Civilizing Kwakiutl.
Contexts and Contests of Kwakiutl Personhood, 1880-1999

Steffen Bohni Nielsen
Ph.D. Dissertation
Civilizing Kwakiutl.
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Danish Abstract


Afhandlingen er tematisk baseret i den forstand, at jeg koncentrerer fokus på personforståelse (UK: personhood) hos Kwakiutl i perioden fra 1880 til 1999. Den centrale antagelse er, at personforståelse afspejler den herskende sociale orden. Med andre ord analyserer jeg, hvorledes social institutioner som skolen, slægtsgruppen og det indfødte ritual ”potlatch” bliver genstand for identitetspolitiske konflikter og undergår forandringer. Det, som er af central betydning for ovennævnte institutioner, er deres placering i forhold til konstitution og læring af specifikke identiteter. Afhandlingen viser, at institutionernes rolle langt fra er statisk. Dels udvikler politikkerne sig, dels ændrer kontrollen over institutionernes situationsbestemte læring sig, og dels ændres identitets-
repræsentationerne sig. Et eksempel herpå er skolen. Da skolen blev introduseret blandt Kwakiutl i slutningen af det 19. århundrede var den en central institution i regeringens og missionærernes forsøg på at "civilisere" Kwakiutl. I dag er skolen styret af indianerne selv og et vigtigt element i at fastholde, hvad nogel sociale aktører opfatter som indiansk "kultur".

Perioden 1880-1999 er kendetegnet ved intens kolonisering og komplekse magtrelationer mellem forskellige grupper af social aktører, som embedsmænd, missionærer, kristne indianere og "traditionalister". Deres indbyrdes relationer fandt udtryk i forskellige identitetspolitikker, hvorigennem aktørerne søgte at påvirke Kwakiutl folkets personforståelse. I dette historiske forløb ændres magtforholdet mellem disse aktører som udsag skiftende globale, nationale og lokale omvæltninger.

En central bestanddel af afhandlingen er således analysen af relationerne mellem forskellige aktører, som søgte at definere og repræsentere Kwakiutl identitet. Ikke mindst analyseres de sociale institutioner, hvori sådanne identitetskonstruktioner og forhandlinger finder udtryk. Ved at analysere deres historiske forandringer af form, indhold og betydning i samspil med de dynamiske relationer mellem forskellige sociale aktører, udeledes dels aktørernes indbyrdes skiftende positioner, og dels Kwakiutl personforståelse.

**Teori og metode**


Der var såvel en teoretisk som metodologisk begrundelse for at eksplicitere den begrebsmæssige ramme for undersøgelsen. Dels klarlægger og afgrænser diskussionen personforståelsesbegrebet i forhold til tilgrænsende begreber, og dels skaber det klarhed over de antagelser, der ligger til grund for studiet, hvilket er centralt for en granskning af undersøgelsens validitet og reliabilitet.

Personforståelse i det 19. århundrede


Disse numayms var internt og eksternt rangordnede. Eksternt var numayms og stammer ceremonielt rangordnede, men denne orden havde ingen politisk betydning. Internt havde numaym en øverste leder, som, ideelt set, var direkte efterkommen af en linje af førstefødte fra slægtens stamfader: Et antropomorfisk væsen med overnaturlige kræfter. Den gren af slægtens, som var i denne direkte linje med stamfaderen var den højest

Det var denne personforståelse, som kom under stigende pres i den efterfølgende periode. I anden halvdel af det 19. århundrede medvirkede epidemi, pelshandel og siden lønarbejde til at Kwakiutls social og økonomiske struktur ændrede sig. Den eksisterende orden med en dominerende adel kom under pres fra nyrige, som i stigende grad søgte at forvandle deres økonomiske formue til religiøs og social status.

I denne kontekst ankom to nye grupper af euro-canadiske aktører, som, modsat pelshandlere, handelsmænd og minearbejdere, havde en udtrykt intention om at transformere Kwakiutls selv- og verdensforståelse.

Missionærerne og regeringen identificerede snart den såkaldte "potlatch", som den helt centrale institution, der fastholdt indianerne i deres hedenske tro og sociale struktur. Denne institution blev derefter forbudt ved lov. Samtidig, konkluderede regeringen at indsatsen mod voksne indianere var forspildt og fremtidig indsats skulle rettes mod børnene som skulle uddannes, og "civiliseres", i skoler med afstand til forældrenes indflydelse.
En tredje institution, som blev indirekte påvirket heraf, var numaymen, som hidtil var den centrale sociale enhed i oplæring af børn til at blive fuldgyldige medlemmer af samfundet.

Med andre ord, udspillede sig en række konflikter om kontrol over, adgang til og indhold af institutioner, som på forskellig vis var central i skabelsen af forskellige identiteter. Institutionernes situationsbestemte læring blev central for aktørernes identitetspolitik.

Konsekvenserne af disse konflikter er dog langt fra entydige, hvilket bevidner, at aktører ikke er individer som uproblematisk internaliserer en bestemt forkropsliggjort viden. De er betydningsproducenter, som kombinerer forskellig viden og praksisser i forskellige sammenhænge, og resultaterne er sjældent forudsigelige.

**Institutionelle forandringer**

I afhandlingen fokuserede jeg på udviklingen af de sociale institutioner, hvori, sociale aktører producerer og reproducerer sådanne identiteter. De historiske forandringer af ovennævnte institutioner afspejles i udviklingen af Kwakiutl personforståelse.


Deltagelse i ”potlatches” blev gjort ulovlig fra 1884 til 1951. I denne periode herskede der betydelige konflikter mellem regering, missionærer
og kristne indianere på den ene side og "traditionalister" på den anden side. Førstnævnte søgte at stoppe "potlatches", mens sidstnævnte søgte at fastholde disse. I Alert Bay og andre bosættelser med tæt kontakt til canadiske aktører standsede indianerne med at "potlatche" i en årrække. Siden 1950erne er opbakningen bag "potlatch" steget markant og deltagelsen ligeledes.


I modsætning til "potlatch" blev skolen etableret som et institutionelt middel til at "civilisere" Kwakiutl. Resultaterne af disse uddannelses anstrengelser er flertydige. For det første er det en fællesnævner for de kristne indianere, der kæmpede imod "potlatchen", at de var tidligere elever på skolen. For det andet var den generation, der blev eksponeret for systematisk uddannelse, den første, der opdragede deres børn med engelsk som modersmål. For det tredje var skolen medvirkende til at en generation af Kwakiutl lederskikkelser tilegnede sig skriftlige og mundtlige engelsk kundskaber og derved få politisk styrke i forhold til regeringen.

Skolens rolle var ikke udelukkende repressiv. Den var også produktiv. Ikke mindst, må skolen ses i form af dens dominans i tid og sted, som forhindrede andre lærlingsformer i at finde sted. Skolen rolle er ikke blevet mindre flertydig af, at Kwakiutl i Alert Bay selv har etableret en skole, hvorigennem man søger at lære børnene om deres identitet og kultur. Undervisningsplanen er ikke mindre identitetspolitis til tidligere. – De sociale aktører og repræsentationerne er imidlertid anderledes. I dag

**Samtidig Kwakiutl personforståelse**

Personforståelse blandt Kwakiutl ved slutningen af forgangne årtusinde bærer i betydelig grad præg af de forløbne 120 års historiske udviklinger. Ikke alene har det omkringliggende samfund ændret sig fra industrialiseringen af den sidste "frontier" i Frederick Jackson Turners berømte vending til et senmoderne samfund med alskens forbindelseslinjer til globale markeder og strømninger.


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Part One. Theoretical and Methodological Tenets
Chapter 1. Introduction

In May 1999, a new Big House was inaugurated on the ’Namgis First Nation reserve on Cormorant Island in the Canadian province British Columbia. The event caused great excitement in the local community where volunteers, craftsmen, and artists had all worked in unison to complete the massive physical structure. The Big House is a late modern rendering of a 19th century Kwakiutl Big House with a large design adorning the front, and the intricate carvings of ancestral and supernatural beings on the four vertical beams inside the house. The Big House boasted state of the art toilets and kitchen and back-stage facilities to host about 800-1000 people attending various functions in the building. Reportedly, people from neighboring First Nations communities and from all corners of the world traveled from afar by car, airplane, or boat to attend the big day. More than three thousand guests sought to find a seat in the Big House. That day many were disappointed as the huge attendance left them unable to attend the cultural celebration.

Back in time, leaping about 150 years the Kwakiutl people, situated in various settlements in an area from Smith Inlet in the North to Cape Mudge in the South, increasingly felt the presence of British colonial incursion as the Hudson Bay Company established a trade post at Fort Rupert in the center of Kwakiutl territory. At this time potential intertribal warfare was an ever-present feature in the daily lives of all indigenous communities. Captives were taken from such military endeavors and were put to use in economic as well as ritual functions. Some ended their lives buried alive under house posts, while others were slain as a part of the elaborate Hamat’sa ceremonial complex that the Kwakiutl had recently acquired, in anything but peaceful fashion, from the neighboring Heiltsuks (Cf. Donald 1997, Ferguson 1984). Three decades later Europeans, now subjects of the new Dominion of Canada, made their presence felt through the establishment of an “Indian Agency” in the territory, assigned to
govern the indigenous population of the land. A couple of years earlier an Anglican Mission had been established in the territory by the Anglican Church Missionary Society.

These dates, 1880 and 1999, mark temporal fix points that on the one hand structure my narrative about the ongoing Euro-Canadian relations with the Kwakiutl, and on the other hand guide as commencement and conclusion of the present dissertation. These events should not be considered defining moments in the sense that the occurrence altered the course of Kwakiutl history, rather the advent of the Anglican missionary mark the commencement of one trajectory which is thematically linked to this textual production. Similarly, the inauguration of the Big House in 1999 is a fitting event to mark the conclusion of the same textual production insofar as it symbolizes some of the processes analyzed in the last part of the dissertation.

**Research Objectives**

The objective of the dissertation is to analyze the relations between social agents such as government officials, missionaries, and factions of the Kwakiutl, and how these social relations are enunciated in politics of identity where Kwakiutl conceptions of the person have been negotiated and defined under shifting structural conditions in the period 1880-1999. In this historical span Kwakiutl personhood has been constructed and reconstructed in a complex interplay between shifting social agents from outside and within Kwakiutl society.

Central to the understanding of personhood is the analysis of these social agents, who, at various times, have occupied social positions of power under shifting structural conditions and who have had a central impact on the construction of categories of the person through constructing personhood as an object of knowledge and power. By investigating changes in form and content of social institutions such as the extended
family, the school, and the potlatch I seek to understand the politics of identity inscribed and enunciated in the workings of these institutions by various social agents, and how their socio-political trajectories are inscribed on Kwakiutl personhood.

More specifically, the dissertation analyzes the shifting importance and functions of the institutions, and the production of meanings that went on within and outside these institutions, which were continually negotiated by individuals with differing resources under varying structural constraints and opportunities. One such example is schooling. Once considered a pivotal “civilizing” instrument by the government and missionaries, schooling today is considered an essential means by natives themselves to maintain and reproduce cultural knowledge and practices. A second example is the contestation of the institution known as the potlatch which was a prime target in the colonial encroachment. In recent years the institution has been revitalized, although the form and content have been subject to changes.

Scope of the Inquiry

The scope of the current dissertation is first and foremost an empirical contribution to the body of ethnographic literature on the Kwakiutl. However, the account is not an ethnographic contribution in the classical mold, it is rather a thematic contribution insofar as it focuses on the historical development of Kwakiutl personhood. To address this theme, which has received little attention, I make use of archival evidence hitherto unexamined as well as fieldwork data from the first long-term fieldwork at Alert Bay in close to two decades.

Analytically, I seek to situate personhood as a social construct that has been produced, reproduced, and altered in the course of social action. In this sense, personhood is more than the embodiment of static cultural patterns. Therefore, I focus on the relations of contests, alliances, and resistance throughout the temporal span I analyze. At the heart of these
relations, I argue, is politics of identity. By this concept I consider the politics of symbols and representations of self and others as it is continually negotiated by social agents who seek to invoke a particular identity onto the people in question.

In the light of global processes of colonialism this inquiry may, at best, provide new insights to ways of analyzing changing conceptions of personhood in local contexts, where the path of colonial incursion is similar to that witnessed among the Kwakiutl. Arguably, Anglo-Saxon colonial policy has been implemented along the same lines across the Globe, which suggests that there exists a richness of cases to be examined along the same lines.

In theoretical terms it is a study of the long-term continuities and discontinuities of personhood as they are produced in historical settings of structure, power, and agency, which impacts on various institutions and processes of socialization and individual learning. To comprehend these social processes, several conceptual questions that grasp the situated, relational and dynamic nature of personhood need to be addressed. Albeit, my ambitions for empirical accuracy overshadow my theoretical aspirations, I make it a methodological point to devote considerable attention to sketching the theoretical and methodological considerations vested in the current narrative (Sanjek 1990). Therefore I sketch the interconnections between the analytical concept of personhood with the theoretical propositions towards a theory of self and the properties of social action.

1 My analytical gaze on this problem is by no means new. It is the result of more than four years of research which expanded in temporal scope and research methodology. An initial attempt to grasp these developments resulted in my MA thesis (Nielsen n.d.) which differed in temporal scope, that is 1792-1951, and was based on ethnographic and archival material only. Subsequently, I conducted fifteen months of fieldwork at the ‘Namgis First Nation reserves at Alert Bay. I also interviewed individuals at other reserves and in the city. This research was complemented by further archival as well and ethnographic evidence.
Having made these propositions, let me venture further into the way the empirical, analytical, methodological, and theoretical reflections structure the form and content of this dissertation.

**Approach and Structure of the Study**

In classical historical accounts, as touched upon above, *events* serve as rhetorical devices to construe the defining moments in the grandeur of history. Thus, history is by definition written by and for holders of social power, whose actions had wide-ranging repercussions. Events are thus markers of history in the retrospective construction of historical accounts. In this sense, events are points of reference around which narratives are structured. Arguably, such narratives did not focus on the everyday life of “ordinary” people, the minutiae of practices structuring time and space of most members of society. The challenge of new social history highlighted this politico-methodological bias of historical accounts. Whilst new social historians did challenge *who* should be the focus of historical accounts, they did not address the methodological problem of beginning and ending accounts. Convenient events often serve as fix points for this. In the present study, 1880 marks a commencement of an ongoing process, as Rev. Alfred J. Hall embodies the colonial incursion as he resituated his mission at Alert Bay. Similarly, 1999 marks a fix point of closure with the establishment of the Big House, however contemporary relations of power and politics of identity continue to make their present felt at the time of writing.

Thus, temporal fix points serve as much as markers delineating stages in the processes analyzed. In the current study I have created four such fix point inscribed in the very structure of the dissertation. These points in time serve to outline the socio-structural contexts and contests at two different levels: A macro-structural and a micro-structural. The macro-structural fix points serve to delineate social structure and allocation of
resources at a societal level, while the micro-structural level seeks to analyze the relation between social organization, social agents and the conceptions of personhood at that point in history. With the creation of such historical fix points I have sought to draw the multi-faceted connection between 19th century Kwakiutl social organization and personhood and their development until the brink of the new millennium. Insofar as personhood is the societal inscribed in and upon the individual, this remains the analytical level to focus on. Thus, I have focused on the societal effects of politics of identity, rather than seeking to interpret the motivations and inner experiences of individual social actors.

After this analytical excursus on the form of the dissertation, let me return to its content and structure before focusing on the theoretical and methodological considerations governing the account.

**Part One: Theoretical and Methodological Tenets**

In chapter 2 I sketch the conceptual framework of the dissertation. For the reader who is singularly interested in the empirical subject matter, this chapter is residual. However, as a theoretical and methodological point, I outline the conceptual framework that governs the level, form and content of the analysis. In other words, as a thematic contribution to analyses of the person, I relate my analytical framework to corresponding concepts.

By making an analytical distinction between individual, self, and person, I establish a theoretical level of the self which helps to understand historical changes in conceptions of the person as the empirical subject matter. To grasp the nature of the historical developments I propose that George Herbert Mead’s notion of the social self can fruitfully be combined with Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger’s concept of situated learning to understand the nature of social practice. Social practice as both a level of social analysis and an analytical concept is also important in combining the concepts introduced by Norbert Elias and Michel Foucault that help to couple the notion of the self with concepts of power and wider social and institutional structures. Indeed, I argue, the analysis of certain social
institutions provide significant insight to Kwakiutl personhood. While the conceptual application is discussed in chapter 2, their empirical application comes to light in the proceeding chapters.

The so-called postmodernist intervention in anthropology has, if anything, elevated the role of methodology in the ethnographic literature from the appendices to a focal point of the textual production. Similar to the preceding one, chapter 3 revolves around the framework of the analysis. In other words, this chapter is concerned with the research methods of the inquiry and the crevasses of using the data employed in the dissertation. Again, this chapter represents an excursus from the empirical subject matter, but it sheds light upon the conditions of the research and analysis, and thus addresses methodological issues concerning the plausibility of the arguments and conclusions in the dissertation.

