the weather”. ȾELIŁĆ (Cordova Bay where the creek is) growing defeat. These placenames (see table 1) in particular, relate to the location of the stone alignments as the line up with ȾEL,IŁĆE and ȾELIŁĆ, and are embedded in the intertidal zone of ȻESTEUWEĆ. As I spend more time becoming acquainted with ȻESTEUWEĆ, ȾEL,IŁĆE, and ȾELIŁĆ as a place or places, it takes on a much more significant meaning. While I spend time at ȾEL,IŁĆE and contemplating the ingenuity of the W̱SÁNEĆ and lək̓ʷəŋən peoples as they watched the world in front of them in order to co-create with the ocean, the sea life, the birds, the winds, the moons, the land

mammals, the spirits, and all the tiny nuances occurring in the area. And finding the perfect spot within the intertidal zone to build a fish trap that enhances the production of marine life, I think about Tim Ingold's (1993: 152) concept of a "dwelling perspective":

> according to which the landscape is constituted as an enduring record of - and testimony to - the lives and works of past generations who have dwelt within it, and in so doing, have left there something of themselves…. the landscape tells - or rather is - a story. It enfolds the lives and times of predecessors who, over the generations, have moved around in it and played their part in its formation. To perceive the landscape is therefore to carry out an act of remembrance.

The ancestors of the W̱SÁNEĆ and lək̓ʷəŋən peoples have been part of the ƛ̓EL,IŁĆE landscape for generations. As Dave Elliot says, they could tell the time of year by the tides. They knew which tides would bring in the herring and when to go out for them (Elliot 1990: 44). Their ancestors would watch the tides and the fish, sea mammals, birds, and other life, in so doing learning the best ways to work within this environment and enhance it to create a sustainable place of harvesting fish. I liken this to the notion of bodyland from João Batista (2022: 42) where the land, humans, and non-humans are interconnected through their interactions with each other, they are all made of and nourish each other. Bodyland is an ethnographic concept "for theorizing human-land relations, and as an intervention in discussions about the legitimation of human presence in places" (Batista 2022: 35). Understanding the significance of place and the connections to humans and non-human relations is relevant in the WSÁNEĆ worldview as well. WSÁNEĆ peoples are called "Saltwater People because so much of their territory is made up of the ocean. Their territory is almost as much water as it is land" (Paul 2020: 5). Furthermore, they are deeply connected to fish and fishing; Nicholas XEMƮOLTW Claxton (2015: ix) says "The SX̱OLE, or Reef Net Fishery, was at the core of this existence, it was the 'backbone' of our

W̱SÁNEĆ society". Hence bodyland, W̱SÁNEĆ, the land, the water, and the fish are all interconnected.

Despite development and pollution from the embedded sewage system, sea life is abundant within the intertidal zone. Clams spit as you walk past. Tiny air holes in the sand illumine the life beneath the sediment, small bodies of crabs abound everywhere, seagulls dive into the pools of water, created by the intertidal stone alignments, for tiny fish. Chitons cling to rocks, and small shrimp-like creatures can be seen as the tide recedes. The remains of clams like giant horse clams are also scattered throughout the intertidal zone. And this is just from a small fraction of time while the tide is out far enough to see the stone elements enmeshed within this place. The presence of sea life is active and flourishing, showing just how much marine life could be cultivated from this significant place.

Ethnography

Although there is more detailed ethnographic work on the Coast Salish peoples ways of living including the W̱SÁNEĆ and lək̓ʷəŋən First Nations, through the works of Franz Boas (1891), Diamond Jenness (1935), Wayne Suttles (1951; 1986), H.G Barnett (1955) (to name only a few), this paper will primarily focus on the fishing aspects from the ethnographies of the Northwest Coast. The area of focus in this project is within the traditional territories of the W̱SÁNEĆ and lək̓ʷəŋən peoples. ȾEL̓ IŁĆE/ ċəl̓íłč as a place has ancestral connections to both W̱SÁNEĆ and lək̓ʷəŋən peoples and was considered to be a Songhees village once owned by a Songhees man named Kwutsingellitch (this is not the proper spelling, I could not translate this to lək̓ʷəŋən) (Duff 1969: 50) who was known to stay there year-round (Suttles 1951: 21). Suttles described the area from Metchosin to Cordova Bay as Songish or Songhees, and the whole

Saanich Peninsula up to and including the Gulf Islands as Saanich or WSÁNEĆ territories (Suttles 1951: 4). He also notes that Songhees winter villages extended all the way along the coast "in every bay from Cordova Head to William Head on Vancouver Island" (Suttles 1951: 13). Whereas Diamond Jenness notes that the W̱SÁNEĆ "inhabited the Saanich Peninsula, extending down its east side to Cordova Bay, and in the west, along the length of the Saanich Inlet" (Jenness 1935/2016: 1). We can see that there is certainly a known presence of both W̱SÁNEĆ and lək̓ʷəŋən peoples who are connected to Cordova Bay and who lived and managed these landscapes for thousands of years. The W̱SÁNEĆ have lived throughout these lands long before settlers ever stepped off their boats, claiming it as British or Crown land (Horne 2012: 6).

Besides hunting and plant-based harvesting practices, fishing was the Coast Salish peoples main source of subsistence. The W̱SÁNEĆ peoples employed similar fishing practices that other Coast Salish Nations utilized, such as stone and wood fish traps, fishing from canoes with harpoons, hook and line, particularly the reef net (Barnett 1955; Suttles 1986: 148). The reef net technology is specifically associated with W̱SÁNEĆ peoples. They have limited salmon-bearing streams throughout their territory and had to paddle out towards the San Juan islands to employ the reef net (Barnett 1955: 86; more on reef net fishing below). Fish traps made of stone alignments are found within the intertidal zones, usually near the mouth of a river or stream, where the stone alignments secured latticework to help guide fish into the traps, and then fish were clubbed, hooked, or scooped out of the holding areas (Barnett 1955: 81; Stewart 1976).

The waters along the San Juan islands across the Haro Strait from Cordova Bay are known to be important reef net fishing areas for salmon (Duff 1969: 5; Suttles 1951: 15). Although many fish were caught throughout the straits, salmon was a staple. Other fish included

halibut, sturgeon, lingcod, rockfish, herring, smelt, flounder, dogfish, perch, sculpin, and octopus (Suttles 1951: 114-134). Herring was harvested in the late winter and early spring as they spawned in the intertidal areas (Suttles 1951: 126). Using a herring rake that had sharpened needle-like teeth on one side of the end of a long wooden stick, the stick was waterproofed by smoking it over the fire and applying tallow to adhere the ashes (Stewart 1976: 76). Sculpins or bullheads were generally speared and taken right out from under larger boulders or stones in the intertidal zone (Elliot 1990: 46; Suttles 1951:131). Suttles (1951: 131) says sculpin would be taken from a "canoe at low tide in bays near a winter village." Although Suttles does not mention a specific location, he does note that one way of harvesting salmon for the straits people was the use of weirs (or traps) where the fish would be stopped by the alignments and either taken with hooks or traps (most likely basket traps) (Suttles 1951:134). The mention of weirs is an important note in Suttles's ethnography as it acknowledges the use of intertidal traps within the Saanich territory. He mentions that not all Straits people used the techniques mentioned, mostly mainland groups (Suttles 1951: 134), but we see clear evidence of a trap-like alignment in the Cordova Bay intertidal area, next to a creek! Suttles also makes mentions of a "Saanichton man, Joe Michel, [who] built a small plank house up Sandhill Creek [where Tsawout Nation is] and built a weir there in the fall [of the late 1800s]. Silvers ran here until December" (Suttles 1951: 150). Although Suttles says he was told this weir was the first one and that Joe was the only one who did this, I do not believe this is the case. Yes, possibly the first of its kind in the late 1800s. However, what about before this? And what about other types of traps elsewhere throughout W̱SÁNEĆ territory? Like at ȾEL ̓IŁĆE/ ċəl̓íłč or the western side of the Saanich peninsula in the Saanich inlet (as Goldstream river comes out here).