In chapter 2 I pointed towards the centrality of “practice” as a useful analytical concept in understanding human conduct. It follows that conversely, ethnographic research is an activity that can be understood as a particular form of social practice. To understand the centrality of the concept I outline the ontological tenets of the research practice based on a pragmatist-hermeneutical constructivism. One element of this argument is to highlight the particularity of my research practice. However, I do not resort to a stance where all “facts” are merely constructs. Rather, I argue that the materiality of the “fact” is construed and represented by particular, and positioned, world views of social actors involved. Therefore, I advocate “triangulation” of different kinds of data and methods to arrive at tenable conclusions. As an element of this approach I investigate the contexts of the main data sources involved in the analysis. While the argument is ontological I operationalize the presupposition by seeking to make the theoretical framework and research practice as transparent to the reader as possible. Part One of the dissertation exemplifies this argument, as it illuminates the theoretical and methodological approach to the study.
Part Two: Contexts

Above I asserted that attention must be paid to both macro- and micro-sociological phenomena in order to understand Kwakiutl personhood. The present attempt to integrate both levels of analysis becomes clear in the second part of the dissertation. In fact, this consideration is central to the structure of this part from an empirical, analytical, and theoretical point of view. Empirically, I seek to construe a narrative that provides historical depth to the analysis as I sketch the history and changing structure of interethnic relations in the region since the arrival of the first Europeans until the present. Analytically, Part Two serves to comprehend regional developments and local responses. Insofar as no society is temporally or spatially isolated, localities are situated in a wider figuration of human interdependencies that continuously exchange material and immaterial items such as commodities and symbols. Theoretically, I seek to capture the continuous flux between global, regional, and local developments by devoting the entire Part Two to outlining the historical development from a macro-sociological level of analysis. Part Two, then, must be seen as spatial and temporal contexts and a point of reference for the analysis of the whereabouts of social actors and their particular construal of politics of identity and, ultimately, Kwakiutl personhood.

Therefore, chapter 4 sketches the history of interethnic relations on the Northwest Coast since the arrival of the first Europeans. Historical knowledge of global and regional developments remains central in understanding the development of Kwakiutl society, such as the capabilities and resources of social agents in a wider socio-political figuration, and, ultimately, the impact on Kwakiutl personhood. For the sake of clarity I have divided the historical trajectory into three phases that were marked by different structural conditions. The overall pattern of interethnic relations, not surprisingly, resembles that of Canada in general (Miller 1991). First a phase of relative cooperation where trade prospered to the mutual benefit of the indigenous peoples as well as the European fur traders. Following vast immigration to the area by diversified groups of Europeans, coinciding with the pandemic decimation of the region's
aboriginal population, British social agents *subjugated* natives of the Northwest Coast in different ways. Following a prolonged period of political, legal, economic, and cultural hegemony, the natives mobilized and organized along new lines and *confronted* the supremacy of the invoked colonial order. Within this historical framework social agents such as missionaries, government agents, Christianized natives, and “traditionalists” came to dominate social institutions and invoke particular politics of identity. Using the Foucaultian concepts of utopia and heterotopia I outline the conceptions and policies governing missionaries and government agents as they increased their presence on the Northwest Coast in the late 19th century. In different ways their conceptions of, and intentions for, the “Indian other” coincided in the field of Christianization, schooling, and medical aid, which became the pillars of colonization on the Northwest Coast. On the whole, global and regional relations of power structured and conditioned local interactions between the immigrant population and native residents of Kwakiutl territory.

Following the regional overview, chapter 5 concentrates on a temporal fixpoint of social organization among 19th century Kwakiutl, before this social and symbolic order was significantly altered by the advent of Europeans. In relation to chapter 4, the chapter moves to another level of analysis as it is concerned with “local” contexts and developments. The chapter delineates Kwakiutl social structure, where access to political power, symbolic, and material property was conditioned by a politico-symbolic hierarchy, where nobility controlled the exchanges of material and symbolic property. In this sense, the chapter provides the context for Kwakiutl notions of the person that will be investigated in chapters 7 and 8, in which I examine how individuals of noble descent are constituted as “real” persons. Again, the relation between chapters 5 and 8 presents an analytical “move” between two levels of analysis: One focuses on the social structure, the other concentrates on personhood.

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2 I am, of course, well aware that the concept of “utopia” by no means stems from Foucault. Rather I use the concept in the restricted fashion outlined in chapter 2.
Similarly, chapter 6 describes Kwakiutl social organizations, centered on the community of Alert Bay in the late 20th century. As historical fix point the chapter seeks to illuminate the ambiguous, diversified, political and symbolic landscape of the last decade of the millennium. In an increasing global marketplace of consumption, identity making, and migration, local communities anywhere on the globe undergo similar transitions to those of the metropolis. In this era the sources of social power and corresponding identities have increasingly diversified. Social relations and identities exemplify the ambiguities of social institutions following a history of colonization, resistance, and renewed political activism. This social context frames the late 20th century negotiation and construction of personhood. Similar to the structure between chapters 5 and 8, there exists a temporal and analytical correspondence between chapters 6 and 13, as the latter limits its focus to Kwakiutl personhood.

**Part Three: The Self and the Other**

In Part Three I analyze 19th century Kwakiutl personhood between conceptions and practices of the person prior to the settlements of Europeans in Kwakiutl territory. This part of the dissertation also examines the conceptions of self and other governing the principal social agents in the time span analyzed.

As a prelude, chapter 7 is devoted to an examination of scholarly contributions to comprehending Kwakiutl personhood. Despite significant ethnographic contributions to understanding personhood in other parts of the world, this analytical mode has been somewhat under-explored on the Northwest Coast. Analyses of Kwakiutl notions of the person have been no exception. Only Marie Mauzé’s remarkable analysis is a concerted effort to study the phenomenon (Mauzé 1994a). However, other scholars have contributed to a partial understanding of Kwakiutl personhood.

In chapter 8 I examine 19th century Kwakiutl personhood based on the studies previously analyzed, combined with Boas’ and Edward Curtis’
ethnographies and – to a limited extent – my own field notes. Agreeing with Mauzé, I argue that Kwakiutl categories of the person was based on a hierarchical social structure, where embodying so-called title names were constituting for the individual as a “real person.” In other words, Kwakiutl personhood was carefully structured by a gradation of names. Therefore the chapter devotes a great deal of attention to categories of names and the acts of naming. As mentioned above, the chapter also provides a fix point at the micro-level of analysis as it explores personhood in relation to 19th century Kwakiutl social structure investigated in chapter 5.

Part Four: “A Most Difficult Lot to Civilize.” Contesting Personhood, 1880-1951

In Part Four I analyze the developments at Alert Bay from 1880-1951. In this period, the social and symbolic structure of the Kwakiutl changed significantly under intense colonial encroachment. In Part Four I investigate how the government and missionaries became central social agents in an attempt to “civilize” the Kwakiutl. In this era, social institutions such as the school, marriage, the so-called potlatch, and the extended family as core social unit became objects of fierce symbolic, legal, and moral contestations. The analysis also outlines how the body became a focal point for these struggles as an object of power and knowledge throughout the colonial incursion.

In chapter 9 I analyze the establishment of the central institutional pillar of formal education: The school. This institution was perceived by the government and missionaries to be a central tool for the “civilization” of native children. Arguably, the school was also the institution that had the most important impact on Kwakiutl conceptions of self and the world around them. However, this was not attained in one unambiguous fashion, and certainly not according to the designs of the government and missionaries. From the outset schooling was, I argue, imbued with politics of identity that sought to construe the native children as individual Canadian citizens able to contribute to and participate in the emerging economy and, eventually, body politic of the Canadian state. Exemplified

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by the residential school, I also examine the workings of power relations in education as native children were spatially isolated and temporally separated from their native communities, and how the school was designed to be a setting of learning, which on the one hand communicated Anglo-Saxon knowledge and practices and, on the other hand, prevented the children from participating in and learning from their native communities.

In the subsequent chapter 10, I situate the politics of education in a wider colonial framework. Here I examine the other pillars in government and missionary efforts to transform native lives with technologies of power centered around the body. In this period, former pupils of the schools at Alert Bay were at the forefront of converting to Christianity and abandoning the indigenous institution of potlatching that had become the focal point of struggle not only between natives and colonial agents, but also between Christian converts and “traditionalists” within the community of Alert Bay.


In the last part of the dissertation the historical trajectories are drawn to the present. This part examines the ambiguous negotiation of personhood that takes place at several different levels of identity construction and through the negotiation of several different social institutions such as schooling, potlatch, and soccer. The latter, became a potent institution insofar as it gained great public support and the identities negotiated on and around the soccer field signify new identities created in this period. In this era Kwakiutl, similar to other natives on the entire Coast and North America as a whole, increasingly confronts government and other agents that oppose their political goals. Furthermore, two processes espouse from the community of Alert Bay. On the one hand, recent decades suggest that native institutions and practices, often framed and mobilized around the concept of culture, suggest a resacralization of existing indigenous institutions such as the potlatch. On the other hand, the era
espouses a seeming irony as the very institutions, that once were assimilatory tools such as the school and soccer, today are *indigenized* by the Kwakiutl to construe their conception of identity – and ultimately construct personhood. This process, however, is far from unambiguous as different interests and conceptions of identity are negotiated in the schism between discourses of democracy from wider society, and discourses of hierarchy and restricted access to “culture” in a traditionalist making of identity. Arguably, the social complexities of construing personhood are manifold, and personhood has increasingly diversified as these patterns converge in Alert Bay in the late 20th century.

In chapter 11 I analyze the establishment of a native administered school, the T’lisalagi’lakw School. Native control over native education – the phrase itself a political slogan of the era – marks a significant shift as it can be considered a reversal of the politics of education which was originally imbued in schooling. Nevertheless, the importance of schooling as a means for construing specific identities remains the same. Simply the vision and agents governing the agenda of formal education have changed. Thus, native control over schooling is problematic in more than one sense. While schooling provides institutionalized democratic access to its curriculum of teaching, it may be at odds with earlier practices of teaching, where access was restricted by birthright. Particularly, the school’s much touted “Cultural Program” negotiates this structural jinx as it teaches the form and content of “culture” that hitherto belonged to and was taught in the extended lineage, the numaym.

Chapter 12 examines the changing forms, contents, and meanings of another institution contested by colonial agents, that of the potlatch. Also, I investigate soccer as the two institutions constitute social identities at different levels insofar as they are organized and carried out by differing individual and collective social agents. While the mobilization of the potlatch lends itself as a “traditional” event, this is not the case with soccer. Rather, soccer carries with it a colonial legacy as it was introduced by the missionaries. Nonetheless, the institution has been framed in a
fashion that interprets the game along lines of the newly formed First Nations. These two institutions are not only relevant insofar as they are the most important collective events in the community, they also negotiate the structural limbo of the popular mobilization around "culture" and those that insist on the exclusive access to and ownership of that very "culture."

In chapter 13 I make the final historical fix point at the micro level of analysis as I examine contemporary Kwakiutl personhood. The fix point is related to the investigation in the preceding chapters of Part Five and not least to the historical fix point in chapter 6. In this chapter I delineate the diversification of personhood at Alert Bay in late modernity. The chapter investigates the continuous importance of the extended family as a social and ideological point of reference in an era where the self as a physical and cognitive entity becomes object of self-molding. Nonetheless, the act of naming and names remains a remarkable avenue to understanding contemporary personhood. Significantly, Christian names, rather than being the interpellated results of subjectification in the Althusserian sense, espouse meaning and continuities that reproduce the extended lineage as the core social and ideological unit.

The last chapter of the dissertation summarizes the conclusions of the separate parts. I draw together the conclusions and relate these conclusions to theoretical propositions forwarded in chapter 2.

The presence of Kwakiutl in the history of anthropology dates to the establishment of the discipline in the academia. Before embarking on the proposed analytic journey one final detour must be made. In order to assess the scholarly scope and, at best, contributions to the discipline of anthropology, I need to place the dissertation within its regional context of ethnographic literature. In other words, the account must be theoretically contextualized in relation to its antecedents.
Arguably, no other group has been as rigorously subjected to ethnographic scrutiny as the Kwakiutl since the establishment of the discipline in academic institutions. One of its most influential figures, Franz Boas, conducted his first fieldwork in the region in 1886, and on this occasion he was intrigued by the Kwakiutl people (Cf. Cole 1999). He retained his involvement with the Kwakiutl for more than fifty years. Subsequently, several fieldworks have been conducted throughout the Northwest Coast in general and the Kwakiutl in particular. The long-standing connection between the Kwakiutl and practitioners of anthropology and related disciplines remains to this day. During more than 130 years, this liaison has produced an overwhelming body of literature which has proved to be irresistible to scholars of various political and theoretical inclinations. Indeed, by investigating the vast literature on the Kwakiutl the entire intellectual history of the discipline can be exemplified as Joseph Masco points out (1995: 41).

Regional ethnographies have a tendency towards self-production. Indeed, certain accounts and modes of analysis become authoritative, and some empirical phenomena become omnipresent when ethnographers present their account to their regional peers. The Melanesian Cargo Cults, The Trobriand Kula exchange, the kinship system of the Australian Aborigines, and the potlatch of the Northwest Coast of America are all cases in point. On a theoretical note, similar theoretical strands seem to emanate from scholars visiting the same region at roughly the same time as has been the case with Boasian particularism on the Northwest Coast, structural functionalism in Africa, and culture and personality in the Pacific (Cf. Stocking 1974, 1984, 1986, 1995). Theoretical and methodological synergy, institutional traditions, and interests may be reasons for this interesting phenomenon.

While Northwest Coast ethnography has enjoyed similar theoretical and thematic combustion, the literature, nevertheless, espouse significant
contributions from many different theoretical and methodological strands. Below I provide a tentative overview.

The majority of early ethnographic studies of the Northwest Coast peoples have been dominated by a Boasian-style research. Such research was carried out by either Boas himself, his students, or his students’ students (Suttles & Jonaitis 1990: 74-80). More recently the style of inquiry has been diversified in methodology, scope, and theoretical orientation. In the following I outline some of the main features of research on the Northwest Coast with a particular attention to the Kwakiutl research. I categorize these studies into six broad categories based on theoretical inclination and/or methodological/thematic orientation: (i) Boasian research, (ii) functionalist studies, (iii) symbolic re-examinations, (iv) comparative structural analyses, (v) interethnic historical studies, and finally (vi) cultural production.

**Boasian Research**

As mentioned, not only was Franz Boas central in the shaping of American anthropology in general. He was also an emblematic figure to the ethnography of the Northwest Coast in particular (Rohner 1969: xxix-xxx, Suttles & Jonaitis 1990: 77-79). Franz Boas’ involvement with Northwest Coast research still stands as unique in the history of anthropology because of its groundbreaking research methods, temporal duration, and exhaustive collection of data. His involvement lasted for nearly sixty years from 1886 until his death in 1942.

Boas’ conception of anthropology was very much defined against evolutionary theory prevailing in the mid-1890s (Boas 1939, orig. 1896). As opposed to placing societies on a comparative evolutionary ladder, his approach was radically different as he sought to understand a society and its culture from the native point of view. Central to an understanding of native culture was religion and language. Thus, Boas’ ethnography placed an emphasis on mythology, language, and art. This research strategy was copied by a great number of ethnographers schooled in the Boasian
tradition. The research method implied extensive descriptions of mythology, religion, and ceremonials. Elders who could bridge between what Boas perceived to be vanishing cultures and the conditions of the present provided most of these representations. Essentially, this was a piece of “salvage ethnography” before “the culture” was lost in the sea of European immigration to the new world (Cf. Stocking 1974).

Boas’ extensive ethnographies, political activism, and teachings were influential, albeit in no one-sided fashion. Whereas some of his students and students’ students adopted the Boasian style of inquiry, others set out to refine some of his assumptions or in some instances to define themselves against him (Caffrey 1989: 98-103, 215-16, Stocking 1974: 17). In any case, to this day Boas remains the ubiquitous figure in Northwest Coast research. Although he studied a number of different ethnic groups, his investigation of the Kwakiutl remains by far the most extensive and best known.

However, these ethnographies often suffered from a lack of integration as elaborate details of ceremonials, language, and art were neither related to the wider socio-political structure nor to the agency of social actors. Since then, more differentiated theoretical and methodological perspectives have been employed on Northwest Coast³.

**Functionalist Studies**

The second strand is characterized by scholars who focused on the social structure and the importance of the potlatch institution within a functionalist-voluntarist conception. These accounts interpreted the function of the potlatch as a central institution for asserting self-esteem, social competition, and accumulating prestige (Cf. Codere 1966), or as a socially integrative and reproductive phenomenon (Barnett 1995, Drucker & Heizer 1967). It is notable that these studies, as opposed to mainstream

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³ A fine overview of the existing literature can be found in Adams (1981), on potlatch in Boelscher (1982) and Schulte-Tenckhoff (1986).
functionalist and structural-functionalist studies, paid attention to the
dynamic and changing function of social institutions under changing
historical and structural conditions.

**Symbolic Re-examinations**

A third approach in the study of Northwest Coast cultures has been the re-
examination of Boas’ material mostly without the support of fieldwork. Some have offered a reinterpretation of symbolic and structural features of native cultures (Walens 1981, Goldman 1975, Reid 1979, Dundes 1979, Mauzé 1994). These works provided new understandings of meaning and structure in Northwest Coast societies as they structured data gathered by Boas – although subject to considerable criticism on ethnographic grounds. Also, they failed to historicize these insights and demonstrate under which circumstances such meaning came about. A notable exception is Joseph Masco’s influential article, which offers exactly this (Masco 1995).

**Comparative Structural Analyses**

A fourth approach has been the inclusion of the institutions of potlatch, marriage, and transfer of immortal supernatural powers and myths in a comparative and analytic framework (Lévi-Strauss 1967, Lévi-Strauss 1982, Mauss 1985, Mauss 1990, Rosman & Rubel 1971). The studies often offered interesting theoretical perspectives on the lengthy empirical material provided by ethnographers in the Boasian vein. However, the strengths of these accounts have often been tainted by a simplification or outright misunderstanding of the empirical evidence (Boelscher 1982, Adams 1981).

**Interethnic Historical Studies**

A fifth approach has been the historical studies of interethnic relations. This broad epithet ranges from general political, demographic, and social developments (Duff 1964), a fine study on fur trade (Fisher 1994), collection of artifacts (Cole 1985), potlatch prohibition (Bracken 1997, Cole

**Cultural Production**

A sixth approach has been ethnographies on adaptation of traditional knowledge and skills to new conditions and discourses of knowledge in the greater Euro-Canadian society. A number of these studies have approached the theme through biographies (Assu & Inglis 1989, Blackman 1982, Ford 1941, Spradley 1969). The biographies deal with elements of social change and cultural adaptation, the accounts portray the adaptations through biographical accounts of exceptionally resourceful individuals that can hardly be generalized to native communities as a whole. Other accounts remain at a macro-level based on cumulative evidence which does suggest elements of economic adaptation, but only very little on the individual and collective production of meaning under the specific historic and structural conditions (Cf. Duff 1964). The study of individual and collective productions of meanings and their engagement in social practice makes it central to investigate conceptions of personhood to understand social selves engaged in meaningful social practices. With some exception and fragmentary evidence, this task has been widely neglected (Benedict 1934, Boelscher 1988, Harkin 1997a, Kan 1989, Mauss 1938, Mauzé 1994a, 1997b).