The W̱SÁNEĆ, like other Coast Salish groups, were highly skilled fishermen and demonstrated great ingenuity in their fishing technologies. Part of this knowledge comes from being embedded in the environment where you are part of the cycles and rhythms of the land and non-human beings. Diamond Jenness (1935: 6) describes the cycles of the year according to English months, while the W̱SÁNEĆ describe these cycles in moons or lunar phases, which vary from place to place. (See Elliot 1990: 41-54 for a detailed description of the moons' names and cultural practices throughout the cycle). These phases relate to what resources were available. The winter months were a time of ceremonial dances; it was also a time when men would fish offshore for cod as well as hunt ducks. The early spring brought seal and spring salmon, followed by halibut and spawning herring, while later spring brought camas roots and wild carrots. When summer came people ventured further out from their winter villages, where the women would collect berries and seeds, and men would begin reef net fishing across the straits for sockeye and humpback salmon. Then in fall, all would return to their winter village areas preparing food for the coming cold months (Jenness 1935:6-7). (For a more detailed understanding of seasonal movements, read Abramczyk, U. *Hul'qumi'num Peoples in the Gulf Islands: Re-Storying the Coast Salish Landscape* 118-132).

Although there is little evidence of salmon in the archaeological record at ȾEL̓ IŁĆE/ ċəl̓íłč (the sample is from only a small area when considering the size of and development of ȾEL̓ IŁĆE/ ċəl̓íłč), salmon is still an important figure in the lives of the W̱SÁNEĆ peoples. Jenness notes that wherever weirs (traps) could be placed across rivers in W̱SÁNEĆ territory, they would be. The salmon were caught either by attaching basketry to the weirs, by dip nets, willow bark purse nets between two canoes or speared by two-barbed bone points. Five or six men typically owned the weirs, but others were allowed to use them once the owners had their

fill. The Saanich had immemorial fishing rights "off Point Roberts near the mouth of the Fraser River [….]as did the Songhees at San Juan Islands" (Jenness 1935:17-18). The W̱SÁNEĆ celebrated the first salmon ceremony with the sockeye or humpback (not the first salmon, but more common in their area, and the humpback because everyone could eat them at all times). Salmon were revered and thought to be "human beings from some far-away land that transformed themselves into fish during the migration season [where they would be called ŚÍEŁ (elder brother), and SI,ÁM (rich person/noble)]" (Jenness 1935:19).

South Saanich Treaty of 1852

Figure 2 South Saanich Treaty Map, also indicating the location of the fish trap (intertidal stone elements) and SENĆOŦEN placenames. Courtesy of Dr. Brian Thom.

Throughout the 1850's James Douglas, a member of the Hudson's Bay Trading Company and representative of the Crown, was tasked with acquiring the land and the resources of Vancouver Island to be the white man's property forever (Duff 1969; Horne 2012:9). By doing so, Douglas created fourteen treaties for the southern part of the island from Nanaimo down. Along with the Douglas Treaties, the Oregon Treaty of 1846 separated the land and the waters between a Canadian and American border. The Oregon Treaty essentially separated W̱SÁNEĆ and lək̓ʷəŋən peoples from their families and neighbours across the waters by a fake line in the ocean and on land (Horne 2012: 6). The treaties represent the views and opinions of white European colonial men who were set out to "unburden the land of its Indian ownership" (Duff 1969: 3). Where the details were expressly the colonial understanding of property and politics and did not account for the social, economic, political, and spiritual perspectives of the Indigenous peoples, they would ultimately affect. While the Treaty was understood by the W̱SÁNEĆ and lək̓ʷəŋən peoples as peace offerings because of settlers killing a young First Nations boy and cutting down trees in Cordova Bay[1], to the settlers, it was a purchase of land. The W̱SÁNEĆ received blankets and metal (coins) and placed an X on a sheet of paper (which they thought represented the sign of the settlers' cross) in recognition of a peace offering from

[1] Before the singing of the South Saanich Treaty the territories of the W̱SÁNEĆ peoples were intruded on by white settlers. James Douglas invited the W̱SÁNEĆ to Victoria for a meeting which they thought was to create peace between the settlers and the Indigenous peoples. Prior to the W̱SÁNEĆ peoples signing the South Saanich Treaty of 1852 two events in particular had occurred 1) a young W̱SÁNEĆ messenger boy was simply running through a field and was shot and killed by James Douglas's men and 2) white settlers were cutting down large trees in Cordova Bay and shipping them to England for ship masts. The W̱SÁNEĆ men showed up in battle dress and canoes and talked with the settlers resulting in them packing up and leaving. After these events James Douglas requested the W̱SÁNEĆ to come to Victoria for a meeting where they received blankets, and coins in turn they marked an X on a blank sheet of paper. The W̱SÁNEĆ were of the understanding this was a peace offering for the previous events, not that they were selling their land to Douglas (Knighton 2004: 10; Thom 2018: 23).

the white people; they did not realize this was signing away their C'ela'nen (way of life) (Knighton 2004: 10).

The treaties eventually removed the W̱SÁNEĆ and lək̓ʷəŋən peoples from their homelands onto small plots of land, essentially taking away access to their territories, resources, and ways of life (Claxton 2015: 25; Elliot 1990: 17). ȾEL,IŁĆE is an area that falls under the South Saanich Treaty of 1852 (signed February 7th 1852 (Duff 1969: 21)), which encompasses the southern portion of W̱SÁNEĆ territory pictured in Figure 2. Although, as mentioned earlier, this area was considered a Songhees' village, it is thought to be a mix of Songhees and Sidney Islanders, who possibly ended up moving to Victoria after the Treaty took place (Duff 1969: 50-51). For the purpose of this paper, the most important part of the Douglas Treaties is the "right to fish as formerly," where W̱SÁNEĆ peoples were told they would always be able to fish as formerly, use their lands as formerly, and that nothing was going to be taken from them (Knighton 2004:10). However, this has not been the case. The South Saanich Treaty of 1852 should be represented as a document that safeguards the rights of Indigenous peoples throughout their territories and their right to self-governance and their right to fish as formerly. However, because of the Treaty and the placement of W̱SÁNEĆ peoples to certain sects of land, the majority of the territory is now developed by industry, business, and residential settlements, leaving the land and waters polluted and sacred ancestral grounds disturbed and destroyed.

Aerial Photographs

Figure 3 Drone image of intertidal stone alignments at ƛ̓EL̓ IŁĆE/ c̓əl̓íɬč: Courtesy of Jack Baker 2018

Aerial photos allow me to develop a comprehensive view of the stone alignments within the intertidal zone. Through the aerial images and an on-ground presence, I was able to sketch (see figure 1) the intertidal stone elements in relation to the hightide line, low tide mark, and the sandbar at the lowest tide line. These images help me to corroborate how the stone alignments work with the ebb and flood of tides to create holding pools for fish, as well as comparative material for other intertidal stone alignments throughout the Northwest Coast. The sketch also shows more distinctly the relation of Galey Brook to the stone elements compared to other aerial photos. Orthophotos (see figures 4-5) show the distinct lines of the intertidal elements within the focus area.

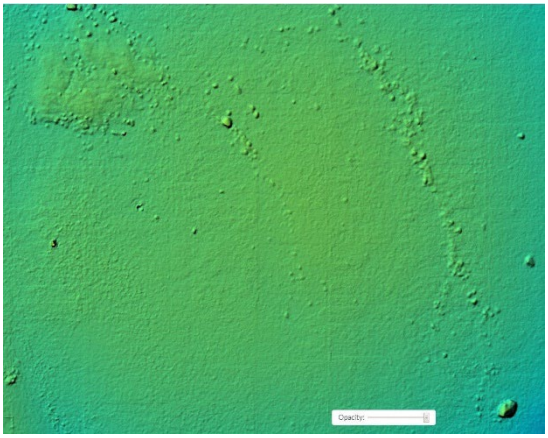

Figure 5 Orthophoto of stone alignments at Courtesy of Dr. Brian Thom 2022

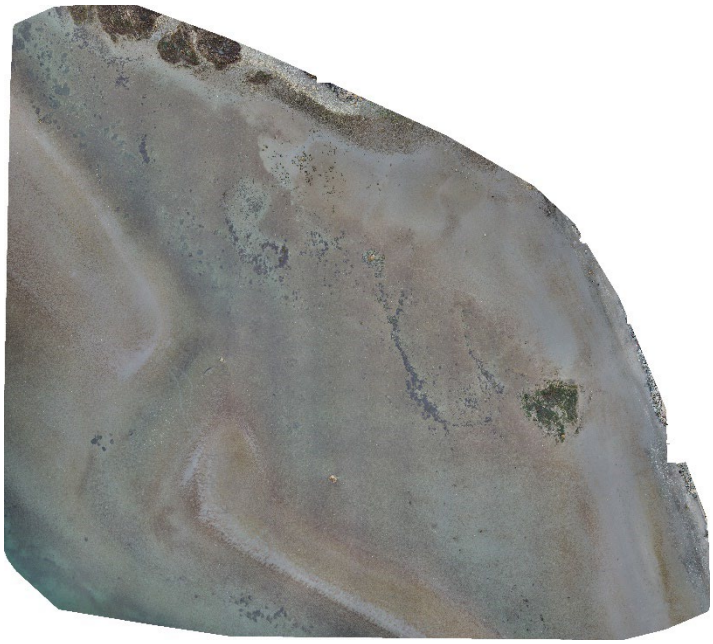

Figure 4 Orthophoto showing the relation of the sand bar and stone alignments within the intertidal zone Courtesy of Dr. Brian Thom 2022

Even though the W̱SÁNEĆ territory is not well known for salmon bearing streams along the east coast, it is quite likely that, given the relation of the stream to the holding areas of the stone walls (see figure 1), at one point, Galey Brook could have been a salmon bearing stream. I also think that the sand bar has something to do with the way the rocks are aligned, however, it is

difficult to say given the lack of ethnographic material regarding fish traps in the Cordova Bay region. However, this does create space for future research in this area to understand how and if the sand bar relates. The sand bar itself does seem to be of significance to the W̱SÁNEĆ peoples as the name ȾEL,IŁĆE in SENĆOŦEN (see table 1) denotes the Cordova Bay sand bar and a place of defeat (Elliot 1990: 26).

Archaeology

Cordova Bay is a highly significant archaeological area (see figure 6). While there has been a limited amount of archaeological work throughout the Cordova Bay area, significant evidence is present relating to the importance of fishing. There are several recorded sites in the area including "DdRu81 (the village site at Agate Lane), DdRu 13, DdRu 119, 165, 166 (the burial area at and around McMorran Park), DdRu 37 (the Galey Brook site), DdRu 67 and 82 (upland resource harvesting sites), and DdRu 95 (the Highgate site on the Ridge)" which you can see in Figure 6 (Thom 2018: 5). These sites are significant as they show the activities of life and interactions with the land surrounding the intertidal stone elements, therefore, connecting them, in their use, as part of an intertidal food source.

Figure 6 Small portion of archaeological sites with Borden numbers surrounding the intertidal stone alignments at ȾEL̓ IŁĆE/ ċəl̓íłč image enhanced to show significance of archaeological sites surrounding intertidal stone alignments: Courtesy of Dr. Brian Thom

During the mid-1900s, the archaeological work throughout Cordova Bay was executed in a disrespectful and exploitative manner. Brian Thom (2018: 5) relates how the work was primarily done in an era when the Indian Act and the Residential School system were actively controlling Indigenous peoples' lives across Turtle Island. The sites that were "excavated, disturbed, and destroyed" (Thom 2018: 5) contained the material belongings and the ancestral remains of the W̱SÁNEĆ and lək̓ʷəŋən First Nations. Throughout this period, the work carried out represents a time when First Nations' connections to their homelands and ancestors were disregarded and disrespected by settlers. It is important to acknowledge the poor work and handling of ancestral remains in Cordova Bay and elsewhere throughout the world during these

archaeological excavations. As we move forward, the importance of building honest and respectful relationships between Indigenous peoples and settlers is paramount. The work in this project is in association with the W̱SÁNEĆ Leadership Council and Dr. Brian Thom as they implement a new a Local Area Plan hence it aims to recognize this as a significant place in which W̱SÁNEĆ ancestors have lived, fished, hunted, and gathered since time immemorial.

Figure 7 Unilaterally barbed harpoon points most likely for sea otters, birds, and salmon. Shows characteristics from Marpole phase indicating a date of 2400-1600 BP (Bowie 2008:117).

Though each site recorded so far are significant in their own ways, DdRu 81, in particular, is highly influential as it pertains to a dwelling location and midden site with a material assemblage related to fishing practices. Some of the fishing technology found at DdRu 81 include thin fish blades, unilaterally barbed harpoons, fixed points, toggling harpoon valves, fish hook barbs, gorges, a variety of bone points, and bipoints (Bowie 2008: iii).

Along with fishing technology, the faunal assemblage includes land and sea mammals, fish, and bird bones (Bowie 2008: iv) (see Figure 7) for examples of unilaterally barbed harpoon points for catching sea otters, birds, and salmon). Furthermore, DdRu 81 suggests a high degree of cooking and food processing with features such as 40 hearths, 26 pit features, post moulds (indicate a possible drying rack), and 6 processing or dumpsites (Bowie 2008: iii). Of the fish bones present, there were 29 different species identified, excluding around 1000 fish elements not identified. Herring and Sculpin fish were among the area's highest-

Figure 8 Salmon hook barb (Bowie 2008:102)

ranking zooarchaeological fish bones (Bowie 2008: 158-164). We also have to take into account that this is only from one area throughout ȾEL ̓IŁĆE/ ċəl̓íłč, hence it represents only a small fraction of what actually occurred here. The figures represented here show only a few samples of the types of fishing technologies found. Figure 8 shows a spindle-shaped bi-point fish hook, part of a composite tool possibly used to fish for salmon (Bowie 2008: 102).