Echoing Sergei Kan, despite the variety of theoretical stances in Northwest Coast studies the perspective of individual and collective production of meaning in the competition for social and economic resources has been vastly ignored (Kan 1989:5-7), apart from a few noteworthy exceptions that generated some scholarly attention (Cf. Boelscher 1988, Harkin 1997a, 1997b, Kan 1989, Masco 1995).

The latter “explorative gap” may be usefully addressed by integrating biographical accounts as personal narratives situated in regional 20
interethnic relations and local cultural contestations. At best, this dissertation is inscribed in this “ethnographic gap” as I seek to explore a collective phenomenon which is enacted and embodied, and produced and reproduced by social actors. Nevertheless, such an empirical study cannot be addressed without careful considerations to the property of the social actors and the analytical levels dealt with in the analysis. In other words, an adequate theorization of the relationship between history, structure, power, and agency is central to the investigation at hand. This issue will be addressed in the following two chapters.
Chapter 2. Theoretical Practice or a Theory of Practice

Writers of ethnographic records make, as any scholarly account, assumptions about the nature of the reality they study. As any other form of knowledge, the records are productions of their time and context. In this sense, all textual productions are positioned, partial constructions reflecting the research practice, genre conventions, theoretical, and methodological assumptions of its author(s) (Cf. Clifford and Marcus 1986). While such “positioning” poses a methodological challenge to ethnography, it does not violate the core of the discipline; it historicizes the discipline and its practitioners. One dimension of addressing this problem is a thorough historicization of the textual accounts, whether documentary or academic, that helps to uncover the partiality of the particular textual production.

While the intricacies of this problem will be dealt with in chapter three, I propose that another dimension of the challenge can be addressed by making explicit the theoretical and methodological framework of the text. By devoting considerable space on the theoretical assumptions of text, the “partiality” of the account becomes increasingly evident for the reader, and can be subject to critical scrutiny which clearly examines the theoretical and analytical ramifications of the avenue taken by the writer. Such clarity of the theoretical framework, I will argue, is a central element of the validity of the account. Therefore, this chapter and the following address the theoretical and methodological tenets of the dissertation.

More specifically, in this chapter I outline the theoretical framework of the study, which revolves around the concept of personhood. The nature and capabilities of human beings in the social world is central to all social sciences (Cf. Giddens 1979), therefore, the first part of the chapter commences with a delimitation of personhood as an analytical concept.
Using Joan La Fontaine's distinction between individual, self, and person as three interconnected analytical dimensions, I propose that the study of Kwakiutl personhood can be situated in a dynamic social and cultural context.

Therefore, in the second part of the chapter, I devise a theoretical concept of the person and the self which is analytically applicable to the study of the Kwakiutl. I place the concepts in an integrated analytical framework that captures both micro- and macro-processes in the social world. At the heart of this conceptual avenue are the concepts of social self by George Herbert Mead, the notion of situated learning by Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger, Foucault's concept of heterotopic space, combined with his notion of bio-power. These concepts are connected with Norbert Elias' notions of historical figurations as chains of social interdependencies. The concepts remain the tenets in a loosely knit analytical framework, which is central to discerning Kwakiutl personhood from 1880-1999.

**Delimiting Personhood**

Studies of different cultural expressions of personhood are by no means new to the discipline. Initially, discussions emerged whether all societies had concepts of the person (Fortes 1973), or whether this was uniquely a Western conception (Mauss 1985 (orig. 1938), Read 1955). While still an issue of contention, recent ethnographic studies claim that notions of the self appear in most, if not all, societies, thus addressing the need for a more sophisticated analysis of the human being as a culturally situated social actor (Cf. Harkin 1994, Mauzé 1994a, McHugh 1989, Strathern 1979).

Before elaborating the theoretical framework we must define the concept of person, from which personhood is a derivative, to related concepts such as individual, self, and social actor. As Grace Harris writes, conflation of
concepts has serious ramifications on analyses and comparison of these categories. She suggests the following distinction:

“All else aside, a common feature runs through anthropological and other work: concepts of the person, self, and, also, individual are often conflated. The consequences are serious, for these issues are theoretically important not merely terminological. In anthropology, one result is that various ethnographies do not lend themselves easily to comparison. Potential cross-disciplinary work is also hampered. Certainly in anthropology we need to distinguish among conceptualizations of human beings as (1) living entities among many other such entities in the universe, (2) human beings who are centers of being or experience, or (3) human beings who are members of society. That is, we need to distinguish, for any local system, among biologistic, psychologistic, and sociologistic concepts – concepts that may parallel without being coextensive with Western biological, psychological and sociological formulations.” (Harris 1989: 599)

Grace Harris’ distinction between three different dimensions of analysis for which she assigned the analytical concepts; individual, self, and person respectively draws on Joan La Fontaine’s similar distinctions (Harris 1989: 609). La Fontaine argues that “the term individual to refer to the mortal human being, the object of observation and person to refer to concepts…which lend the object social significance”, whereas “the self is an individual’s awareness of a unique identity, the person is society’s confirmation of that identity as of social significance. Person and individual are identified in contrast to the self.” (La Fontaine 1985: 124, 126 my italics) Let us therefore examine the distinguished concepts closer.
The Individual

Expression of the individual varies in historical and cultural expressions in terms of the conceptions of bodily structure, composition, boundaries, and the permeability of the biological entity. The definition of the individual human being may depend on racial, ethnic, or gendered relations inscribed in the spatio-moral order of any given society. While individuals may be recognized as human beings, they may not be recognized as persons (Harris 1989: 600-601). An example is slaves on the Northwest Coast who were recognized in kind (as humans), but they were at times sacrificed in rituals to satiate supernatural beings’ hunger for human flesh. Their dispensability witnesses the lack of social significance (as persons).

The Self

In a groundbreaking article on ethnopsychology A.I. Hallowell asserted that self-awareness is universal and in any given culture there exists a notion of the person (Hallowell 1955). While editing a volume on Pacific ethnopsychologies, Geoffrey White and John Kirkpatrick outlined the contributors’ shared ambitions sustaining this assumption:

“We recognize self-awareness as a human universal. Along with it, awareness of similarities among persons and of shared involvements and propensities crosscutting the distinctiveness of selves also seems universal. These apperceptions are basic parameters of the psychological aspect of cultures, not of ethnopsychology per se. This is because…the definition of the self can occur in and through any domain or element of a culture. We wish to focus attention on a more restricted topic: cultural formulations of persons, personal action and experience, and the interactive practices through which such formulations are conveyed in social life.” (White and Kirkpatrick 1985: 9)

While acknowledging the universal existence of self-awareness, its form, content, and relations to other aspects of the socio-cultural world remain
variable. In other words, following Hallowell, they propose that in all societies one or several forms of self-awareness occur. While such self-awareness is bodily anchored, the definition of the experience varies culturally. Supporting the claim above, Catherine Lutz points out:

“Without some notion of the self as distinct from other selves and objects, the creation, perception and enactment of a human social and moral order would be impossible. However, cultural variability exists — content of self-awareness and person concepts but also the degree to which this self-awareness is monitored, emphasized as salient, and explicitly discussed in everyday discourse.” (Lutz 1985: 36)

Thus, self-awareness does not appear as a “pure” universal expression. It is culturally negotiated, mediated, and, modified. While humans engage in social interactions, meanings arise. By far the most comprehensive system of signs is language in its various oral and written forms. It is a system of signs that enables individuals to form a reflexive capacity (Burkitt 1991: 36). The construction of language enables a further differentiation of signs and meanings and is thus more complex, elaborate, and specific than other interactions with signs. For Grace Harris language forms the basis for at least four levels of signification in regard to the self:

“(i) In brief, the use of language makes it possible for an individual to develop a self living in a world of beings recognized as having or being selves, some of whom are persons... (ii) In the public world of mutual construal, people use and manipulate the structure and generative capacities of their own language and culture to create, re-create and, alter their institutions... (iii) Language is constitutive of many elements of action by way of speech acts... Individuals unable to use language cannot draw on this resource and so must remain little more than members of the kind... (iv) Through language a sense of time is linked to that continuity of identity without which
accountability for conduct cannot exist… To humans, the situations they are in always have significance for them, and between different cultures significances vary.” (Harris 1989: 600, my numerals)

In other words, for the social and cultural construction of self, language has four central properties: (i) It makes possible the reflexive capacity of self-awareness, and (ii) it has generative capacities for social actions that can change the nature of the social world. (iii) Language, by way of speech acts, is constitutive of many elements of action. (iv) Language enables a sense continuity of identity, through signifying human activities. While I perceive this list to be exhaustive, I must add that the properties of language in discourse are embedded in relations of power. That is, through discourse language constitutes the boundaries of the reflexive capacity of the self. Language constitutes the possibilities and impossibilities of self-awareness. These properties are tested in the interactions between two differing ontologies. One such situation is the arrival of the first trade schooner on the Northwest Coast as materials and symbols are exchanged. Such interactions discover new possibilities in both a material and symbolic sense. Marshall Sahlins’ study of the signification of material item in the fur trade on the Northwest coast is one such example (Sahlins 1988).

The Person

Language similarly plays a role in the construal of notions of the person. However, central to grasping the complexities of the category I adhere to Grace Harris’ distinctions, as I approach the concept of the person from two different social perspectives. One is processual and the other is structural. The first focuses on the social career of individuals, or the social life cycles, to reiterate Harris’ terminology. The second focuses on the different social kinds that are construed in society “as to those summative social identities by means of which members of the society group together and label clusters of social properties” (Harris 1989: 604).
Focusing on the concept of the person does not necessarily imply that human beings are the only creatures of social significance. I.e. animals and supernatural beings are assigned agentive properties in Kwakiutl cosmology. A conceptualization of some human beings as persons ensures that one distinguishes between the theoretical properties assigned to a human being as an agent-in-society, and the classifications of, and significance assigned to, different human beings in empirical terms. In Grace Harris’ own words:

“To focus on human persons as agents-in-society directs attention to systems of social relationships whose participants, performing actions and responding to each other's actions, live in a moral order. In this analytic frame we can make contact with concepts of the person used in other societies and notice their connections with social structures. Local concepts of the person as agent-in-society plainly are not co-extensive with local concepts of normal human individuals and their capacities for behavior. Many but not all of the doings of persons, when approached from within their society, reveal themselves as actions. In an ongoing socio-moral order movements and vocalizings are constantly subjected to a public process of construal. There is a process of analyzing, interpreting, and labeling of conduct so as to generate a stream of public discourse about agency and non-agency.” (Harris 1989: 603)

Individuals as members of society are engaged in a socio-moral career that may, or may not, grant them social significance as persons through different social identities. In this way, concepts of the person are inherently related to the existing social structure of society. By tracing the paths of social careers and the ascription of social identities throughout the social careers, one attains a processual understanding of local concepts of the person. Similarly, the structural approach focuses on situationally defined
social identities, which may reveal something about the structure and valuations recognized in a particular society:

“Two interconnected approaches can reveal the nature of agentive capacities and make for more readily comparable accounts of personhood as both structural and processual. One approach looks at the array of social kinds recognized in the society. The other approach looks at the pattern of social life cycles as moral careers by which socially identified humans are brought to ends points differing for the various social kinds... As someone lives through a finite career, he or she comes to encapsulate, through both membership in social kinds and social life cycle phases, features of the society’s self-production and self-representation. He or she can be seen both as a microcosm of the contemporary social order and as an embodiment of large-scale processes and quasi-history (i.e. structural time).” (Harris 1989: 604)

So far I have followed Harris’ argument closely, but here we part ways. Arguably, Harris uses the concept person and personhood interchangeably. However, her definition is too narrow, as she does not implicate an understanding of the bodily and emotive aspects of personhood (Harris 1989: 603). The person as an agent-in-society not merely embodies social categories and enunciates cognitive categories. A person also embodies physical and emotional aspects to become an agent-in-society.

Several studies in social theory accentuate the inscription and constitution of the body (Cf. Featherstone & Turner 1995) and emotions in the social world (Cf. Elias 1987, Lutz and White 1986, Rosaldo 1980). Indeed, some studies show emotions as if they are embodiments of thought rather than biological affect. Others, such as Eleanor R. Gerber, assert that there is a distinction between the public displays of emotions in a “culturally constituted emotion system and the subjective experiences of “basic
affects” that are not always “channeled through culturally prepared tracks” (Gerber 1985: 122). The biological basis of emotions remains a contention issue, but Fred Myers, pragmatically, addresses the problem by arguing that scholars should, to begin with, examine the public displays of emotions, rather than inner sentiments, as they are culturally construed (Myers 1979). Thus, for a comprehensive analysis of personhood, the person must be conceived through social, cognitive, emotional, and physical aspects of his or her being-in-the-world.

The distinctions above facilitate an analytical division between: (i) A theory of the self which addresses the possibility of existential unity. This theory must allow us to understand the interrelationship between the collective and the uniquely individual. That is, the irreducible duality of how the social is manifested in the individual, and how the individual is manifest in the social, and (ii) it allows us to construct an analytical model which takes into account the social constructions and cultural variations of what comprises the person.

The former remains theoretical and speculative. Despite anthropological preoccupation with shared, public symbols, its methods cannot claim to gain access to individual experiences of such symbols, as they constitute self-awareness (Harris 1989: 601-602). The latter, however, can be empirically explored through an operative concept of the person that systematically explores public expressions of the person. However, before such empirical application can be made the theoretical notions implied by my usage of the concept must be clarified. This clarification first and foremost relates to the relationship between personhood and social structure.

**Personhood and the Social Structure**

As I proposed above, the self is constituted by an irreducible duality between the collective and the individual. If this proposition holds true, manifestations of personhood are similarly constructed as social phenomena. However, it does not imply in what way such collective
constructions come about. While the theoretical framework will be expanded upon in the second part of this chapter, I argue that situated learning as a form of social practice is central to understanding the formation of personhood.

In order to become socially competent, actors engage in social life and learn rules and regularities of social, symbolic interaction. In short, individuals go through learning processes to become doers and knowers in society. In a Kwakiutl context the extended family, schooling, and apprenticeships form *social relations and institutional sites* that are instrumental in the social reproduction of such knowledge and practices.

These processes of learning, or as some would have it; “internalizing” or “being socialized” into the cognitive and embodied rules and regularities, are of course central to social theory. How individuals learn the cognitive schemes for self-awareness, enact socially acceptable acts of emotion and bodily conduct, and negotiate corresponding social identities is a central analytical question. Within the last three decades increasing attention has been paid to the asymmetrical access to different forms of knowledge and material resources which, similar to Marxist approaches, point out that different practices, forms of knowledge, and preferences develop out of, and are reproduced in, the social relations that are structured by social inequalities (Cf. Bourdieu 1994).

Arguably, the study of institutional sites and the practices at these sites may be helpful in discerning the production and reproduction of social relationships that negotiate identities and structure personhood⁴. That is, personhood is construed by social agents in and through the active negotiation of different identities. Such notions of identity are socially

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⁴ The case becomes even more complex when the institutional sites are focal points of defining and constructing opposing identities, which was often the case in colonial relations. One such instance is the establishment of the residential school system in Canada school, which will be further investigated in chapter 9.
produced in time and space by varying techniques of power. This agenda, however, may not be unproblematically “internalized” by the interlocutors. As I will assert below, identities are produced in, and through, practices, where social actors learn and shape these identities within these structural and institutional constraints and opportunities. Rarely, the result is according to the intentions of any one social agent. Similarly, personhood encompasses the totality of the social identities for individuals as agents-in-society regardless their relationship to asymmetrical relations. Nonetheless, some social identities may override the importance of other social identities in public discourse, e.g. C.E.O. over single 40-something male. Hence the institutional sites, and the constructions of meaning within and around these in which such identities are produced, become focal points for discerning personhood.

Through my usage of personhood it is implied that it is related to the social order. However, it is not ipso facto bound to the social structure in any specific way\(^5\). Rather, it is related to the social identities that are continually produced throughout the socio-moral careers of individuals. It follows that the more differentiated society is, the more differentiated notion of the person will become. Thus, personhood is continually created, recreated and modified by way of social practices. In this way it subsumes identity as socially and situationally defined. Therefore, it cannot be reduced to “internalization” of identities imposed by social agents controlling symbolic and material resources.

To complete this line of reasoning and definition of the concept we must place it within the concept of the current debate between agentive and structural capacity embedded in human action. This debate encompasses the theoretical notions implied by my usage of personhood, and therefore I need to distinguish the concept from related concepts that may provide alternate ways to approach the problem.

\(^5\) Which is implied by e.g. Marxist notions of ideology, misrecognition, and false consciousness.
Action, Structure and Practice

The relationship between structure and action has been identified in recent debates as a central problem in social theory (Giddens 1979). In other words, the problem is how culture and social relations are structuring for and structured by the social action or practice of social actors (Archer 1989, Bourdieu 1992, 1993, Giddens 1979, 1984, Sahlins 1985). In sociology, the debate has centered on agency-structure integration (Cf. Mouzelis 1991, Ritzer 1992), but on practice within anthropology.

The turn in the direction of an anthropology of practice was summarized in a seminal article by Sherry B. Ortner (1984), in which she captured the essence of a theoretical shift occurring in some strands of the discipline. Rather hopefully than realistically, Ortner formulated a new “practice approach” conceived by “practice theorists” (Ortner 1984: 46).