Herring also played an important role in W̱SÁNEĆ fishing practices. Herring would spawn along kelp beds in the intertidal zone, sending scouts to seek good spawning locations in early March. The herring were important as other sea life, and birds followed the spawning herring in hopes of feeding off them as well, including salmon, sculpins, and ducks (Elliot 1990: 44). Figure 9 shows examples of herring rake barbs, which would have been attached to one side of the end of a long shaft made of hardwood, spaced about "two finger widths apart" (Stewart 1977: 76).

Figure 9 Herring rake barbs (Bowie 2008:100).

Given the faunal assemblage found at DdRu81 has a high representation of herring bones followed by sculpins, it is safe to assume that these fish were caught in high quantity within the waters at Cordova Bay. While the sample at DdRu 81 only represents a small portion of the activities that occurred here, it provides us with a beneficial look into the lives of the W̱SÁNEĆ and lək̓ʷəŋən First Nations at the time. Fish traps along the Northwest coast are typically designed to catch salmon; however, any fish that came into the intertidal zone remained in the trap as well (Pacific 2022; White 2006). Many areas are dominated by pacific herring and salmon (Pacific 2022), and herring is often referred to as baitfish for larger fish such as salmon,

sculpins, and larger sea mammals (Bowie 2008; Moss 2013: 329; Stewart 1977: 119). Given the variety of fish remains found within the village site, the ancestral belongings of fishing technology, and cooking features, there is a high likelihood that the intertidal stone alignments belong to a fish trap used and maintained by W̱SÁNEĆ and lək̓ʷəŋən First Nations. John Pomeroy (1976: 166) notes that many stone fish traps would often be found within proximity of a midden site, indicating the area's use as a high potential for fishing and marine harvesting. As we have clear indications of an intact midden at ȾEL,IŁĆE, this further corroborates the use of the stone elements as possible fishing technology.

Discussion

Intertidal Stone Elements.

The intertidal zone is along the shore, covered during high tide and exposed at low tide. At ȾEL ̓IŁĆE / ċəl̓íłč, ebb (low tide) flow is southward, and flood tide (high tide) is northward (for a detailed discussion of tidal currents for this region see Keenan et al. 1966; Lu 1996: 13; Lu 2000; Farmer 1987: 5370; Pawlowiwcz 2002: 8). Understanding how the tides work in the bay is critical to understanding how the stone elements work, as the alignments work to trap fish within the space created by the rock walls using the ebb and flood currents. When the flood tide fills up the shoreline, the stone features are entirely covered, and as the water ebbs out of the bay, the stone alignments are exposed (see figure 10). When the alignments are in a fully functioning capacity, "fish swim over the walls at high tide and are caught when the tide ebbs" (Hobler 1970: 82-83). The sandy area of the bay within the rock elements also creates an environment suitable for enhancing bivalve and shellfish production, all of which we see represented in the archaeological record at ȾEL ̓IŁĆE / ċəl̓íłč (see figure 6-9) (Bowie 2008: 201).

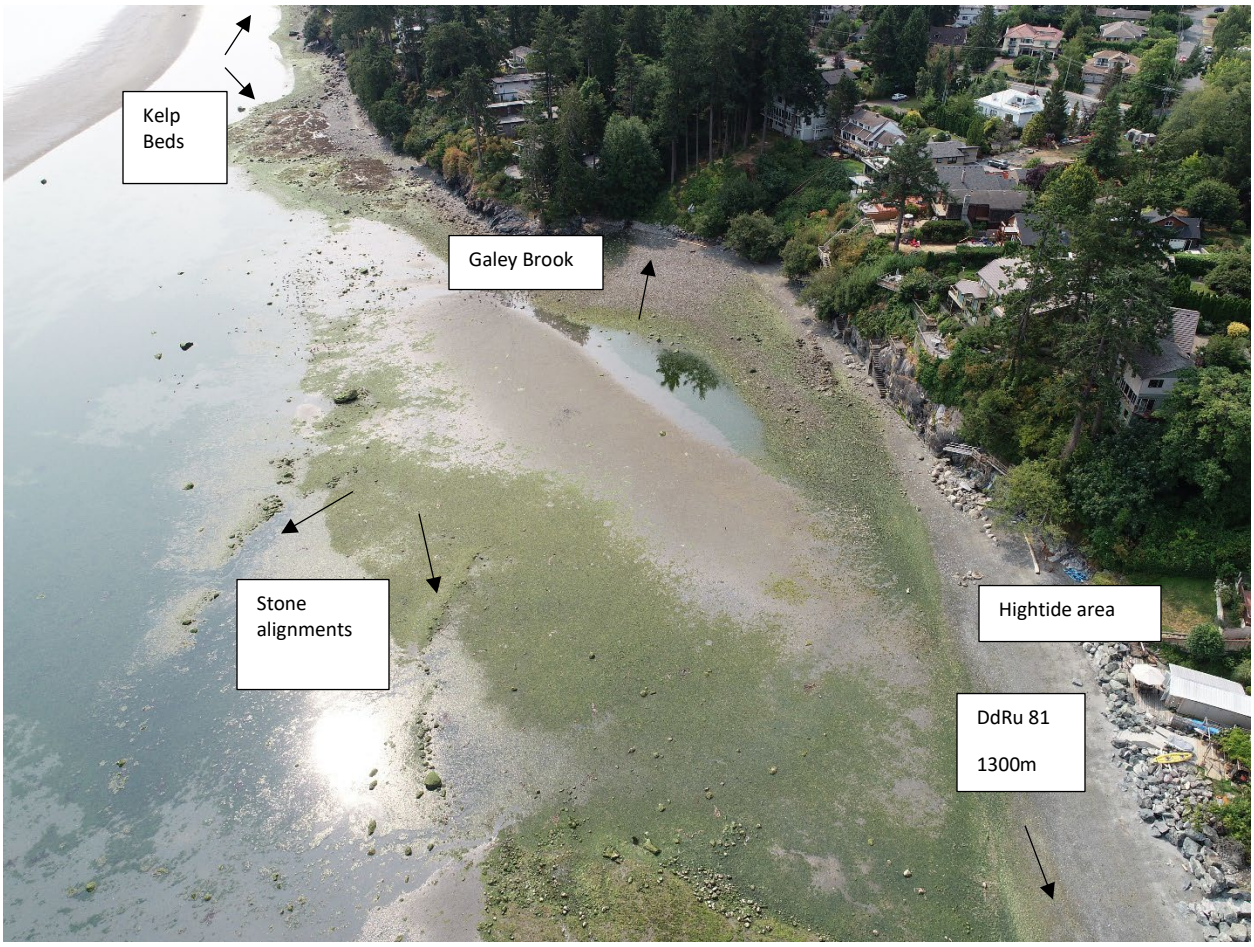

Figure 10 Drone image of intertidal elements at ƛEL̓ IŁĆE / ċəl̓íɬč. Photo courtesy of Jack Baker 2018; descriptions added by Rachel Hooton 2022

Megan Caldwell et al. (2012: 220) describes intertidal stone features as a typology of elements related to Indigenous ways of modifying intertidal environments. Modifications involve clearing the beach by moving stones, then using the stones to build walls and enclosures. These manipulations of the intertidal zone work to support a more hospitable environment for fish and shellfish. Caldwell (2012: 220) describes the stone alignments as elements of features. She states "while the terms "fish trap" and "clam garden" are convenient ways of classifying intertidal

modifications that either trap fish or enhance clam productivity, the terms do not adequately describe the formal and functional variation often encompassed within these archaeological features. Similarly, these collective terms may also inhibit understanding the ecological knowledge or social context embedded in feature construction" (Caldwell 2012:220). It essentially limits the conceptual framework of how these intertidal features exist within an Indigenous worldview. Acknowledging the stone alignments at ȾEL ̓IŁĆE / ċəl̓íłč as elements that enhance the environment for the harvesting of marine resources works to a more *wholistic* understanding of Indigenous food systems and the use of sea gardens.

The term sea garden aligns with the W̱SÁNEĆ Leadership Councils: *The Salish Sea Garden Project,* which is currently revitalizing sea gardens to create a healthy and sustainable ecosystem for clams and other key marine species like seaweed (see figure 10) (W̱SÁNEĆ 2022). The construction and use of clam gardens have occurred throughout Coast Salish territory for thousands of years. Moving stones and building walls to clear the beach creates an environment hospitable for increased production of clams (Olsen, 2019: 9). Such areas were the responsibility of ȾEX̱TÁN or family units. Joni Olsen (2019: 6) says that "these family units belong to certain places, animals, plants, masks, rituals, song and dances." As W̱SÁNEĆ peoples revitalize clam gardens, they are creating a sustainable food source, increasing biodiversity (Olsen 2019:6), and taking back their cultural protocols and their rights to fish as formerly (Olsen 2019:6; Tsawout 2015). These practices can hopefully be implemented at ȾEL ̓IŁĆE / ċəl̓íłč as well because the stone elements here are most likely part of an extensive harvesting area, including shellfish and fish, and built by W̱SÁNEĆ and lək̓ʷəŋən ancestors.

The intertidal zones were maintained throughout the Coast Salish world as integral food systems for fish, shellfish, intertidal root gardens, kelp beds, bait for birds, and larger sea mammals. (Matthews and Turner 2017: 6). From the archaeological record listed above, we see a distinct presence of the remains of fishing practices in the form of fish bones, shellfish, bird bones, and land and sea mammals. Although it is difficult to account for the remnants of plant life in the record, there is evidence of kelp beds just to the south of the intertidal stone elements. Jack Baker's (2016) master's thesis provides a wealth of knowledge of the importance of kelp beds in traditional food systems. He notes that ȾEL ̓IŁĆE "represent[s] one of many beaches identified by traditional food practitioners as important for *lhuq'us* harvesting" (Baker 2016:72); "*lhuq'us* (the Hul'q'umi'num' language term for *pohrpyra/pyropia spp.* (commonly known as red laver or black gold) is a flavourful and nutritious intertidal seaweed that grows on rocky beaches across the Pacific Northwest" (Baker 2016: iii). Hence along with the zooarchaeological remains and Jack Bakers' work, we can see how the intertidal stone elements at ȾEL ̓IŁĆE have been used as part of a traditional harvesting site for generations.

A Northwest Coast Comparative Understanding of Intertidal Stone Alignment

Intertidal stone features such as the semi-circular alignments at ȾEL ̓IŁĆE / ċəl̓íɬč (seen in Figure 12) are similar to other intertidal features found throughout the Pacific North West Coast (Caldwell et al. 2012; Hobler 1970; Langdon 2006; Lepofsky et al. 2020; Losey 2010; Moss 2013; Stewart 1977; White 2006; Pacific 2022; Pomeroy 1976). These structures were constructed with stone, wood, woven baskets, and fences. They represent "long-term relationships between humans, fish, and the technologies linking them together" (Losey 2010: 18). Keeping in mind the expansive area these fish traps are located in (see figure 11) it is important to recognize that fish traps vary in shape, size, and location depending on "the species

of fish, the type of environment, the building materials available, and the cultural background of the people" (Stewart 1977: 99).

Figure 11 Map showing the location of known fish traps throughout the Northwest Coast used to compare the stone alignments at ȾEL̓ IŁĆE / ċəl̓íłč Courtesy of Rachel Hooton 2022

Figure 12 Drone image of two semi-curved intertidal stone alignments at ȾEL̓ IŁĆE/ ċəl̓íɬč: Courtesy of Jack Baker 2018

Hilary Stewart (1977) wrote one of the most well-known books on Northwest Coast First Nations fishing practices and related material technologies. These technologies help to alter the landscape in a way that guides and holds fish in traps. Fish weirs are described as fences either built into streams or angled to guide migrating fish into the traps. These weirs were either removable latticework fences and baskets or built into river beds (like the one Joe Michel built in W̱SÁNEĆ territory in the 1800s, mention earlier from Suttles 1951: 150). Another form is made from stone, creating wall-like rock alignments that use the ebb and flood of tides to trap fish behind the walls (Stewart 1977: 99). In identifying the shape of the stone alignments, Hilary

(1977: 119) notes that the rocks used are typically more *prominent than the other rocks in the surrounding area and are precisely placed in a straight or curved line*. In figure 12 we can see the stones at ȾEL ̓IŁĆE/ ċəl̓íłč precisely placed within two rows of semi-circular alignments in the intertidal zone, as well as the prominence of the stones used in the formations.

Some traps referred to as weirs use latticework fences, which are then inserted into rock walls either in an intertidal zone or across rivers, streams, or creeks. The stone walls act as a secure attachment place for the fence infrastructure. (Losey 2010: 27). One such trap utilizing latticework and stone walls comes from "the Klahoose term *sh'ıshitl'ech* ("lying on your back"), for instance, refers to tidal weirs which were used in small bays to catch a variety of fish. The term refers to latticework fencing anchored by a row of heavy rocks in the tidal flat so that it lay flat at low tide and rose up to trap fish when the tide came in" (Caldwell 2012: 222). These types of traps work with the ebb and flood of the tides to trap fish within the structure as the tide ebbs, fish remain within the enclosure, often including herring, sculpin, shellfish, and octopus (Caldwell et al. 2012: 222-223). The traps are known to have associated midden sites close by that reflect the wide variety of fish remains, including herring, sculpins, and flatfish (Caldwell et al. 2012: 222). This type of trap correlates with the elements found at ȾEL ̓IŁĆE/ ċəl̓íłč since the stone alignments relate to the DdRu 81 (see figures 1, 9, and 10) midden site containing herring, sculpin, and shellfish remains along with fishing hooks, barbs, and harpoons. This example also represents an area for further archaeological research to be conducted at ȾEL ̓IŁĆE / ċəl̓íłč to see if there are remnants of wood embedded in the stone alignments.

Another remarkable similarity to ȾEL ̓IŁĆE / ċəl̓íłč, in the stone alignments, is found in the Tla'amin region (Pacific 2022). Figure 13, shows long semi-curved stone alignments throughout the intertidal zone, at Grief Point, along with the canoes runs which you can see in the foreground and background. Intertidal alignments such as these were possibly used to enhance both an environment for clams and shellfish and create a holding area for fish. The beaches are modified to improve them for clam production; rocks are moved away from areas in the intertidal zone, leaving a cleared space accessible for clam digging. While doing so, the intertidal area can be further modified by building wall alignments with the rocks creating a fish barricade (Caldwell 2012: 226-227; Pacific 2022). It is possible that the alignments at ȾEL ̓IŁĆE / ċəl̓íłč (see figure 14) relate to this concept of clearing rocks from beaches for clam productivity while at the same time using the rocks to build fish holding areas. In this case, the stone alignments interact within the intertidal zone and other elements that recognize an interconnected ecosystem that enhances the area for the production of mariculture (Caldwell 2012; Lepofsky and Caldwell 2013; Olsen 2019).