When investigating Ortner’s assertion further, it is evident that neither a school of practice theorists nor one practice approach emerged⁶. Disagreements persist, whether practice constitutes an ontological breakthrough, or if it is yet another term for thorough research (Cf. Bildsøe-Lassen & Grzymala-Lubanski 1992, Bloch 1986, 1989, Rabinow & Dreyfus 1993).

Arguably, a focus on practice by various scholars never constituted any shared ontological, epistemological, and methodological grounds. Yet, the focus on practice inspired an impressive body of work, debating the theoretical acumen of various approaches as for instance proposed by

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⁶ A meta-scientific reference to a “School”, defined by Lee Harvey as having the following properties: (i) a central figure, (ii) physical infrastructure, (iii) institutional links to existing academic bodies, (iv) financial support, (v) means of disseminating its work, (vi) it must attract students and (vii) provide a climate for intellectual exchanges leader and members of the group (Harvey 1987: 3).

These approaches emphasize agency and structure as a duality. They argue that social action, cognitive structures, and social structures cannot be treated separately as the former produces and reproduces cognition and social relations. Concomitant to the focus on agency and structure is the insistence that individual and society cannot be treated as a dualism. Although agency is mostly attributed to individuals, it can also be attributed to larger social groups (Touraine 1977). Finally, structural positions, power, resource, and relational asymmetries have come to the forefront in the analysis of social relations (Ortner 1984). Despite gaining significant insight by focusing on practice, agency, and structure, a recurrent flaw within the debate has been a reductionist understanding of the human being as a social being, explaining the basis of its action as an instance of personal maximization (Cf. Bourdieu 1993: 1-5), or personal valorization (Cf. Ortner 1989c: 15). Ultimately, it refers to a form of culturally constructed rational action in Weberian vein. These assumptions are in the last instance tautological insofar as the actions of individuals are explained by such concepts that fit any argument. Ultimately, rational action theorists radicalize and elevate subjectivist notions of a conscious, un-constrained social actor to the premises for social theory derived from methodological individualism.

At the other extreme investigations into structural determination have led to criticism of an unambiguous correspondence between the social structures and the cognitive structure. Theorists such as Anthony Giddens and Pierre Bourdieu propose an unproblematic internalization of structural properties that are informing social action (Archer 1989: 74-78, Mouzelis 1991: 34-40). In such approaches social action becomes merely a reproduction of the existing social and cognitive orders. This form of structural determinism reduces the social actors to enactors of socially determined rules. In other words, these approaches resort to a form of
circular determinism that allows little room for agentive powers and structural changes as a property of social action.

Despite these infinite debates on the capabilities of social actors’ agency, structural constraint, and determinism, which at times seem to be a hindrance to theoretical advancement rather than a solution, there exists common ground for the debate. The scholars share an analytical level establishing social actors firmly within structures of constraint and opportunity, while seeking to investigate their social practice as meaningful and intentional.

While the debate is ongoing, its premises are, ironically, meta-theoretical rather than empirical (Layder 1985, Ritzer 1992). Rather than focusing on what social actors do – through empirical analyses – speculations about their agentive properties persist. Implied by the concept of practice itself, such empirical probing may provide a theoretical contribution that goes beyond the current exhaustion of the theoretical conceptualizations.

Informed by phenomenological hermeneutics I propose that the interplay between data and theory may be theoretically helpful (Ricoeur 1979a). By reverting to empirical application and the insights gained therein, the action-structure debate may possibly move on to fertile grounds where exhausted ideas gain new impetus. We must remember that mere theory remains pure speculation – and mere empirical investigation substantiates nothing. Therefore I suggest that the “practice approaches” must be brought into an empirical practice. This task commences, at last, in chapter 4.

As opposed to concepts engulfed in wider theoretical frameworks concerning the agency-structure relationship, personhood is not ipso facto bound to such theoretical presuppositions.

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7 Following the theoretical and methodological elaborations, this dissertation seeks to revert to the empirical foundation which seems generally lacking in the debate.
Conceptual Delimitations

Two instances of concepts that imply such relationships are Pierre Bourdieu's concept of habitus (Cf. Bourdieu 1993, Bourdieu & Passeron 1977) or the Marxist concept of ideology (Cf. Althusser 1983). These concepts assume a correspondence between cognitive structures informing practice and social structure in the final instance. Within the objective social order defined by certain relations of power, social actors act upon cognitive structures that at the one and same time reproduce the existing social, and mystify the social actors' objective possibilities through mis-recognition of asymmetrical relationships in the social order (Cf. Althusser 1983: 43, Bourdieu 1993: 164, 188-95). I am at odds with theoretical concepts that presume a “free” condition outside relations of power. Rather, I tend to think that insofar as humans are social beings, they are always already embedded in relations of power. At the very core of the social construction of reality lie relations of power in the definition of the nature of the self and the nature of reality.

To Pierre Bourdieu, the cognitive structure guiding conception of self and the social practice of social actors is called:

“Habitus, the durably installed generative principle of regulated improvisations, produces practices, which tend to reproduce the regularities immanent in the objective conditions of the production of their generative principle...”
(Bourdieu 1993: 78)

Social actors embody this structure insofar as: “Bodily hexis is political mythology embodied, turned into a permanent disposition, a durable manner of standing, speaking, and thereby feeling and thinking.” (Bourdieu 1993: 93, original italics) My reservation about this observation is more that hexis is tied to habitus which again is determined by the social structure. Echoing Norbert Elias, as seen below, I tend to think that sources of social power, their combinations, and the structure of social
configurations are more dynamic than suggested by Bourdieu, who postulates the sources of social power to be bound in certain kinds of material and symbolic capital. Thence, the argument becomes circular: the allocation of capital determines the objective structure. The objective structure determines habitus as an embodied, cognitive, and practical sense which reproduces social structure. Social dynamics that produce social relations rather than reproduce them are hard to conceive of.

In similar fashion, the Marxist concept of ideology is thought to mask the objective economic structure of society through the ideational superstructure. Although several Marxist theorists sought to modify this presupposition, it remains a basic tenet that ideology contributes to the misrecognition of the relations of production. Again, circular determinism applies, and yet again it is hard to conceive of the social production of change despite Marxist concepts such as Praxis in the Antonio Gramsci vein (Cf. Krause-Jensen 1979).

The concept of personhood does not from the outset have these theoretical connotations. One must add that it becomes theoretically implicated once employed in analysis. While I refuse that the concept is bound to the social order in any specific way, such as the concepts of habitus and ideology, I place the concept in a theoretical framework below. This theoretical detour makes explicit the theoretical framework guiding the analyses and also enables a theoretical as well as analytical critique of the approach to understanding personhood guiding this dissertation.

**Constructing the Analytical Framework**

Whereas I devised an analytical concept of the person and research method to discern its empirical existence above, I did not expand upon a theory of the self and the relation between self and society. By breaching this subject, the problem of micro and macrolevels of analysis
inadvertently arise (Cf. Knorr-Cetina and Cicourel 1981). As Aaron Cicourel states:

“The micro-macro integration problem revolves around the following challenge: the micro-researcher doing a study of a complex organization but focusing on segments of discourse makes indirect reference to macro-concepts or at least must sustain their tacit relevance. The macro-researcher studying complex organizations or movements or historical trends will make reference to micro-activities, but only indirectly. In each case the challenge is to sustain one level while demonstrating that the other is an integral part of the discussion of the findings and the theoretical propositions advanced.” (Cicourel 1981: 56)

The theoretical and analytical challenge arises in construing a model that builds on microlevel analysis while placing actions and meanings within a framework that explicitly acknowledges the temporal and spatial extension of macrolevel structures. These levels of analysis in social theory may differ depending on the analytical object, but the interdependency between the social phenomenon and other levels of analysis remains. In this context I understand the microlevel of analysis as one of embodied, closely knit, interrelated communities such as the Kwakiutl, while the macrolevel of analysis refers to the structural constraints and opportunities that appear external and disembodied to the social group analyzed. That is, social actions in China and the United Kingdom affecting the global demand for sea otter furs appear as disembodied to the Kwakiutl. However, were the topic of analysis the opposite, then relations between British traders and the Emperor of China were conversely affected by Northwest Coast supply of fur as a structural constraint.

To conceive of the macrolevel of analysis, I rely on the works of Norbert Elias and Michel Foucault. Despite similarities in scope, and to some extent overlapping conceptual application, a comparison between Elias and Foucault, let alone discerning theoretical inspirations, remains under-
explored. I too abstain from this intriguing task. However, they share with a third source of inspiration, George Herbert Mead, an ontological stance of social constructivism. Complemented by the notion of situated learning, I argue, an adequate analytical model for the analysis of personhood can be constructed by applying concepts from these diverse approaches.

**Ontological Beginnings**

As a starting point I echo the interactionist and pragmatist stance: (i) Human beings act toward things on the basis of the meaning that the things have for them. (ii) Meaning is derived from, or arises out of the social interaction one has with one’s fellows. (iii) Meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretive process used by persons in dealing with the things he/she encounters (Blumer 1969: 2). Essentially these ontological tenets were shared by the pragmatist philosophers at the University of Chicago, John Dewey, George Herbert Mead, and Charles H. Coolidge, who preceded the structuralist and post-structuralist critique of the Cartesian subject by half a century.

As opposed to the structuralist and some hermeneutic critique of the subject, pragmatists differ insofar as their outset is irreducibly materialist and interactionist (Mead 1967: 144-52). Human life precedes meaning which is constructed in and through social interaction. Thus, the production of meaning is irreducible from the social, yet it is a means of social interaction. These ontological tenets remain central to interactionist theory until the present (Blumer 1969, Berger and Luckmann, 1991, Denzin 1992).

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8 The inspiration on Foucault by Elias’ work was, to my knowledge, not publicly acknowledged by Foucault himself. If anything the inspiration was suggested in the most comprehensive biography, where a quote by Norbert Elias appears on the initial page of the volume (Eribon 1991: xi). Another indication may be that Elias’ work; “The Loneliness of Dying,” was translated into French by Foucault himself, although his translation was never published (Van Krieken 1998: 39).
George Herbert Mead: The Formation of the Social Self

With this ontological outset I turn my attention to a theory of the social self, by employing George Herbert Mead’s theory of self which utilizes the same ontological stance. In recent years, a number of scholars have turned to the pragmatist alternative in a penetrating critique of the subject in social theory, which proves the enduring legacy of his theoretical contribution (Burkitt 1991).

Theoretical Tenets: Social Selves

His conception of the social self was based on his rejection of any fixed metaphysical entity defining the human being (Mead 1967: 188). His critical stance to homo clauses thus resembles that of Norbert Elias insofar as the human being was constituted in a social discourse with others. He argued that discourse and language were social activities and could never be the property of a single individual. Therefore George Herbert Mead devised the concept of the social self to comprehend the dialectics between the social and the individual, and the body and the mind. Mind was, contrary to the Cartesians’ claim, not a fixed entity constituent for human being. Mind evolved through biological and social processes. There was not a transcendental, or metaphysical, reality of the mind in its own right. The rejection of the dualisms between body and mind, and, society and individual, were central in his conception of the self. His approach was established on truly dialectical grounds of irreducible dualities.

The Development of the Self

His theory of the social self was based on the development of the child into a member of a social group. Mead’s central argument was that the human being, defined by its ability to interact, was inherently social. Therefore he investigated the socialization processes, in which the child increasingly developed cognitive skills to communicate with others and reflect upon itself.
To Mead, the basic tenet of the socialization process was the development of a gradually sophisticated communicative ability with others. In early childhood the infant acted in order to evoke a kind of response from its parents. Through interaction the child gradually learned to anticipate and respond to similar gestures in certain ways. Mead argued that the child did not have any cognitive skills at this level of development, and in this sense it was solely aware of the responses of others. The social environment constituted its reality. The perception of the objective reality was similar to the social reality, Mead claimed, since the child in its early stages of linguistic development ascribed cognitive capacity to material things (Joas 1985: 157-58).

In a contingent and interactive process of learning to attribute meaningful signs to gestures and things, the child gradually learned the skill of linguistic communication. To Mead, language was not a precondition for social interaction — it was its ultimate form. Language enabled social interaction to develop beyond mere responses to gestures. Vocal gestures enabled further production of, inter-subjectively generated, meaningful signs. Language, meaning, and self-reflection are inherently social as they derive from social interaction.

The social self developed out of learning processes — in and through social practice — as the individual engaged in social intercourse with others acquiring the skills of communication. Inherent in acquiring the ability to interpret meaning and act upon the gestures of others was the act of undertaking internal conversations with one’s own self, mediated by language and meaning derived from the social.

The ability to mount such internal conversations developed through different stages of social role-taking. Initially, this was done through play. Here, the child made itself an object for interaction with imaginary persons whom it pretended to be. Eventually, the child learned to participate in games, where it was taught to perform changing roles and abide by certain rules. Mead perceived the game as instrumental in developing a
sense of a “generalized other.” That is, the patterns of expected attitudes and behavior ascribed to and performed by individuals ascribed certain social identities such as the chief, the policeman, or the housewife. The child/adolescent achieved a sense of the roles necessary to function in social life from engaging in social interaction. It was a process of tacitly learning of certain rules, which was how the community came to exercise control over the conduct of the individual (Mead 1967: 155).

**I and Me**

In Mead’s view, discourse and language are irreducibly social activities and can never be the property of a single individual (Burkitt 1991: 29). Sociality is inscribed in the very core of the formation of personality. Mead sought to comprehend the complex interplay between the individual and the social through the concept of social selves.

He argued that the individual had multiple selves (e.g. social identities) which reflected the diversity of social interactions it engaged in. They were all unified in their relation to the fundamental organic self which may not be mistaken with a core in the subjectivist sense. Thus, the social self consisted of two dialectically related parts, the *I* and the *Me*.

“The *I* is the response of the organism to the attitudes of the others: The *“Me”* is the organized set of attitudes of others which one himself assumes. The attitudes of the others constitute the organized *“Me”*, and then one reacts toward that as an *I*.” (Mead 1967: 175, my italics)

The distinction and interdependence between the *Me* and the *I* was manifested in the temporal duration between response and attitude. It constituted the possibility of reciprocation. The *Me* was the socialized set

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9 A misconception which symbol interactionism reiterated. Named after Mead’s approach, Herbert Blumer interpreted the relations in such a way that the *I* becomes a core and more real than the *Me* (Blumer 1969). This is a misreading that also Blumer’s student, Erving Goffman, reiterated, thus collapsing the duality into a mode of subjectivism (1983, 1991).
of roles and I the individuated, the uncertain residual that constituted the particularity of the individual personality. This residual was not to be understood as a subjectivist core; rather, it was a genuine dialectic between the I and the Me. In any given social situation with any given interaction, internal or external, a certain Me was constituent of the experience. Rather than understanding the social self as an entity, it is useful to conceive it as a process, as “a mobile region of continually self-reproducing activity” (Shotter in Burkitt 1991: 40). The I was only present in the self-reflection upon one’s Me. The self was inherently social and firmly rooted in bodily activities. It was a bio-social unity engaged in social activity. It was more an embodied process than a substance where symbolic interaction finds a unified form, which was preconditioned by the material world and sociality (Baldwin 1986: 107).

Mead’s theory of the social self dispenses with the dualisms between the mind and the body, the individual and the social. And show how social identities are learned and continued through social interaction. In other words, notions of the person are learned through the engagement in social practice. These notions become the meaningful categories in and through which the individual creates self-awareness and engages in the social world as an agent-in-society.

While Mead’s argument is persuasive at the microlevel of analysis, Mead himself never subjected it to empirical analysis10. Furthermore, he never explored its relations to macro-structural processes in society, such as the emergence of social institutions or relations of power embedded in the social order. He never explored how power relations were related to his notion of the “generalized other.” To alleviate the latter theoretical problem I use the concept of situated learning as proposed by Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger (Lave and Wenger 1991). The problem of integration to macrolevels of analysis will be explored further below.

10 Bruce Kapferer, however, convincingly showed its empirical applicability when investigating notions of illness in Sri Lanka (Kapferer 1979).
Jean Lave: Social Practice as Situated Learning

In 1991 Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger published “Situated Learning. Legitimate Peripheral Participation.” Their basic proposal was that the concepts of legitimate peripheral participation and situated learning contribute to a firmer understanding of the practice of everyday life and the production and reproduction of the social order (Lave & Wenger 1991: 47).

They explicated that situated learning is more than the internalization of structural and ideological properties. Situated learning must be understood as increasing participation in varying communities of practice (Lave and Wenger 1991: 49).

Situated learning is a socio-culturally constituted activity of varying participation. The positions of the learner are dynamic, and the situated character of the activity defines what is learned. Learning is a social process which is not merely confined to childhood and adolescence. It is ongoing and lived. This activity presupposes a setting of learning. This setting is, they argue, embedded in relations of power, such as controlling access, degrees of participation, and the symbolic and material resources. Such as what is learned, where, and by whom. They point out that:

“Hegemony over resources for learning and alienation from full participation are inherent in the shaping of the legitimacy and peripherality of participation in its historical actualizations.” (Lave & Wenger 1991: 42)

Presupposing individuals inscribed in time and space, learning is fundamentally situated and a social practice. Lave juxtaposes her theory with theories which assert an unproblematic acquisition of knowledge, i.e. transmission of culture as a formal set of rules through socialization (Lave 1990: 309-311). Such theories, with a functionalist bend, ignore the negotiated and creative character of learning as a social process. A basic
tenet is the notion that situated learning is a social practice, where social actors learn certain skills and competences in and through this practice. Drawing their inspiration from the “theories of practice” (Lave 1990: 311), situated learning is inscribed as a social practice engaged in by social actors. It is inherently negotiated and framed by relations of power.

This conceptualization is interesting in several different ways: (i) It accounts for learning in everyday practices through communities of practices, not merely formal institutionalized settings. (ii) The character of learning as social practice facilitates that learning experiences should be understood as more than the transmission of skills and knowledge, i.e. the internalization of structural properties, by focusing on the situated and negotiated character of the process. (iii) This leads to the concept of situated learning as central to understanding both processes of social reproduction and production of meanings and practices. The concept of situated learning entails a beneficial polyvalence, as it enables an analysis of both the impact and shortcomings of institutionalized settings of learning as opposed to other communities of practice with different forms of knowledge and skills embedded in other relations of power.

While acknowledging the importance of asymmetries of power in situated learning Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger do not examine the specific techniques of power that are instituted in particular spatio-temporal settings of learning, or how the allocation of resources influences the representations and skills that form the curriculum of teaching. Michel Foucault’s analysis of bio-power and how it is vested in institutionalized sites may provide insights to workings of power relations within settings of learning.

**Michel Foucault: Bio-Power**

When summing up the main tenet in his research, Michel Foucault suggested that the focal point of his works had always been the modes of
governance and objectification that transform human beings into subjects (Foucault 1982: 208). Foucault sought to tie the micro-practices of human beings to the macro-structures of society. In this sense, his work points to a number of concepts that complement George Herbert Mead’s theory of social selves.

Like many of his structuralist or post-structuralist contemporaries, Michel Foucault opposed the humanism as propagated by the ubiquitous Jean Paul Sartre (Cf. Althusser 1983, Lévi-Strauss 1974). Along with Louis Althusser, Claude Lévi-Strauss, Jacques Lacan, Roland Barthes, and later also Jacques Derrida and Gilles Deleuze, he engaged in a fierce critique of the Enlightenment, Reason, and the epistemological status of the Cartesian Cogito (Cf. Krause-Jensen 1983). In Foucault’s own words:

“[I had] undertaken to study the constitution of the subject as its own object: the formation of the procedures by which the subject is led to observe itself, to analyze itself, to decipher itself, to recognize itself as a domain of possible knowledge. At issue, in short, is the history of “subjectivity” if by that word is meant the way in which the subject experiences itself in a truth game in which it has a relation to itself” (Foucault 1994: 316, my insertion)

Discourse and Power

Central to Foucault’s understanding of society was his notion of discourse. He identified three particular discourses that emerged at the turn of the 19th century. These discourses mapped new terrain for relations of power. The discourses were on: (i) living beings, (ii) on language and (iii) on wealth (Foucault 1970). The first “humanist” discourse gave central importance to “Man” as a subject acting upon the world. In a number of studies he investigated, and sought to unmask, the duplicity of this notion, as he argued that social sciences seeking to uncover “the essential elements of human beings” actually recreated human beings in particular
categorizations that enabled specific relations of power to be enacted within these discursive practices (Cf. Burkitt 1991: 93).

Spatial Constructions

Gradually his studies focused on institutional sites, such as the mental hospital and the prison, where power relations operate, organized by this particular kind of knowledge, and thus governing the individuals through discursive practices.

Michel Foucault delineated the utopian character of “society” as a utopian space, an unreal space, which existed as an analogy to the space of real society. Utopia can either be an inversion or a perfection of society\textsuperscript{11}. Such visions could find their enunciation in real physical places, heterotopia, which effectively were enacted utopia. It was the space where real sites of society were compartmentalized, represented, contested, and inverted in order to institute the ideal social order\textsuperscript{12}. Examples of heterotopic spaces are the institutional sites such as the reform prison, the mental hospital, and the boarding school.

Through his analysis of institutional sites he sought to uncover the micro-practices through which human beings were affected by these “humanist”

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\textsuperscript{11} Michel Foucault’s definition of utopian space is: “Utopias are sites with no real place. They are sites that have a general relation of direct or inverted analogy with the real space of Society. The present society itself in a perfected form, or else society turned upside down, but in any case these utopias are fundamentally unreal places.” (Foucault 1986: 24)
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\textsuperscript{12} Foucault’s definition of heterotopian space is: “There are also, probably in every culture, in every civilization, real places – places that do exist and that are formed in the very founding of society – which are something like counter-sites, a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted. Places of this kind are outside of all places, even though it may be possible to indicate their location in reality. Because these places are absolutely different from all the sites that they reflect and speak about, I shall call them, by way of contrast to utopias, heterotopias.” (Foucault 1986: 24)
\end{flushleft}
discourses. That is, how the human being became an object of knowledge and a subject of control through disciplinary technologies that sought to modify, reform, or transform human beings into subjectified, docile bodies.

“The modern individual – objectified, analyzed, fixed – is a historical achievement. There is no universal person on whom power has performed its operations and knowledge its enquiries. Rather, the individual is the effect and object of a certain crossing of power and knowledge. He is the product of the complex strategic developments in the field of power and the multiple developments in the human sciences.” (Rabinow & Dreyfus 1982: 159-60)

Central to his investigation was the notion of power as a set of relations of domination rather than a reified object. In detail, Foucault mapped the intertwining of power and knowledge. Central to the disciplining of Man was corporeal reform in order to create docile bodies, which in a more subtle fashion was also believed to inculcate the reform of the soul (Krause-Jensen 1978: 117).

Institutionalized discursive practices rendered what was “thinkable” and “imaginable,” and in the normalizing technologies of modernity also aided to define “the normal” and “the deviant.” Foucault pointed to the possibility of subversive strategies which were essentially reactive in character while acting upon the discursive practices rather than defining places free and beyond power/knowledge (Foucault 1982). In Foucault’s mind, such places free of power did not exist. Therefore he also insisted on an anti-foundationalist approach in an attempt to avoid another focal point for the intersection of power/knowledge.

In a perceptive analysis of Foucault’s writings on the technology of the self (Foucault 1990, 1992), Ian Burkitt argues that Foucault construes a notion of the individual that escapes relations of power. He argues that there exists a disparity between Foucault’s early and late writings insofar as he proposes that the individual is capable of making itself an object of its own
moral practice. Thereby, he assumes that ethics develop in the sphere of the individual rather than as a social exchange between beings (Burkitt 1991: 106-108).

Granting Foucault the benefit of the doubt, it is hardly surprising that internal contradictions arise during 30 years of inquiry. It remains more problematic that Foucault argues that he studies the micro-practices of power, without investigating the production of meanings by the “receivers” of these social and symbolic processes. In short, Foucault’s analytical framework helps to understand the technologies of knowledge and techniques of power vested in institutional sites, but he does little to help us understand social processes and productions of meaning unrelated to “governmentality.”

Norbert Elias: Power, Interdependency and Historical Figurations

As was the case with the theorists above, I do not attempt to provide an exhaustive account of Norbert Elias’ theoretical framework (Cf. Featherstone 1987, Van Krieken 1998). I will seek to outline the concepts applicable for the current analysis.

Throughout his unconventional career, Norbert Elias argued that societies had to be understood in terms of historical processes of development and changes. Society should not be conceived of in terms of timeless states and conditions. Thus, current social relations and structures had to be understood in a historical perspective. This diachronic tenet also inspired the label “process-sociology” to denote his theoretical framework13.

The diachronic perspective also transpired into his analysis of human beings constituting society, as he argued that they had to be understood

13 Norbert Elias himself preferred this label, while his approach was also known as “figurational sociology.”
through their interdependencies with one another, which he referred to as historical figurations. Following Elias, these interdependencies are framed in historical figurations. In a socio-historical intersection of time and space, social relations are formed between different people. Inherent in such social relations are interdependencies between people. At the same time relations of power structure these relations.

“By figuration we mean the changing pattern created by the players as a whole – not only by their intellects but by their whole social selves, the totality of their dealings in their relationships with each other. It can be seen that this figuration forms a flexible lattice-work of tensions. The interdependence of the players, which is a prerequisite of their forming a figuration, may be an interdependence of allies or of opponents.” (Elias 1939 in Burkitt 1991: 164)

Elias created an analogy of social actors as players forming, in a particular intersection time and space, a figuration of interdependencies and interconnectedness that form the very core of human life.

Balances of Power

This notion of fundamental interdependencies can also be found in his conception of power as he argued that social life had to be conceived of in terms of relations rather than states. Therefore, he proposed, one had to study the shifting balances and distributions of the sources of power rather than objectify these relations.

“The concept of power has been transformed from a concept of substance to a concept of relationship. At the core of changing figurations – indeed the very hub of the figuration process – is a fluctuating, tensile equilibrium, a balance of power to and fro, inclining first to one side and then to the other. This kind of fluctuating balance of power is a structural characteristic of the flow of every figuration.” (Elias 1939 in Burkitt 1991: 165)
Central to Norbert Elias’ theoretical approach was his critique of the *homo clausus* of social theory. That is, the individual conceived of as an autonomous subject. Similar to his American contemporaries from Chicago, the pragmatist philosophers, he argued that human beings have no core autonomy – they are constituted in and defined through their engagement in social relations. While they are engaged in intentional action, the combinations of such actions most often have an unintended or unplanned outcome (Van Krieken 1998: 6-7).

**Historical Figurations**

In sum, a historical figuration comprised different social agents who were interlocked in positions where the dispositions of one may affect the conditions of possibilities for the others. Not only may the dispositions vary and fluctuate over time, so can the sources of social power. Elias acknowledged that asymmetrical social relations are inherent in social life. However, he asserted that power relations are fluid, revocable, and changeable through the structural changes as well as the intentional or unintentional outcomes of actions by social agents or alliances of social agents within this figuration. As opposed to the similar idea by Pierre Bourdieu of social life consisting of relatively autonomous fields with bounded types of social capital (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992), Elias asserted that historical figurations neither had distinctions of fields nor bounded kinds of capital structuring social positions within them. Furthermore, the boundaries of figurations were subject to change as social differentiation increased, and chains of social interdependencies lengthened.

**Socio- and Psychogenesis**

The historical scope introduced in his 1939 seminal study “Über den Prozess der Zivilization” (Elias 1994) presented a link between the formation of a peculiar societal structure, that of Court society, and its impact on physical, cognitive, and emotional structures of human beings.
To conceptualize these historical developments, Elias constructed the notions of socio- and psychogenesis in order to demonstrate the intrinsic relationship between the social and the psychological.

“That a historical social psychology, a study at once psychogenetic and sociogenetic, is needed to draw the connections between all these different manifestations of social human beings, remains unrecognized. Those concerned with the history of society like those concerned with the history of mind, perceive “society” on the one hand and the world of “ideas” on the other as two different formations that can be meaningfully separated. Both seem to believe, that there is either a society outside ideas or thoughts, or ideas outside society.” (Elias 1994: 484)

Therefore Norbert Elias set out in his study of the civilizing process to demonstrate the intrinsic relation between the two, and demonstrate their joint historical development from an age “that preserve[d] actual gestures and movements that have grown strange to us, embodiments of a different mental and emotional structure.” (Elias 1994: 45, my insertion)\(^\text{14}\).

Norbert Elias’ application of a fundamentally evolutionist scope, which jeopardizes ethnographic usage of his concept of the “civilization process” makes an uncritical application of his framework untenable. Nonetheless, the application of his concept of historical figurations, balances of power, and psycho- and socio-genesis preserves the backbone of his figurational approach. While Elias, ambiguously, applied the concept of the civilizing process as both a theoretical concept and an empirical one, I propose that the former is untenable, while the latter as a social phenomena can be

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\(^\text{14}\) Elias set out to historicize psychoanalysis insofar as he was interested in the socio-historically constructed relation between the Id, the ego, and the Super-ego (Elias 1994: 487). In the 1930s, Freud’s psychoanalysis was a viable alternative to challenging the Cartesian subject, and Elias never fully parted ways with Freudian psychoanalysis as he consistently employed terms of “self-restraint” and “constraint.” (Van Krieken 1998: 20)
observed in the conception of self and other as it was transplanted to North American interethnic relations.

Norbert Elias’ processual approach bridges several of the theoretical dilemmas above. He neither separated the individual from the social as different realms, nor the rational from the emotional. All are products of social reality. With the insistence on the interconnectedness between macrolevels of analysis, e.g. state formation, with microlevels of analysis, e.g. the formation of the person through changing configurations and alliances of social actors and balances of social power, he integrates collective and individual properties of the social into one theory of the self.

Theory Integration. The Total Social Person

In the classical academic division of labor, biological, psychological, social, and cultural phenomena were confined to different fields of inquiry with an assumed “layering” of the physical, emotional, social, and cognitive in different order (Geertz 1973b)15. My initial suggestion was that all aspects form part of personhood insofar as they are formed in and through social practice. To engage in a comprehensive analysis of Kwakiutl personhood, all aspects; physical, social, cognitive, and emotive must be acknowledged to understand the total social person.

15 Clifford Geertz argued that in the great scientific project of Man that emerged in the Enlightenment there was a conviction of a universal human being with like abilities and capacities. Throughout imperialism new cultures were discovered, and inevitably the question arose whether these “others” possessed the same capacities when the layer of culture was “peeled off.” Essentially this was a stratigraphic project, a science of (the universals of) Man – The idea of “Consensus Gentium.” (Geertz 1973b: 35) It was assumed that below the layer of culture was the layer of the social, studied by sociology, then the mind studied by psychology, and eventually the layer of biological capacities and necessities. This great scientific project was reflected in anthropology through comparative studies which aimed at detecting cultural universals, and evidently in the scientific division of labor with its internal hierarchy of disciplines.
While notions of the person can be subjected to the rigor of empirical investigation, a theory of the self is a theoretical abstraction. Yet, in analytical terms a theory of the self is necessary to understand the person as a reflexive, intentional social actor engaged in social practice. The key notion to arrive at this proposition is that social actors continuously engage in social practices that also comprise forms of situated learning. Thus, learning is more than the unproblematic acquisition of knowledge. Learning is a practice situated in the social order. The social positions of the learned, and the curriculum of teaching are inscribed in the politico-moral fabric of society. Arguably, formal institutions such as the school represent sites where particular forms of knowledge and bodily practices are taught. However, the school is far from the only site of learning in society. This proposition presents two tenets: Firstly, learning is inscribed in, and reflects, the politics of one (or more competing) social group(s). Thus, relations of power are inscribed in the very practice of learning that takes place in various formal and informal social institutions as communities of practice. Secondly, a notion of self is construed through learned categories that reflect the social identities of society. That is, it comprises socially produced and learned notions of the person. In other words, to understand personhood and the relations of power vested in personhood by differing social agents, the institutional sites where the apprehension of self is produced may be an interesting starting point for the analysis of its production and reproduction.

However, such analysis needs to include all aspects of the human being while engaging in social interaction: the social, the cognitive, the emotive, and the bodily. By focusing on all aspects of the total social person we are able to grasp the various ways that notions of the person are produced, reproduced, and modified in social action. At the heart of the empirical investigation of this dissertation is the temporal extension of such meanings inscribed in the collective and individual bodies of generations spanning roughly 120 years. In theoretical terms, this dissertation is concerned with personhood in a diachronic perspective, where I seek to
investigate the long-term continuities and discontinuities in its constitution, as differing social agents negotiated these meanings and practices.

To accommodate this analysis, I introduced the notion of the total social person, drawing extensively on George Herbert Mead’s theory of the social self, coupled with Jean Lave’s concept of situated learning and the tenets of Norbert Elias’ figurational sociology. These concepts I coupled with Michel Foucault’s analysis of the interrelationships between power and knowledge vested in institutional sites. Central for these theoretical elaborations was the notion of social practice as the ontological tenet for understanding personhood as enunciated by agents-in-society. Drawing on the proposition made above, i.e. that social practice is a central analytical perspective, I will continue with this assumption in the following chapter as I make clear the research methods employed in this inquiry.
Chapter 3. A Methodology of Practice or a Practicable Method?

In chapter 2 I elaborated the theoretical concepts that constitute the analytical framework for the present investigation. As proposed, the methodological approach and the data applied must also become apparent for the reader. This chapter addresses these issues. Initially I outline the proposed methodology, which is based on pragmatism and hermeneutics. Particularly, I propose that the convergence of different kinds of evidence provides a superior research design to arrive at tenable conclusions. Arguing that ethnographic research is one particular form of social practice, I expand on the particular practice of my own fieldwork at Alert Bay in 1997-98 and 2000. Also, I elaborate the constraints and possibilities of other kinds of data employed in the analysis.

While I propagate a pragmatist and hermeneutical approach, I also share the materialist foundation of the former. I am at odds with postmodernist approaches that question a materialist foundation of social sciences. I do subscribe to a stance that social situations do occur and do have impacts that structure the material and social world. While the interpretation of social phenomena may vary depending on the positioned nature of the interpreter, I still believe that elements of the occurrence can be firmly verified. Who was involved, what they did, when and where are but elements of one particular situation that can be verified. Thus, research into social and cultural phenomena cannot be conflated with representing the narratives of the social actors involved. That said, I also reject positivist notions that social phenomena can unproblematically be observed.

If anything, the hermeneutical turn in anthropology has reminded us to challenge the positivist notion of scientific objectivity (Cf. Rabinow &
Sullivan 1979, Rabinow 1977, Winch 1958, 1964). Anthropology, as ever so often, has been on the forefront of such critique as it explores the diverse ontologies of human lives outside the confines of the Western world. By placing the epistemological emphasis on interpretation and understanding, anthropology not only explores the paradigmatic shift in the social sciences, it also probes the methodological boundaries of such approaches.

In my understanding, a pivotal element of the ethnographic endeavor is the practice of interpretation and understanding. When an ethnographer studies socio-cultural phenomena, this investigation is simultaneously depending on the researcher’s ability as a learner engaged in social situations that are embedded in specific patterns of meanings and expectations to the behavior of the individuals involved in the social situation. The researcher must be taught the specific subtleties of speech acts, corporeal expressions, and the slight differences of meanings as individuals engage in social intercourse in a certain spatial and temporal setting. These patterns of behavior and expectations often remain tacit and are carried out as, what Pierre Bourdieu dubs, a practical sense. For the ethnographer to apprehend these patterns, he undergoes a process from a radical other of relative incompetence to learning the cultural practices inscribed in social activity and space16.