Figure 13 Intertidal stone fish trap at Grief Point in Tla'amin region (Pacific 2022)

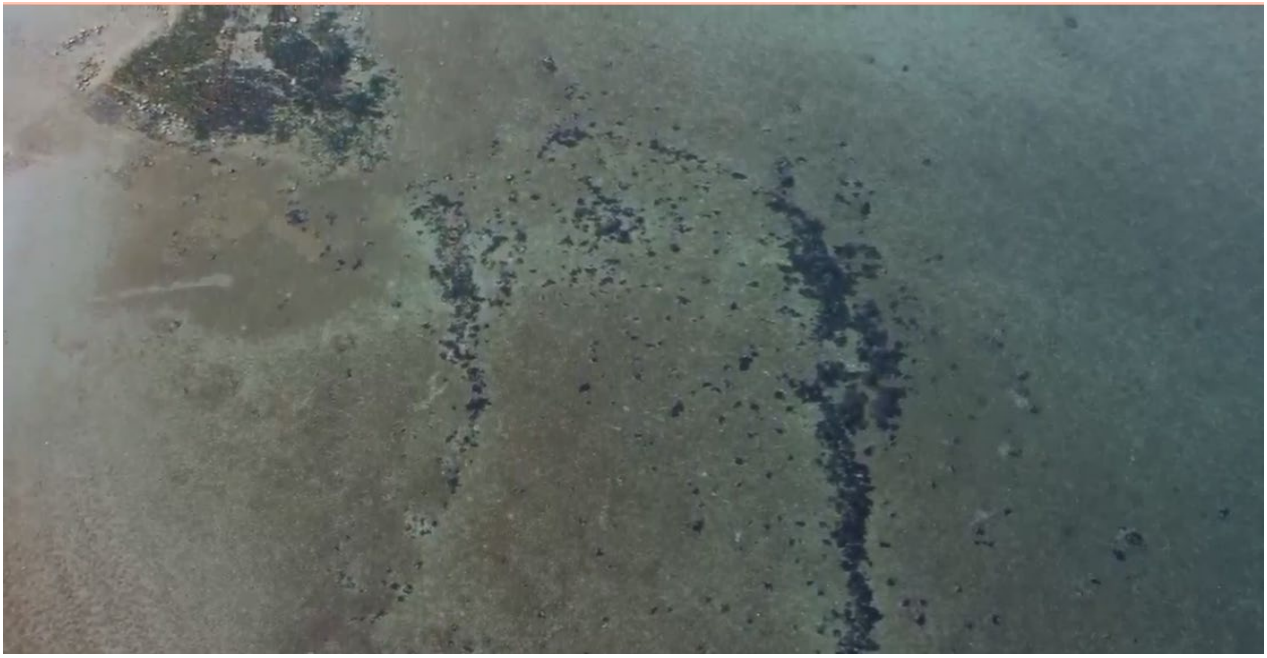

Figure 14 Drone image of intertidal stone alignments at ƛ̓EL̓ IŁĆE / ċəl̓íɬč: demonstrating similar alignments to Grief Point. Courtesy of Richard Johns 2022.

In Figure 15, Caldwell (2012: 224) depicts a variety of intertidal stone alignments throughout the Northwest Coast. A hook shape (a), heart shape (b), V-shape or funnel (c), crescent (d), linear (e). cleared bedrock depression (f), and a cleared beach (g), all elements are associated with cleared beach areas. The difference in shapes could be due to the environment they are found in such as how the tide and currents works in the area and the behaviour of fish and shellfish. However, they could also vary due to a stylist preference by local groups (Caldwell 2012: 228). Many of the elements can be found in combination with each other such as hook, V, crescent, and cleared beach, whereas linear, heart, and cleared bedrock are often found alone (Caldwell 2012: 227). Focusing on the shape and location of the elements provides a way of determining them as cultural modifications of the landscape rather than simply natural occurrences. The alignments are usually quite distinct and visibly different from the surrounding area, older elements seem to occur in the middle to lower intertidal zone, while more recent ones occur in the upper intertidal zone (Caldwell 2012: 223).

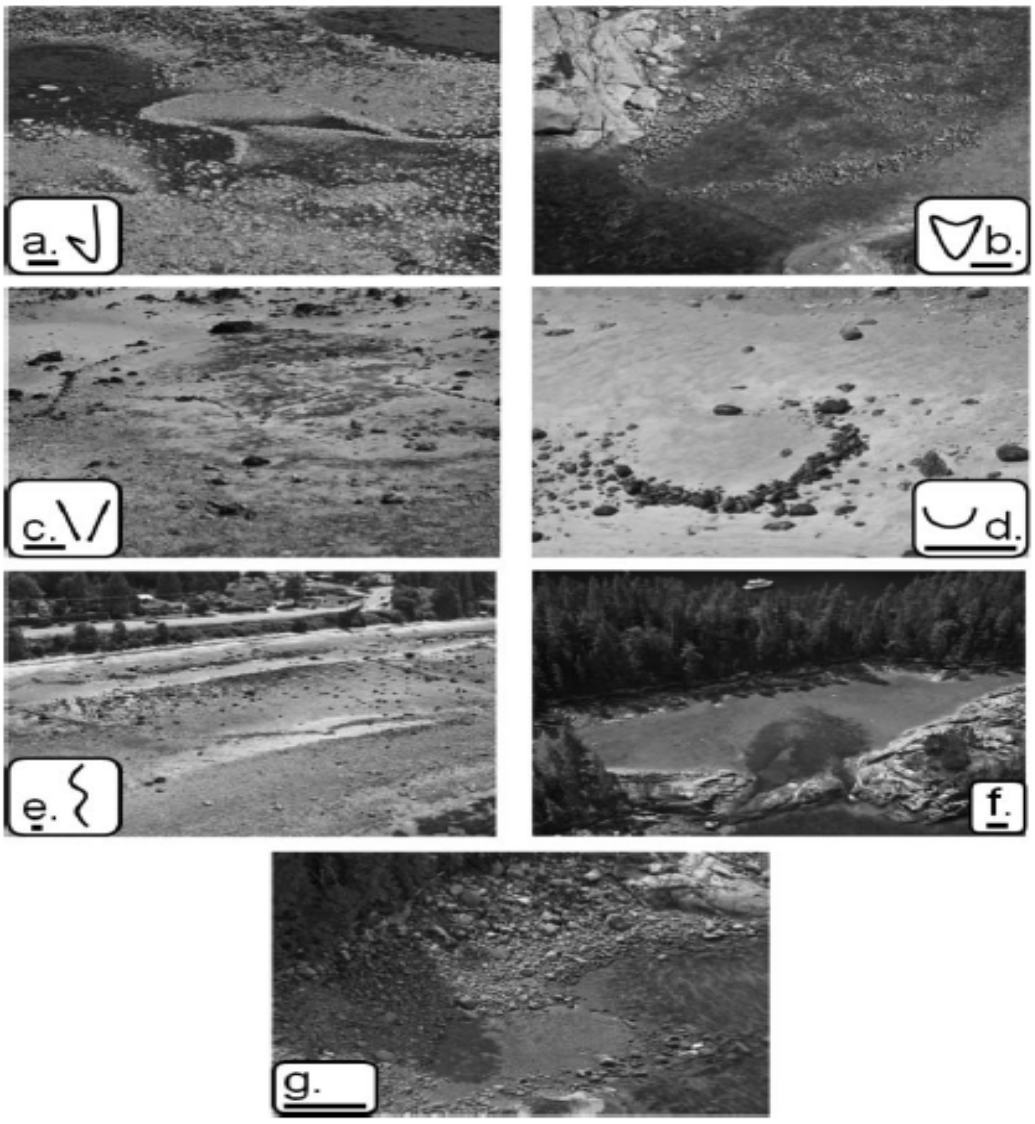

Figure 15 Various fish trap shapes throughout the Northwest Coast (Caldwell 2012:224)

Elroy White (2006) from the Heiltsuk nation describes intertidal stone alignments throughout his territory where salmon was the main focus of fishing. A village site at Namu shows evidence of at least 7000 years of salmon fishing (White 2006:21). Ownerships of fishing sites varied among different groups and whether they were owned by individual families or by whole villages depended on the area and people involved (Stewart 1977: 99). From Heiltsuk oral

traditions, White describes how semi-circular tidal traps were often used as holding areas for fish as the tides receded. The stone walls often reached heights of around three to four feet, creating deep holding pens for live salmon (White 2006: 125). He also notes that a gap would be made along an area of a stone wall at the end of the season to ensure fish were not trapped behind the wall when no one was there to rescue them. In the Heiltsuk region, small semi-circular stone traps acted as holding areas and typically corresponded with smokehouses (White 2006: 129-130).

John Pomeroy documented 109 fish traps in the Bella Bella region, where he showed that stone fish traps are often low stone walls that trap fish during an ebb tide or in "ascending spawning streams" (Pomeroy 1976: 166). Two types of traps Pomeroy mentions are those associated with streams and those in the intertidal zones. Streams will have traps along the sides, across the stream, and or running parallel within the stream. Whereas, flat beach areas within the intertidal zone (seen in Figure 16) often have more complex interconnected semi-circular stone alignments (Pomeroy 1976: 166). He indicates that traps found within the intertidal zone that are not directly in front of or beside a stream were more likely to use the ebb tide as a holding area for fish (Pomeroy 1976: 173). It is also important to note that some of the tidal traps in the Bella Bella region were associated with very small streams that indicate less of a salmon-bearing creek and more of a reliance on other fish within the intertidal zone (Pomeroy 1976: 166). At ƛ̓EL̓ IŁĆE / ċəl̓íłč the concave side

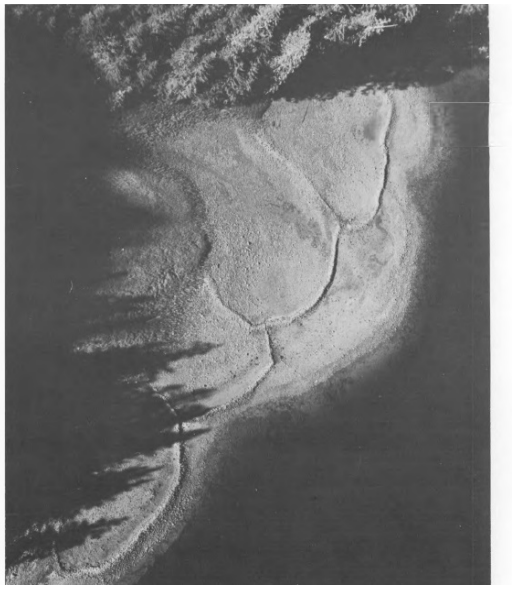

Figure 16 Evans Inlet: Complex intertidal stone alignments (Pomeroy 1976:170)

of the semi-circular alignments face the shore and not the mouth of Galey Brook. Thus, it could indicate more of a reliance on the ebb and flood of tides rather than an association with the stream. However, it is difficult to know for sure as the trap is in disrepair and most likely has not been used since the early 1900s.

Furthering the presence of semi-circular intertidal stone alignments, Steve Langdon's work throughout Tlingit territory in Alaska, shows how the traps functioned within the intertidal zone. In Figure 17, Langdon demonstrates how stone alignments interact with streams and intertidal beach areas. In regards to the ƛEL̓ IŁĆE / ċəl̓íłč alignments, the terracing elements are possibly similar to these. Terracing traps create holding areas for fish where the water pools behind the stones. The terrace also allows for ample use of ebb tide as semi-circular alignments interact with the differing tide levels (Langdon 2006: 61).

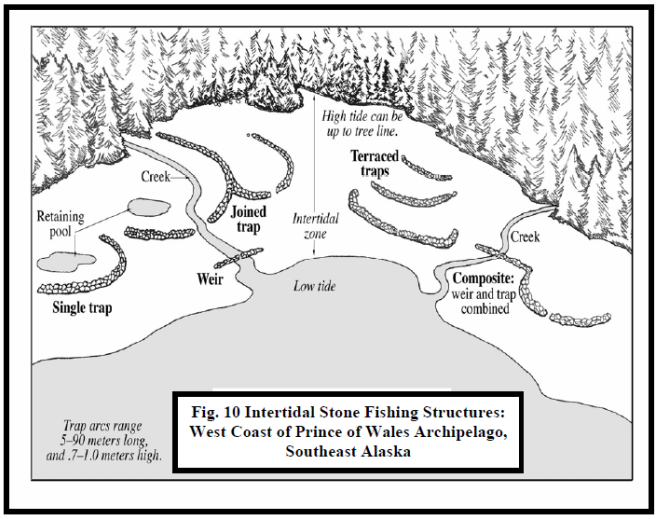

Figure 17 Drawing showing stream and intertidal trap variations in Alaska (Langdon 2006:60).

Further mapping and tidal elevation measurements at ƛEL̓ IŁĆE / ċəl̓íłč will provide insight into how the stones work with the different tide levels throughout the ebb tide.

Another important feature of the semi-circular alignments in the Tlingit region are the gaps present mid way along the curve (Figure 18), where it is thought that basketry could be used to trap the fish while also allowing the fish to leave when the gap was not blocked (Langdon 2006: 62). This feature is similar to the ƛEL̓ IŁĆE / ċəl̓íłč alignments, where we see in Figure 19

a gap in the second alignment which corresponds to a gap in the sand bar further out in the low tide zone.

Figure 18 Photo showing a gap in the curvature of a semi-circular alignment in Alaska (Langdon 2006:61).