As argued in chapter 2, a conceptualization of human beings as social actors presupposes a focus on behavior as meaningful and intentional social practice. Arguably, such assumptions must by definition also apply to the social practice of social actors of all kinds. As pertains to ethnographic research, involvement in the social world is a prerequisite for both informant and ethnographer. Informants and ethnographers are engaged in social practice through their active negotiation of meanings, participation in and reflections upon the social world. In this sense,

16 Whether the ethnographer can ever become completely “capable” as member-of-society is doubtful. Anthropologist “going-native” certainly places such arguments on the edge.
fieldwork as a research method is also a peculiar social practice and form of knowledge that situates the ethnographer in society. At the heart of the research process is a dialogue between ethnographers and informants and later, I would argue, between data and analysis, theory construction and empirical evidence.

In other words, these assumptions suggest at least three issues to be presented in this chapter: (i) To construe a methodology that grants this practical dialogue presence from the production of data to the inferences made in the final analysis. (ii) If ethnographic knowledge is not different in kind from that of other social knowledge, I must find ways that render the ethnographer’s inferences plausible and valid. (iii) If ethnography is a social practice situated in society, its historical trajectory is unique. If inferences are to be made plausible and valid, the trajectory must be outlined to understand the production of the data on which the inferences are based. These three problems structure the sections below.

**Ethnography as a Pragmatic-Hermeneutical Method**

First, researchers make assumptions, whether tacit or explicit about the nature of social reality and social actors whose agentive capacities are ascribed certain properties that impinge on the analysis and conclusions of the inquiry. While I have sought to make my theoretical framework explicit in chapter 2, this chapter serves to make the methodology explicit. As shown in the previous chapter, pragmatist ontology integrates social interactionism and symbolic interpretation on a materialist foundation that acknowledges the social construction of reality (Cf. Berger and Luckmann 1991: 79).

While George Herbert Mead and John Dewey argued that language refined human communication, it is not its precondition. It was a premise shared by fellow pragmatists such as Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1910) who also argued that human interaction was a premise for language (Cf.
Dinesen 1992: 97-116). As opposed to the semiotics of Ferdinand de Saussure, Peirce argued that signs irreducibly represented something and were generative for further development of signs through the continuous exchange of signs. Human beings are thus a precondition for the exchange and interpretation of signs. Social practice is simultaneously interactive and interpretive of the verbal and bodily signs of others. It is an ontological practice that has methodological consequences insofar as human understanding of the phenomenological reality is mediated by interpretation (C.S. Peirce in Parmentier 1994: 16-20, Grøn in Ricoeur 1979b).

Towards an Interpretive Social Science

Second, ethnographic knowledge is not different in kind from the reasoning of any other knowledge. However, there is a difference in the systematic use and combination of evidence in the interpretive process of arriving at conclusions. If not, the “ethnographers’ magic” as Bronislaw Malinowski denoted the fieldwork may as well traverse into fiction, where rhetorical splendor replaces the diligence of systematic gathering of data and analysis. In some recent postmodernist writings the criteria for “good ethnography” certainly seem to have become rhetorical potency rather than collecting evidence within an enduring process of contextualizing and probing for further evidence 17. Below I shall venture further into this problem of ethnographic method. First, however, I need to elaborate upon the relationship between an interpretive social science and procedures of validation that are central to the scientific endeavor.

17 See for instance Mike Davis’ (1990) account of urban space. An account devoid of thorough investigation, yet tantalizingly suggestive, as is James Clifford’s (1991) comparison of Museums on the Northwest Coast. Clifford’s account clearly reveals the limited contextualization of the museums in Alert Bay and Cape Mudge. It is an account whose query restricts him to gathering stories from “gatekeepers” and rely on their representations solely.
While the stronghold of the philosophical traditions of hermeneutics and phenomenology remains German through the works of Wilhelm Dilthey, Max Weber, Edmund Husserl and Hans-Georg Gadamer (Bauman 1978), the French philosopher Paul Ricoeur developed his notion of a hermeneutical method within a French philosophical tradition. In a fundamental criticism of structuralist linguistics Ricoeur draws on C.S. Peirce’s triad of signs (Ricoeur 1973: 128) and a pragmatic model of interpretation as situated in “events” with human actors involved (Vigsø 1996: 160).

In Ricoeur’s hermeneutics, the exchange of signs through language or otherwise is irreducibly inscribed in social discourse through persons’ application of speech acts\(^{18}\). In Ricoeur’s assertion, such utterances, whether written, verbal or non-verbal, are subject to interpretation. Therefore text – as a metaphor for social action, and a concrete method – becomes crucial for his methodology.

Similar to written texts, speech is dissociated from its author as it is enunciated in a temporal duration and spatial extension. The speech act as a social practice is inscribed in the social world by irretrievably leaving its “mark” in the social world. As the relationship between the writer and his text tends to become complex, so does the relationship between the social actor and his practices. The difference lies between the intentions of the social actor and the temporal duration before its interpretation by other social actors. Whereas some practices never become too dissociated from the original interlocutors, the consequences of others are more socially significant as the action, such as the speech act or gesture, separates itself from the actor and constitutes itself as a durable pattern with identifiable meaning. It loses the immediate *reference* to its subject. Social events and texts share fundamental ontological properties, Ricoeur argued; therefore an interpretive methodology, traditionally restricted to the study of texts, can be employed in the social sciences as well. If

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\(^{18}\) To accomplish this connection he draws from the speech act theory of John Austin and John Searle (Ricoeur 1979a).
interaction and interpretation are instances of a social practice, they must be analyzed as such (Ricoeur 1979a: 74-82). I shall not venture into a detailed discussion of Ricoeur’s methodological arguments towards a qualified interpretive methodology. Suffice his own exceptional account (Ricoeur 1979a)\(^\text{19}\). To counter one obvious point of critique, however, I assert that the focus of signs as constituting wholes is not limited to linguistic signs but the pragmatist-hermeneutical approach enables interpretation and analysis of signs from bodily gestures and material objects, such as the meanings construed in bodily conduct, tacit aspects of interaction and material items such as clothing (Cf. Giddens, 1977a, 1977b, 1982).

**Guesswork and Validation**

I will restrict myself to discussing the relationship between understanding and explanation, as this has ontological as well as methodological implications for an interpretive ethnographic methodology. In Ricoeur’s view, social actions have multiple possibilities of meanings. This necessitates a method of arriving at tenable interpretations. To Ricoeur, a dialectical process between guessing and validating ensures such interpretation. Whereas the former has no rules, the latter has rules.  

“Still another way of expressing the same enigma is that as an individual the text may be reached from different sides. Like a cube, or a volume in space, the text presents a “relief”. Its different topics are not at the same altitude. Therefore the reconstruction of the whole has a perspectivist aspect similar to that of perception. It is always possible to relate the same sentence in different ways this or that sentence considered as a cornerstone of the text. A specific kind of onesidedness is implied in the

\(^{19}\) See Clifford Geertz’ analysis of ethnographic method through the lens of “thick description”, which is based on Ricoeur’s notion of the text as the basis for analysis of social action and meaning (Geertz 1973a).
act of reading. This onesidedness confirms the guess character of interpretation...

As concerns the procedures of validation by which we test our guesses, I agree with [Eric D.] Hirsch that they are closer to a logic of probability than to a logic of empirical verification. To show that an interpretation is more probable in the light of what is known is something other than showing that a conclusion is true. In this sense, validation is not verification. Validation is an argumentative discipline comparable to the juridical procedures of legal interpretation. It is a logic of uncertainty and of qualitative probability.” (Ricoeur 1979a: 90, my insertion)

In this sense, the explanation of social phenomena is rather a dialectical process of guessing and validating than arriving at firm, objective explanations. Competing explanations of the same social phenomenon may be confronted by means of advocacy and probability rather than objective testing. However, Ricoeur points out, this is not a reason for collapsing into mere subjectivity. The span of applicable methods and competing explanations may lead to new understandings and thereby new, more probable, explanations. Therefore, the hermeneutical circle is fruitful and productive rather than fruitless and tautological. Despite his seminal contribution, Paul Ricoeur left us in the dark when making explicit the “argumentative discipline” through which one validates an account. Arguably, this point involves three procedures: (i) A comprehensive research design ensuring that one gets the “right” texts that actually pertain to the social phenomenon one wishes to investigate. (ii) The procedure of inference and, (iii) the relation between data and analysis in the final textual production.

Analysis and Inference

First, validity must be ensured by a research design that provides the basis for proper investigation of social phenomena. Following Robert K. 62
Yin, I propose a methodology based on the principle of triangulation. Yin argues that the use of multiple sources of data provides a stronger and more valid research design, as reliance on single sources of data may lead to bias and spurious conclusions (Yin 1994: 90-101). Therefore he proposes a triangulation of different kinds of “facts” through converging lines of inquiry. His proposal has practical and methodological ramifications for the present study, as I have sought to apply the principle of triangulation consistently on two levels: (i) Methodologically, I have collected, or “produced”, multiple kinds of data through multiple research methods as will be discussed further below, and (ii) analytically, I seek to combine multiple kinds of data in the analysis. To allow for a multiplicity of data, I have focused on historically identifiable effects of changes in personhood throughout the period analyzed.

Second, Susan Reid pointed out the difficulty of making symbolic analysis and finding ways to validate interpretive inferences (Reid 1979). However, I would like to think that the methodological problem can be alleviated by employing multiple kinds of data in a systematic argumentation which approximates the inferences. Without the support of several kinds of data, inference cannot be sustained and remains purely speculative. Therefore, interpretation, especially in the guise of symbolic analysis, needs triangulation with other kinds of evidence. One example of this combination of different kinds of data is the combination of statistics on Christian practices with an interpretation of texts asserting a general pattern towards syncretizing Christian and Indigenous practices. Below, I argue this happened at Alert Bay in the first half of the 20th century.

Third, at the core of the relation between data and analysis is the concept of validity – or various circumscriptions such as “legitimation” and “authority” (Otto 1997: 61). Following Roger Sanjek, I argue that validity must be based on both analytical clarity and methodological and theoretical transparency, whereby the systematic base for inferences is discernable in the final textual production. Sanjek’s notion of transparency in the textual production extends from the notion of three “canons”
necessary to address the problem of validity in the ethnographic text (Sanjek 1990: 394-408):

- Making explicit the theoretical and methodological choices of the text.
- Making explicit the relationship between field notes and the ethnographic text. Ideally, by quoting extensively from the field notes.
- Revealing the network of informants/sources of the research evidence.

The first canon is addressed at length in chapters 2 and 3. The second canon is more problematic in the sense that field notes are not necessarily representative in terms of i.e. population and frequency of the social action. In addition, using the principle of triangulation, field notes are only a single source of evidence, which has methodological limitations. Therefore, I address this canon by citing multiple sources of evidence thus making transparent the combination of different kinds of data which form the basis for particular inferences. The third canon pertaining to making explicit the network of informants I have sought to address by providing an extensive documentation of primary sources and an interview log from the formal interviews made. However, I abstain from citing identifiable individuals in situations where confidentiality is at odds with quoting the individual. In an era where scholarly publications are under close scrutiny by natives themselves, the potential consequences of such identification may be severe for the person's stature within and outside the community. While interviews have been integral to the analysis, quotations are used to exemplify the argument rather than being integral to the argumentation. Below I will address the implications of this canon further. However, before doing so I must delineate my particular research practice, which is, I argued, a precondition for understanding the sources of data used in the fieldwork process.
Ethnographic Research as Social Practice

The third problem to be addressed is the uniqueness of the historical trajectory in ethnographic research. This problem also serves as a methodological point insofar as it creates clarity on the methods used, and how they are related to the social practice of the researcher throughout his stay in the field. This description may help to account for differing ethnographic records, even when time and space of their records intersect, but research practices still yield differing results20. Other sources of disparity, obviously, may be differing theoretical scope, explicitly or implicitly, employed by the researcher or the methods used by the researcher.

It is a recurrent flaw of many ethnographic texts that they mystify the research practice and the conduct of the researcher in the field, while such description may be helpful to understand the production of particular data (Cf. Freilich 1970, Gulick 1970, Honigmann 1970) – and how such social practices are helpful to establish and maintain a network of informants in the field21. The particular spatio-temporal intersection of social practice creates a unique biography for any individual. Evidently, other researchers cannot emulate the biographical trajectory unique to the field researcher. The inevitable distance in time aside, the complexities of social relationships, personal involvement, and negotiation of meanings are immense. The trajectory of social interactions constrains and enables the researcher to obtain some data in dialogue with informants, and keeps other data out of his reach because potential informants refuse to speak to him, access to information is zealously guarded, or simply because the researcher chooses other avenues of research.

20 A much-debated example was Edward S. Curtis (Curtis 1915) refusal of Franz Boas’ account of the system of excessive interest rates described famously by Franz Boas (Boas 1897).

21 The accounts referred to also provide an insight into the personal character of fieldwork as friendships are established, and the experience may leave profound impact on the ethnographer.
As social identities are situationally and relationally defined, they vary over time, and over the course of social interactions. To some extent the researcher negotiates these identities, but, I suspect, often members of the community impose these identities on the researcher. One can say that the identity in several cases is non-negotiable and beyond the agency of the researcher. The trajectory of these social identities may be helpful to understanding the social trajectory inherent to the research process. This trajectory I choose to coin “the ethnographic path.”

Fieldwork among the Kwakiutl illustrates the point clearly. Within a social formation where social “positioning” (see chapters 12 and 13) is ubiquitous in daily discourse, the sometimes perceived allegiances of the ethnographer delineate who will respond to his or her inquiry. The social relations I forged with people were not unproblematic for my research process. The frequency of interactions with some members of the community caused others to be wary of interacting with me. Marie Mauzé has drawn attention to the various ways that anthropologists and anthropological discourse in ethnographic texts and museum exhibits are part of contemporary Kwakiutl identity-making as Kwakiutl persons appropriate these texts and displays to legitimize and validate their ritual authority and social position (Mauzé 1997b). In other examples ethnographers have willingly served the ends of certain agents rather than accounting for the means of such social positioning (Cf. Saunders 1995, 1997).

**Accessing the Field**

Upon securing a research permission by the ‘Namgis First Nation Band Council to do field research I arrived at Alert Bay with a formal permission to do research on the reserves at Alert Bay. My actual fieldwork was conducted over two periods, the first from November 1997 to October 1998, and the second from July 2000 to September 2000. Documentary research preceded the commencement of the fieldwork beginning in February 1997 and intertwined my second stint in the field from July till 66
September 2000. My second visit to do further research also implied a shift in research practice. My first field research was more explorative in scope and strategy, it gradually focused on participant observation and informal dialogues as research techniques. During the second field research I gathered data exclusively through formal, mostly audio-recorded interviews and sought to identify archival evidence on the topic of schooling in various institutions.

One major setback for my research was the tragic arson of the Big House at Alert Bay prior to my arrival in 1997. Throughout my stints in the field, I only attended one potlatch in Alert Bay and a few others in Victoria, Fort Rupert, and Kingcome. Therefore, my data relates more to how the potlatch is talked about than how it was actually done.

Throughout my fieldwork, I was recurrently positioned through a number of different social identities. In some situations I was categorized as “White” which is a socially effective category rather than a racial distinction that invokes a distinction between “us” and “them,” effectively ostracizing me from legitimate participation in the social situation. One occasion where this identity became very clear was at a meeting for First Nations teachers in the North Island School District. I was present at the meeting upon the request by the U’mista Cultural Centre and School District # 85 to do survey on the feasibility of the teaching tools needed in First Nations studies and Kwak’wala classes. At the meeting I asked the teachers present to fill in a questionnaire. As a response, one lady got up and directly questioned the legitimacy of my presence and expressed her displeasure with “White” “anthropologists” doing research among the Kwakiutl. Therefore, she commented that she thought no one should fill in the questionnaire. Before and after the same woman several times conferred her antipathy towards me in public settings. At the meeting some individuals expressed their regrets of the remarks, while others did not fill in the questionnaire. They may have shared the woman’s opinion.
At other times I was referred to merely as “anthropologist” or “researcher,” which is hardly an endearing term in popular discourse. As opposed to “White,” which is almost ubiquitously a derogatory category, “anthropologist” is somewhat more ambiguous. Some quarters of the community, especially the descendants of his main collaborator George Hunt, hail the significance of Franz Boas’ research and documentation\(^{22}\). Several Kwakiutl individuals have degrees in anthropology and have carried out their own research among relatives and elders. While being categorized as “anthropologist,” I often had to explain my project and justify my presence in the community. As my research increasingly concentrated on the issue of schooling, acceptance towards my project seemed to increase.

As time wore on and social relationships with some individuals and their families developed into friendships, I was referred to as “Steffen,” or by nicknames such as “Stiff one” marking degrees of inclusiveness which at times were negotiated. While individuals can trace their genealogy several generations back, they are expressly aware of the kinship ties. These kinship ties literally open doors in the community. Through my close friendships with individuals from the Alfred, Ambers, Beans, Hunt, Speck, and Wasden families my presence in the community and participation in communal activities such as “food fishing,” canoe journeys, and soccer tournaments became increasingly legitimate.

Without the friendships that I established with members of these families I would never have been able to learn the categories and principles of public discourse such as those in jocular interaction. These social relationships established my legitimacy as a person and as a researcher, and a number of people welcomed me into their homes while others

\(^{22}\) In 1986, a 100 year anniversary was held at Alert Bay where Franz Boas’ daughter, Franziska, and his grandson, Norman, took part along with several members of the extended Hunt family. The anniversary was filmed and research was undertaken to produce a movie on the collaboration. However, the project remains unfinished 15 years after the anniversary.
accepted to speak to me. Still, a few others, as mentioned, refused to talk
to me and continued to question my legitimacy and motivation –
sometimes at the aforementioned public events – and at times stories
“circulated” doing the same.

In any case, the social relations forged with a number of people paved the
way for gatekeeping, access, and rapport that is unique and determining
for the kind and range of data that I was able to develop with a number of
individuals. However, this could not have happened without my personal
involvement in the lives of the people with whom I interacted. The visit of
my parents marked a significant development and acceptance of my
personal involvement with people in the community. My parents were
offered gifts, and a private dinner was held for us where members of the
above families partook. Similarly, during my second visit to the community
I was welcomed back by many as a long gone friend. While these
friendships remain enriching on a personal level, their importance for the
production of ethnographic data cannot be negated.