Figure 19 Photo showing a gap in the second stone alignment at ȾEL̓ IŁĆE / ċəl̓íłč corresponding to a gap in the sandbar in the furthest low tide area. Also showing a similarity to the gap in the semi-circular alignment in Langdon's (2006) image above. Courtesy of Rachel Hooton 2022

Lastly, many fish traps and weirs throughout the Northwest coast were dismantled when not in use (Losey 2010: 27). The practice of dismantling traps and allowing fish to escape demonstrated the W̱SÁNEĆ and lək̓ʷəŋən peoples deep reverence for non-human beings. This relationship also connects to Batista's concept of bodyland or as Losey describes animism, where fish are considered relatives, creating a deep interconnection between humans, non-humans, and the land or waters (Batista 2022: 42; Langdon 2006: 115; Losey 2010: 19). Wooden traps are easily dismantled by opening up the enclosures by removing latticework fences; dismantling stone traps, rocks are drawn from a section along the alignment, creating a gap for fish to swim out of, lowering the height of the walls, or by removing any wooden latticework attached to the stone (Losey 2010: 27; Langdon 2006: 132). It is likely the trap at ȾEL ̓IŁĆE / ċəl̓íłč was dismantled at some point in time, possibly in the 1850s around the signing of the South Saanich

Treaty, as there are areas along alignments where the rock seems to have been purposefully cleared away. However, we must acknowledge that this could be due to tides and currents moving rocks around at the same time, depositing large amounts of sediment covering up much of the elements. Robert Losey (2010: 28) notes that "intertidal fish traps, whether they are of wood or stone, are extremely durable— the archaeological record clearly shows they can endure for thousand of years." Hence dismantling the traps when not in use demonstrates a high level of respect and care for the sea life that would be trapped behind the walls were there not someone to scoop them out.

W̱SÁNEĆ Resurgence

Members of the W̱SÁNEĆ Nations are revitalizing their language, cultural practices, and traditional food systems through the resurgence of SX̱OLE (reef net) fishing, land claims and treaty rights through the Saanichton Marina Case (Foster 1988; Horne 2010), revitalizing clam and sea gardens through the W̱SÁNEĆ Sea Garden Initiative (Tsawout 2015; W̱SÁNEĆ 2022), and through implementing the Cordova Bay Local Area Plan with Dr. Brian Thom and the District of Saanich (Thom 2018). Nicholas XEMŦOLTW Claxton (2015: iii) focuses on the revitalization of SX̱OLE (reef net) fishing within the W̱SÁNEĆ territory, as SX̱OLE has been part of the W̱SÁNEĆ fishing practices and ways of knowing for generations. Claxton (2015: 22) says "it is culturally, spiritually and physically necessary for Indigenous nations to relate to, and rebuild their relationship to their homelands." His doctoral work culminated in the resurgence and revitalization of the reef net fishing system through a school-based project making a ceremonial reef net and a community-based project building and then fishing with SX̱OLE for the first time in over seventy years (Claxton 2015: 22). Furthermore, many Coast Salish peoples

are working to revitalize traditional fishing practices involving fish traps. The Sḵwx̱wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish people) are currently fishing from a revitalized stone fish trap across the Capilano river, where they are successfully harvesting salmon once again utilizing traditional methods (Heritage 2021).

Limitations

This project focused on understanding how the intertidal stone elements at ƛ̓EL̓ IŁĆE / c̓əl̓íɬč represent a type of technology that enhances the environment for harvesting fish and other marine life. Throughout, various limitations have impeded certain aspects of adding substance to the outcome of this project. Firstly, as this is a small piece of work, we were not yet able to acquire an archaeological permit to dig in and around the stones to see if there are more stones buried beneath the sediment or wood embedded in the rocks and sediment. Given that this project was within a limited timeframe throughout the winter from January to April, this fell in a time period when low tide happens in low to no sunlight hours, making it difficult to photograph, measure, and see the alignments. However, we did have some favourable day time tides towards the end of March and April where a (wonderful) group of us visited ƛ̓EL̓ IŁĆE / c̓əl̓íɬč with the determination to map the elements, however due to a short low tide period and a bit of technical malfunctions we ran out of time. Finally, Covid-19 impacted the last low tide I would have been able to get to before the end of the 2022 Spring school term (when this paper is due), as I had to isolate on the exact days where the first noon hour low tide occurred. However, these limitations only provide more opportunities for future research.

Future Research

There is still much more work to do here at ȾEL ̓IŁĆE / ċəl̓íɬč in acknowledging this important location as part of the W̱SÁNEĆ peoples' traditional food systems and fishing practices. As I start in the Master of Arts program in Anthropology at the University of Victoria in Fall 2022, I will continue the work started in this honours paper. First and foremost, I hope to continue to develop good relationships with the W̱SÁNEĆ peoples, some of whom I have had the great pleasure of meeting and working with already. I aim to be a conduit and steward to develop work supporting their right to fish as formerly while honouring W̱SÁNEĆ knowledge systems and connections to the inner workings of the lands where their knowledge and traditional practices are rich and deeply embedded.

Furthermore, if and when we can get an archaeological permit to conduct work on the intertidal stone alignments, the next step is to have this site recognized as a designated archaeological site and a culturally significant landmark for W̱SÁNEĆ peoples. Along with this we will be able to see if there is any wood embedded within the stones that would indicate a weir that possibly used latticework fences and basketry to catch fish. It is also possible that the walls are taller than they appear, as decades of sediment have most likely covered a lot of the alignments. It will also be great to conduct a full survey of the intertidal area looking for canoe runs and any other elements which could be connected. Lastly, further research will help the W̱SÁNEĆ Leadership Council and Dr. Brian Thom in implementing the Local Area Plan with the District of Saanich.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the intertidal stone alignments within the bay at ȾEL ̓IŁĆE / ċəl̓íłč have likely been embedded in the landscape for centuries where they were once used for the sustainable harvesting of fish and shellfish. The W̱SÁNEĆ and lək̓ʷəŋən peoples been part of these lands and waters since time immemorial, their ways of being and knowing are deeply rooted within these landscapes, such as the remnants of the intertidal stone fish trap at ȾEL ̓IŁĆE / ċəl̓íłč. Not only do we see the physical stones in place, but the names of significant places throughout the W̱SÁNEĆ territories such as ȻESTEUWEĆ, ȾEL,IŁĆE, and ȾELIŁĆ (Elliot 1990: 26). The archaeological record demonstrates a high correlation to the intertidal stone elements as they show significant use of the site as a village area where W̱SÁNEĆ and lək̓ʷəŋən ancestors lived, hunted, fished, and buried their kin. In relation to fishing, DdRu 81, the village and midden site contain a large presence of herring, sculpins, and other fish, shellfish, birds, sea mammals, along with fishing tools like barbs, points, and harpoons, which corroborate the use of this area as a significant harvesting location. The comparative approach of other intertidal stone fish traps throughout the Northwest Coast shows only a fraction of the work that has been done and is currently being done throughout this region. The entire Northwest Coast is rich in Indigenous fishing technologies and ingenuity. The examples provided show how the stone alignments at ȾEL ̓IŁĆE / ċəl̓íłč quite significantly resemble the foundational structures of a fish trap; by the curved terraced alignments, the gaps in the stone walls, the location within the intertidal zone, and relation to Galey Brook and the sand bar. Along with the proximity to the village site and corresponding midden, not to mention the active sea life still flourishing throughout the area. Hence this is an extremely important location that proves the W̱SÁNEĆ "**right to fish as formerly"** as designated in the South Saanich Treaty of 1852. Intertidal stone

fishing elements such as these come from a long history of ingenuity and a deep understanding of how the world around one works, hence showing the W̱SÁNEĆ peoples rich, complex, and valuable ways of knowing, being, and doing.

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