While ethnographic data are dialogic in kind, I argued that a research
design which triangulated different kinds of evidence is stronger and more
valid than one depending on one kind of data. The subject matter of this
investigation is partially historical, and I set about to gather evidence in
several different ways. While some are produced through ethnographic
methods, other data have been produced without my involvement.

Investigating Evidence

The third of Roger Sanjek’s three canons mentioned above was a
revelation of the network of informants and sources of data of the account.
While I already addressed the former, I am yet to discuss the sources and
kinds of data on which I base the analyses.
The current inquiry draws on a variety of sources and elicits multiple types of data. Within a framework of social practice, it is useful to conceive of these sources as evidence construed by social actors, with degrees of participation within the historical figuration I studied\textsuperscript{23}. In other words, I regard the sources as deriving from social actors who are limited participants and marginally positioned in the field such as journalists and anthropologists who may, by account of their profession, provide some information to understand the developments at Alert Bay. Others, by nature e.g. native social actors or institutional agents, play a direct and crucial role in the politics and negotiations of meaning at Alert Bay. I divide these sources into two types based on my spatial and temporal distance from their production. (i) Data that are produced in dialogue with me. (ii) Data that are produced by others. Below these sources are summarized:

Data produced by myself in dialogue with natives through:
- *Focused interviews*
- *Open ended dialogue*
- *Participant observation*

Sources produced by others:
- *Published ethnographic accounts*
- *Surveys*
- *Private writings such as letters and diaries*
- *Public documents*
- *Published media sources*
- *Archival records*

These data are at different levels informative, representative, structural, and performative. Depending on the mode of analysis these levels are

\textsuperscript{23} The notion is adopted from Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger’s focus on situated learning in a field of legitimate peripheral participation (1991).
variously emphasized. Nevertheless, one must pay keen attention to the way data expose particular visions, discourses, actions, and ends of their producers. Therefore I seek to provide a political, historical and, when relevant, theoretical contextualization of the sources. While this is one element of a critical examination of sources, another element is the triangulation of different sources in the analysis of social phenomena. At best, these sources are independent of one another.

While these considerations are crucial, it is equally relevant that access to some data is denied, or, in other instances, muted. One conspicuous example of the former is the Federal Government’s archival policy which severely limits scholarly access to their records on the residential school system. This kind of gatekeeping marks an interesting case of institutional interests overshadowing exemplary research into government actions and responsibility. Even the (lack of) informative content of such records exemplify the institutional control of written records by its contemporaries. While former residential school students all over the country vividly recollect scenes of emotional, physical, and even sexual abuse, written records suggesting such incidents took place are either circumscribed or completely omitted in the government records on the residential schools that are publicly available.

The political reasoning for such silence is evident, but it also poses a methodical problem if relied on as a singular source of data. This only reiterates Robert Yin’s suggestion that one must include as many kinds of data as possible in the analysis in order to establish a strong, valid ground for inference (Yin 1994: 92). Let us therefore turn our attention to the data included in this inquiry.

**Own Ethnographic Records**

As proposed above, my productions of ethnographic data are, as I imagine all ethnographic accounts are, dialogic in character as they are the result of a collaborative effort insofar as informants enacted gestures, speech acts, and activities before me. However, the data stem from
several informants, and they were elicited through a number of different research techniques. They can be combined with sources external to the ethnographic dialogue. As much as this was a result of an explicit research strategy to complement sources of data it was also, to be honest, the pragmatic outcome of the conditions of possibility of the fieldwork situation.

In some social contexts, it was not appropriate to seek to construe personal interviews, in others this was expected of me as I was cast in the role of the “anthropologist.” In this sense, field research is a pragmatic engagement in social interaction. It is a matter of social practice and learning the cultural competences of which social situations facilitated a specific kind of inquiry. In other words, the social context sets out conditions of possibility for methodological choices.

Semi-structured Interviews

In the latter part of my research I focused on producing interviews. I collected nearly 60 semi-structured, recorded interviews, of which I have conducted the majority24. The remaining interviews are publicly accessible at museums. The interviews varied in topic and stem from interviews on schooling, Christianity, life histories, personhood, and the potlatch. Almost half of the interviews are conducted with females. The majority of the male and female informants were 45 years or older at the time of the interview. However, the informants were not interviewed in order to produce a representative sample of the population. They were interviewed as representatives of specific social identities.

Also, Dr. Dara Culhane most kindly made available her extensive video footage from her ongoing research into the establishment of the T’lisalagil’akw School. This footage also includes a number of interviews and a video on the 20th anniversary of the school.

24  See the interview log in the appendices.
Open-ended Dialogue

Younger people have by no means been excluded from the inquiry. Rather, I used other methods of inquiry to produce a dialogue with this category of informants. Mostly, I used informal, open-ended dialogues where we discussed cultural and political issues. Often such dialogues arose from, or were interspersed with, participant observation. This technique often served to explore themes, and the knowledge constituting the theme that were considered important by the informants rather than semi-structured interviews where scope and method was relatively more defined.

Before turning to the description of other kinds of data, I must also address the issue of ethics involved in the research and writing process.

Ethical Implications

While Kwakiutl collaboration in ethnographic research has a long tradition on the Northwest Coast, natives scrutinize ethnographic accounts and apply ethnographic productions. In the sense of the double hermeneutics suggested by Anthony Giddens, representation of the natives’ world and that of academia converge (Giddens 1982). While Giddens thought the representation to be the problem of the researcher, the scrutiny of the academic publications by the natives themselves and the increased educational level of First Nations peoples stress the importance of how these people are represented. This means that utmost considerations must be given to the ways issues and individuals are represented, as these may have severe repercussions for the represented themselves. I do not deplore this state of affairs. I perceive it as a result of collaboration and dialogue to the final word and beyond.

A case in point is the issue of the residential school system which has been central in political and legal events dominating native and Federal Government relations throughout the second part of the 1990s. Arguably, it is a matter of time before researchers concerned with the residential
school issue may be subpoenaed to testify or make their research evidence accessible to both parties. Careless identification of individuals may have political and legal repercussions for the individual. This political climate necessitates a connection between research practice, methods, and ethics. In terms of the final textual production all quotes, published sources aside, are a result of written permission by the interviewee even when the name is not shown. I asked the interviewee to review his or her quote in the written context of the dissertation. This way there are no unilateral assumptions on my part. In this sense a dialogue is inherent in the method, research practice, and ethics of my ethnography.

The responsibility of the researcher to his collaborators is pivotal, and I have chosen this ethical course of action before methodical clarity. This has been a part of my research practice. I have let certain conversations and events go unrecorded, as I reckoned recordings could be harmful to the people involved. While this is deplorable from a strict academic point of view, this is, in my opinion, outweighed by the possible ethical dilemmas and political consequences were these field notes to become public.

**Participant Observation**

I conducted systematic participant observation of everyday life at the T’lisalagi’lakw School for a period of six months. During this period I “followed” the different grades for a period of two weeks, documenting the content of their curriculum and interaction among the pupils and with the teachers. Also I attended a number of public events such as the annual “Cultural Celebration” at the T’lisalagi’lakw School, potlatches, feasts, a Canoe Journey for youth coming from several different Kwakiutl communities, soccer tournaments, and meetings of the U’mista Cultural Society and fundraisers for the Big House construction. Equally importantly, I was welcomed into the homes of several families, thus enjoying their friendship and hospitality, and learned about etiquette, family interaction, care, and solidarity as I partook in informal family gatherings that occurred on a daily basis.
Therefore, a number of the events and occurrences that I describe in chapters 11-13 are principally based on extensive field notes that were produced on the basis of the dialogue with members of the community.

**Contextualizing Kwakiutl Ethnography**

In relation to the current study the pivotal question is to what extent earlier ethnographic accounts can be used to analyze 19th century conception of personhood among the Kwakiutl. The central source to this question is the Kwakiutl ethnographies of Franz Boas. As Ronald Rohner pointed out: nearly one quarter of Boas’ total publications dealt with the Kwakiutl (Rohner 1969: xxiii). His work is ubiquitous through his voluminous publications, or through the works by other scholars who based their analysis on his textual production. As I mentioned in chapter one, the theoretical and methodological orientation of Boasian ethnography decontextualized his accounts from the contemporary historical figuration. Due to its centrality in Kwakiutl research, a recontextualization of his work historically, politically, and theoretically is necessary prior to a critical application of his work in this inquiry.

The empirical scope of Franz Boas’ salvage ethnography was to document the vanishing cultures of the Northwest Coast before they would disappear altogether. Missionaries, government agents, and scholars alike shared this assumption as rampant diseases, a dwindling population and social disorganization dominated the Northwest Coast indigenous population. Boas concentrated on gathering data on mythology, language, and arts in that order. His main informants were, through the help of George Hunt, older people, asked about their recollections of their youth.

At his advent on the Coast, the Kwakiutl had already been in contact with Europeans for about one hundred years. The momentum of native political autonomy had already eclipsed, and the social formation of Kwakiutl could most adequately be described as “neo-traditional” in Marie Mauzé’s phrase (Mauzé 1986: 22). Certainly, Kwakiutl social life was significantly
different from the societal formation of the pre-contact period. The subsequent chapter will serve to historically recontextualize Boas’ ethnography. Suffice it to say here that the cultural reproduction of Kwakiutl cosmology and ontology was still relatively intact, which can be witnessed by the Roman-Catholics’ decision to abandon their mission at Fort Rupert as late as 1874. If anything, Franz Boas commenced his ethnographic work with the Kwakiutl at a time when Kwakiutl symbolic order was still an integral, if contested, part of its social structure.

Boas’ Kwakiutl ethnography was predominantly a result of a unique collaboration between him and, probably the most famous informant in the history of ethnography, George Hunt who contributed to more than two thirds of these publications (Rohner 1969: xxiii). George Hunt was the son of the British Hudson Bay Company factor at Fort Rupert, Robert Hunt, and a Tlingit princess, Mary Ebbets. Since his childhood he lived in Fort Rupert and spoke Kwak’wala fluently. Exceptionally, he participated in Kwakiutl ceremonials from an early age (Berman 1994: 484-86). Although George Hunt was never considered a Kwakiutl by its members, his position was significant in giving feasts and holding potlatches based on his own and his sons’ marriages to high-ranking Kwakiutl women. He was also engaged in multifaceted enterprises as facilitator, translator, guide, collector, movie director, and ethnographer at various times (Cf. Berman n.d., Canizzo 1983: 46). His increasingly independent role as fieldworker was his most significant contribution to Boas’ Kwakiutl endeavor, and for this he remains most known. The unique collaboration between Franz Boas and George Hunt commenced in 1886 and continued until Hunt’s death in 1933. Although Boas’ longstanding involvement and revolutionizing methods led to an unprecedented volume of material, his approach had significant biases25.

25 Although I remain skeptical of a methodological critique based on contemporary methods, such scrutiny is beneficial insofar as Boas’ methods ramify an understanding of the historical development of social phenomena which were not object to the Boasian gaze in a direct fashion. An application
Firstly, Boas made little effort to explore the everyday activities, the life of the commoners, and to an extent women, insofar as the data were largely concentrated on the ceremonial practices. Such events were orchestrated and participated in by nobles (Ray 1995). Secondly, Boas did little to study any individual or social unit as social actor(s) or as producer(s) of meaning. A third implication of his approach is the discrepancy between the description of Kwakiutl life offered in Boas’ ethnographies and the actual historical events of the period. The discrepancy is best witnessed by the dire difference between the frontier society in which Boas produced his letters and diaries from his numerous expeditions to the Northwest Coast (Rohner 1969), and the almost static, encompassed descriptions of “culture” in his ethnographies (Cf. Boas 1897, 1935a, 1966). A fourth problem was his focus on the Fort Rupert tribes and to a lesser extent the ‘Namgis at Alert Bay, whereas remoter bands did not receive much consideration and attention by Boas. Finally, Boas relied heavily on the collaboration of George Hunt, who himself was positioned within Kwakiutl society, and whose collaboration with Boas at times brought him at odds with the chiefs of other Kwakiutl settlements. The kind of information accessible to Hunt as well as his collaborators was as much positioned as any other individual. Therefore, the sole reliance on George Hunt, however uniquely gifted, was a methodological problem insofar as Hunt’s narratives could not be scrutinized in relation to others that Boas consulted with.

Let us therefore address these problems and their significance for an analysis of 19th century Kwakiutl personhood. First, I address Boas’ lack of preoccupation with commoners, women, and children. While the problem remains from a representational point of view, it is important that nobility was the symbolically and economically dominant group, and as chapter 8 will show, the focus on nobility actually helps reconstruct a notion of contemporary analytical concepts as a critical approach may thereby combine his material in a novel way and elicit new findings.
personhood because of the detailed analysis into acts of naming and categories of names. Second, Boas’ lack of attention to individuals as producers of meaning can be addressed by the approach that personhood is a collective phenomenon which can be analyzed through an understanding of ceremonials and ritual that formed a central part of cultural apprehension and knowledge throughout the social career of the Kwakiutl individual. Furthermore, the noble presented a cultural ideal in the stratified Kwakiutl society that serves as a useful model for understanding Kwakiutl personhood. Third, there exists a discrepancy between Boas’ descriptions of Kwakiutl life and their concurrent involvement in the burgeoning frontier society. I address this problem of historical contextualization throughout the dissertation that situates Kwakiutl in a wider regional and global context. Fourth, Boas unproblematically extrapolated his research among the Kwakiutl at Fort Rupert to all Kwakiutl communities. To address this problem I seek to be specific in reference to actual events or differing practices. Nonetheless, I agree with Boas that cultural similarities overshadow differences between the various Kwakiutl communities. Finally, Boas relied heavily on George Hunt’s work, without considering how this knowledge was inscribed in local contexts and contests. I seek to address this problem by also paying attention to other ethnographies that use other informants as well (Cf. Ford 1941, Drucker & Heizer 1967).

In similar considerations Irving Goldman asserted that the data collected by Hunt were unique, as he regarded them a result of one Kwakiutl conversing with another (Goldman 1975: 13). Hunt’s thorough knowledge eliminated one layer of representation, since it was not necessary for the informant to interpret his account for the benefit of a western ethnographer. On the basis of this assumption Goldman embarked on an analysis of the symbolic and social order of Kwakiutl life. Similarly, Stanley Walens engaged in a study of Kwakiutl ontology and morality, and through the application of a similar methodology he supported Goldman’s argument. However, he ignored all ethnographic records written after 1935 as he asserted: “By this time the more traditional values and ideas...were
drastically altered by the demographic and economic collapse of Kwakiutl society.” (Walens 1981: 7) Even though Boas’ records of an elaborate body of legends, dances, and songs may have been methodologically biased, their significance in Kwakiutl knowledge and cosmology cannot, however, be ignored. Such narratives and practices were central didactic techniques in all Northwest Coast peoples’ social learning of cultural competences. The central importance of the narratives made them unlikely to vanish in a period where systematic repression of local knowledge had not yet been elaborated. In this vein a cautious reading of Boas’ material may suggest social practices, but due to the character of the production they remain decontextualized in relation to the specific historical conditions of their production.

In sum, despite methodological and theoretical reservations on the Boasian ethnography, its contribution, on the one hand, cannot be disqualified. On the other hand, it cannot be read uncritically as “pure” ethnographic descriptions either26.

Furthermore, the value of the ethnography also depends on how it is interpreted. In this inquiry I seek to elicit representations of personhood on two levels. (i) As a cultural ideal as found in legends and descriptions, which, at the same time, carried moral instructions that noble persons were expected to personify. Thus the data does provide a textual body in which categories of the person can be understood. (ii) The body of work, supported by other historical evidence, constitutes a comprehensive, but unstructured body of textual and oral material from which social actors’ practices can be elicited through its consequences or effects.

26 See Jeanne Canizzo (1983) for Hunt’s particular role in the shaping of the ethnographic representation of “culture,” and Berman’s fine analysis on Hunt’s life among the Kwakiutl (Berman 1994, Berman n.d.).
Contextualizing Other Ethnographies

As has been the case with Franz Boas’ work, any ethnography is inscribed in theoretical discourses with particular relations of knowledge and power within which certain assumptions about theory, method, and the object of ethnography is made. I delineated the major theoretical inclinations in Northwest Coast studies in general, and Kwakiutl ethnography in particular in chapter one. Paying closer attention to this work, a number of the ethnographies, precluding work based solely on the ethnography of Franz Boas, stem from the same sources. Edward Curtis’ main collaborator was George Hunt (Curtis 1915), while Kwakiutl Chief Charley Nowell was a pivotal collaborator in several volumes deriving from fieldwork after George Hunt’s death (Drucker 1955, Drucker & Heizer 1967, Ford 1941). Since then, the collaboration has been carried on by a number of Kwakiutl intellectuals who increasingly publish their own accounts on Kwakiutl culture and history (Cf. Cranmer Webster 1990, 1991, Joseph 1998, Sewid-Smith 1979, 1991, 1997 and U’mista 1983).

While such collaborators share their immense narratives with ethnographers, they are also positioned as social actors and are competent in representing narratives which stem from their extended families. Arguably, the notion of “culture” as a shared set of ideas, values, and behavior might well be an impediment to understanding the nature of narratives as positioned and dialogic within Kwakiutl social life. Ethnographic accounts which represent these narratives as “the culture,” rather grant authority to collaborators in defining the content of “the history and the culture” than outline sets of principle structuring this dialogue between social agents in a number of modalities. An example of the tacit dialogue between Kwakiutl social agents within ethnographic literature is James Sewid’s autobiography in which he recollects his, truly astonishing, accomplishments (Spradley 1969). Although his recollections are unique, it is equally interesting to note what he does not say. That is, the persons he acknowledges and those he does not talk about. Such tactics, while invisible to the uninitiated ethnographer’s gaze, form a part of a dialogue...
between Kwakiutl social agents in the realm of native politics which is transplanted into ethnography.

This does not lead to a position where I assert that all accounts are merely narrative constructs positioning the ethnographer and his or her collaborators. Insofar as knowledge and power are inherently connected, Kwakiutl knowledge is not exempt from this relationship. Therefore the Kwakiutl narratives that ethnographers lend scholarly authority are actively produced and negotiated in the local contexts of Kwakiutl communities (Cf. Mauzé 1997b). Such interests vested in narratives are not qualitatively different from the performative elements that can be elicited from any text.

**Documentary and Archival Evidence**

Interspersing with my field research I conducted extensive archival research at a number of different locations. Most significant was the research into the files at the Department of Indian Affairs. Particularly the files of the regional Kwawkewlth Agency and those of the Headquarters in Ottawa were the focus of my investigation. Principally, I concentrated on the potlatch files and school files that illustrate the shifting government conceptions of these institutions. The General Synod Archives of the Anglican Church provided further evidence on the Alert Bay Indian Residential School and shed light on the discourse, intentions, motivations, and cooperation between Church and Government. Similarly, the Church Missionary Society archives, now located in Birmingham, United Kingdom, also provided much information on the early, concerted efforts of Christianization.

Documents released by U’mista Cultural Center, ‘Namgis First Nation and other institutional agents also provided insights that added to the field research. In addition, a critical investigation of newspaper clippings, autobiographies (Cf. Assu & Inglis 1989, Ford 1941, Halliday 1939, Spradley 1969), diaries, and letters (Cf. Rohner 1969) provided further evidence on notions of the persons and their contestation by various
social agents. Finally, photographic evidence from different sources such as the B.C. Archives, U’mista Cultural Centre, and the General Synod Archives has also formed part of the data at hand.

Before drawing the theoretical and methodological excursus of chapters 2 and 3 to a close, a final comment on historical anthropology needs to be made to address the analytical applications of the methodological content of this chapter.

**Historical Anthropology as Research Practice**

Objecting to the tendency of “classical anthropology” to devalue or even deride history as beyond the subject matter of our discipline as A.R. Radcliffe-Brown did in some of his more programmatic writings (Radcliffe-Brown 1968: 40), the subdiscipline of historical anthropology has re-emerged in anthropology in recent years.27 Perhaps beginning with neo-Marxist accounts of world history arriving on the shores of the colonialized world (Cf. Wolf 1979), more proficient attention has been paid to history as structuring culture as well as culture structuring history (Cf. Sahlins 1985, 1988). The trend of historicizing ethnographic accounts has not evaded the Kwakiutl people either (Cf. Bracken 1997, Canizzo 1983, Codere 1966, Kobrinsky 1975, Masco 1995, Mauzé 1986, Sahlins 1988, Wolf 1999).

After all, if one wants to elude the tendency of describing historical formations in ethnographic present or understand the current state of affairs of the Kwakiutl people, a keen attention to history is by definition an analytical prerequisite. Between two points in time and two states of affairs there emerges a path of historical congruities and incongruities. Despite this increasing sensitivity towards an understanding of the historical

27 The subdiscipline has always had its place in British anthropology, although on the fringe of the discipline during the heyday of structural functionalism (Cf. Stocking 1995).
processes in which cultures are produced and reproduced, no regional ethnographies have sought to trace the historical development in conceptions of personhood (Cf. Harkin 1997a, Kan 1989)\textsuperscript{28}. In this sense this inquiry covers new ground in a much trodden field.

The increasing anthropological attention to diachronic perspectives redefines boundaries in the academic division of labor. Thus, boundaries between ethnohistory and historical anthropology have broken down as anthropologists and historians alike apply methods and data traditionally aligned with other disciplines (Cf. Fisher 1994, Harkin 1997a, Kan 1989, Kelm 1998, Knight 1978).

Within an analytical framework of historical figurations I seek to analyze the interrelationship between structural changes, the changing means of social power, changing social agents, and changing institutional control, involved in politics of identity, and Kwakiutl personhood. In the historical process, 1880-1999, I seek to delineate trajectories of continuity and discontinuity by examining effects as benchmarks for the construal of meanings within this historical period. By applying this analytical form and narrative content I seek to avoid the pitfalls of construing historical events as a “state of being” created by defining moments under the agency of social actors. Rather, I seek to delineate the slight congruities and incongruities of meaning and practice that irrevocably create, recreate, and modify the socio-cultural configuration of the Kwakiutl. Cultural meaning cannot be understood solely in terms of a closed coherent cultural system. It is as much a historicized creation of meaning in a dynamic figuration, which imposes new constraints and conditions onto

\textsuperscript{28} Interestingly, this historicizing tendency occurred while global time-space dis-tanciation diminished (Giddens 1994), and the classical ethnographic text has been subjected to the cynical gaze of deconstructivism (Clifford & Marcus 1986). In this context the appendix on the method of the classical monography has been elevated to a central theme in the contemporary ethnographic texts.
various social agents, and along the way may change the notions of the person.

**Final Remarks**

In chapters 2 and 3 I delineated the ontological, theoretical, and methodological tenets guiding the analytical framework informing the present inquiry. Also, I related these tenets to the research practice and their implications for producing, or collecting, data. This reflexive excursus is a result of methodological concern rather than theoretical preoccupation as I sought to make explicit and transparent the interconnections between theory, method, data, and analysis in the ethnographic research practice.

By doing so I emphasized the importance of using a multiplicity of sources and kinds of data in conducting research, while acknowledging the production of data by various social actors. Based on a pragmatic-hermeneutical framework I argued that all social actors are learners of practices and meanings, and this must be guiding ethnographic research as well.

At best, the transparency of theory, method, and inference facilitates a critical analysis of the *internal validity* of the research. That is, by making explicit concepts and practices of the research it can be evaluated on the basis of its contingency with these proposals. Also, in the Ricoeurian sense, the transparency enables critical comparison with competing analyses of the same social phenomena. This may help to ensure the *external validity* of the analysis insofar as they provide alternate data and inferences to those of the present account.

Following the lengthy theoretical and methodological detour, the attention can finally turn to the empirical subject matter of the dissertation: the intricacies of Kwakiutl personhood in the historical figuration of the Northwest Coast of the Americas.
Part Two. Contexts
Chapter 4. A Brief History of the Northwest Coast, 1774-1999

The historian James R. Miller aptly sums up the main tenets in the historical relationship between Natives and Europeans in Canada. According to James Miller the relationship undergoes three different stages from initial cooperation towards subjugation and finally developing into an era of confrontation (Miller 1991: vii-viii). Arguably, the interethnic relations on the Northwest Coast can be summarized under the same headings, although the time span differs somewhat.

However, prior to entering the maze of Northwest Coast history, let me outline the content of the chapter. In the present chapter I sketch the main tenets of the developments within the historical figuration of the Northwest Coast.

I commence this sketch with the reconstitution of the historical figuration as new European agents arrived on the Coast. This seems a logical starting point insofar as the historical developments up to 1880, where the timeframe of the analysis commences, are significant to understanding the changing relations of power between social agents in the figuration. By 1880, as will become apparent, Canadian governance stretched to the far corners of the region. But, the policy of the Canadian state cannot be properly understood outside the history that preceded it.
Figure 4.1. Map of the Northwest Coast
This chapter serves as a regional and historical context to the localized events in the time span from the establishment of the Anglican Mission at Alert Bay in 1880 to the opening of the new Big House at Alert Bay in 1999. Simultaneously, the chapter also serves as a contextualization of the ethnographic evidence which forms the basis of the analysis of Kwakiutl personhood. As will be demonstrated when the spatial, temporal, and thematic frame of the analysis narrows in the subsequent chapters, the global and regional processes structured local events, the conditions of possibility of local agents, and, ultimately, the conception of person and the world.

The Structure of Interethnic Relations

Evidently, the history of native peoples on the Northwest Coast can be traced back in time even further. However, from a macrolevel of analysis it is appropriate to commence the description with the arrival of the first European vessels on the Northwest Coast. These events marked the first contact between Northwest Coast peoples and Europeans – a contact that increased and gradually expanded into European settlement in indigenous territories. While the chapter exclusively builds on western accounts of the period 1774-1999, I seek to focus on the development of interethnic relations rather than settler history. Rather than focusing on the indigenous production of ideational and material culture throughout this period, I focus on what was done by various social agents in the historical figuration. Various groupings of natives, and Europeans engaged in different kinds of exchanges. These exchanges, whether material, bodily, symbolic, or social were structured by, and significant in structuring, the alliances and oppositions within the historical figuration. Similar to James R. Miller’s argument I show that interethnic relations on the Northwest Coast underwent three different periods corresponding to those defined by Miller: Cooperation, subjugation, and confrontation.
Throughout this historical period, natives’ conditions in the region altered altogether. The symmetries of the interethnic relations changed during the years as means and media of exchanges, relations of power, economy, and proportion of population changed.

As proposed above, I structure interethnic relations on the Northwest Coast into three different periods. The first period, cooperation, from 1774 to 1849 was characterized by material exchanges that yielded comparative advantages for Europeans and natives alike. The trade caused an influx of new materials and crafts to the Northwest Coast that both escalated economic, ceremonial, and artistic activity and intertribal hostility. While the trade was far from unproblematic, interethnic relations were characterized by relative cooperation.

In the second period, subjugation, from 1849 to 1951 the relations altered in character. The European presence on the Coast increased. Due to geopolitical concerns the United Kingdom established Vancouver Island as a colony. A decade later gold was found, and soon after the region was flooded by thousands of gold miners and other settlers that took up permanent residence. In 1871 British Columbia became a Province in the Dominion of Canada and was no longer under the direct rule of the British government. During this period immigration escalated, as did a burgeoning frontier society combining capitalism with the richness of the Province’s natural resources. Native people became subjects of the Crown, and their existence as politically autonomous societies was annihilated. In this century the government and other agents took religious, judicial, political, and educational measures to subjugate and transform the land’s native population into Canadian citizens. While the subjugation was never unproblematic, the opposition gained impetus in the third period, confrontation, from 1951-1999. This period is marked by increasing native political organization and vociferous demands to land and political rights by aboriginal people of Canada. Now, native leaders demanded equal rights and services to those of the Euro-Canadian
majority. Simultaneously, confrontations and statements concerning cultural identity and self-government increased.

Throughout the chapter I seek to pay particular attention to the developments in Kwakiutl territory. However, this description must be seen in the context of wider regional changes in the historical figuration. These regional changes provide the backdrop for the development analyzed in Parts Four and Five of this dissertation. However, a detailed analysis will not be forwarded until the subsequent chapters.

**Cooperation, 1774 - 1849**

Initial contact and cooperation between natives of the Northwest Coast and the Europeans was predominantly between natives and fur traders. The contact was based on trading furs, although this was not the only element of interaction as this section will show.

**The Maritime Fur Trade**

The first contact between Europeans and natives of the Pacific Northwest Coast was made in 1741 as Vitus Bering, a Danish captain, employed by the Russian government made contact at the Aleutians. It was not until 1774, as the Spanish sailor Juan Pérez arrived at Langara Island and traded with a group of Haidas, that the native people of present day British Columbia met Europeans. Soon after, in 1778, the British explorer James Cook anchored in Nootka Sound and traded sea otter furs for clothes, iron and muskets. It was later rumored that Cook traded these pelts for astonishing amounts in China. This was confirmed in 1784, and a year after the first British vessel arrived with the sole purpose of acquiring sea otter skins. Merchants from Boston, Spain, and France soon followed the British. By 1792 more than twenty vessels arrived in the area to barter skin (Cf. Fisher 1994, Gunther 1972).
By the end of the 18th century, the Chinese fur trade was the most lucrative enterprise with reportedly incredible profits, and it expanded immensely in the period. Gradually American vessels outnumbered British and Spanish vessels. The maritime fur trade peaked in the years 1792 - 1812. Maritime fur traders had no intentions of altering native societies. They were there to trade and relied on native supply of the furs in demand. Their presence in the area varied from one month and to staying there over the winter season, as the cargo had to be increased to make the voyage worthwhile. By 1825, the Hudson Bay Company had become active on the Northwest Coast by establishing trade posts, and gradually the maritime fur trade ceased to exist independent of the trade on shore.

The native people who were in direct contact with the European traders were primarily the Nuu-chah-nulth (Nootka) on the West Coast of Vancouver Island, and the Haida on the equally accessible Queen Charlotte Islands. The Kwakiutl remained peripheral to the direct involvement with European fur traders. Their participation in the trade was documented by their possession of muskets and other European items, and they did not seem surprised at “the white man” as they encountered George Vancouver's expedition in 1792 (Cf. Vancouver 1984: 624).

The maritime fur trade was not only a profitable business for the European merchants. From a variety of contemporary sources the shrewdness of the native’s bartering was noted (Fisher 1994: 4-5, Gunter 1972: 133). They rigorously asserted their demands and seemed well-informed about the presence of other merchants in the area, which would enhance their bargaining position. Women were often in a position of overseeing the trade and having the final say in the negotiations (Gunther 1972, Littlefield 1988). Initially, the natives’ demands were for items which had meaning within their own culture and were readily applicable, such as iron that was shaped into tools, and for hunting and warfare; muskets and ammunition. Over time, the demand changed towards cloth, clothing, beads, and eventually the Hudson Bay blankets which became a standard item in the expanding Kwakiutl potlatch.
Stealing, cheating, hostage taking, and sometimes plundering by both parties occasionally followed the trade between natives and Europeans. Both sides sought to gain the advantage in the trade through eliminating competition and acquiring goods and profits through all necessary means. It was noted in some communities that chiefs sought to monopolize the trade with the Europeans within the band (Kan 1989: 28), or they sought to turn the exchange with European traders into a ceremony of reciprocal gift giving to their own advantage, claiming they were too great to engage in simple trade (Gunther 1972: 102). There is also evidence that the natives, for instance different groups of the Nuu-chah-nulth, sought to eliminate their competition through warfare and in some instances sought to draw the Europeans into the conflict to their own benefit (Ferguson 1984: 285-92, Fisher 1994: 11).

The extent of intertribal fur trade remains unclear, but as the geography of the area became clear to the merchants they realized that the coastal natives were trading furs with inland groups, acting as intermediaries with estimated profits of two to three hundred percent (Fisher 1994: 15-17). It is likely that already existing trade patterns and economic techniques were enhanced and strengthened through the new sources of material wealth (Fisher 1994: 20-21, Duff 1964: 57-58). Sergei Kan asserted that the trade enhanced already existing social processes in Tlingit society (Kan 1989: 28). This may very well have been general for all Northwest Coast societies in the maritime fur trade29.

29 It is uncertain to what extent the initial contact had an impact on the eventual depopulation of the native population. Robin Fisher asserts that the impact of diseases such as foremost smallpox may not have been as drastic as asserted by many, and hence its impact on the social organization may not have been pervasive (Fisher 1994: 22-23). Also Robert Galois suggests that the first smallpox outbreak did not spread as vigorously as in later instances and did not cause the same rate of mortality (Galois 1994: 42-43). However, it is likely that disease and early contact had greater impact on the bands with more extensive contact such as the Nuuh-chah-nulth, the Haida, and the
The Land-based Fur Trade

By 1793, the first European explorers crossed the Rockies to the land that would be called New Caledonia. The North West Company was the first to establish land-based trading posts in the area in the beginning of the 19th century. In 1820, the North West Company went bankrupt and merged with the Hudson Bay Company. This company soon after commenced the construction of a network of fortressed trading posts so it could acquire the furs of the region systematically in fierce competition with Russian and American traders. Gradually, the Hudson Bay Company would gain the upper hand, and by the end of the fur trade it was the dominant agent in the trade. Fort Langley was established at Fraser River in the Lower Mainland in 1827. Four years later Fort Simpson was established at Nass River. In 1833 it was relocated on the Tsimshian Peninsula. The same year Fort MacLoughlin was founded at Milbanke Sound. Fort Victoria was established in 1843, and in 1849 the foundation of Fort Rupert followed, the first white settlement in Kwakiutl territory.

With the establishment of trading posts the maritime fur trade gradually lost its significance. Although the land-based fur trade changed methods, the fundamental relationship of interdependency and the mutual interest in the trade remained the same (Fisher 1994: 32-35). The mutual interest was indicated by the lack of large-scale raids on the trading posts. Furthermore, it was common for the fur traders to take native women as wives while living on the frontier, although they knew the upset it might cause in the civilized metropolitan areas in the East. Hudson Bay traders were mainly interested in creating a profitable business relationship rather than civilizing the savages (Fisher 1994: 42, Loo 1994: 24-25).

Salish who inhabited areas which were more densely populated and hence easier for diseases to spread in.
With the increasing importance of the trading posts the locus of the fur trade gradually moved inland. This process marginalized the west coastal settlements that had previously remained at the center of the trade. The Nuu-chah-nulth and the Haida sought other ventures, as the diversion of the fur trade and the depletion of sea utters became apparent (Ferguson 1984: 284-97). The inland shift of the fur trade benefited peoples who had hitherto been marginalized from the trade, among those the Kwakiutl communities.

As was the case with four Kwakiutl social groups that moved permanently to Fort Rupert after the establishment of the fort, the land-based fur trade caused significant changes for the geography and economy of native communities close to the trading posts. The natives still proved to be ample traders, and they exploited the fierce competition between the H.B.C., American, and Russian trading posts and vessels to gain high prices for their furs. The advantage of close proximity to the trade posts and intercepting the inbound furs was soon apparent, and they settled there to act as middlemen between native suppliers and the European buyers. These were highly profitable arrangements, which incensed the European traders as fur prices rose (Fisher 1994: 30-31). Native groups were acutely aware of their place in the trade, and they were successful in maintaining that position until at least 1840\(^{30}\). Conversely, social groups that did not live in proximity of the forts sought to circumvent any native interception to gain higher prices by dealing directly with the Europeans. This often led to violent conflict, plundering, and recurrent tension between many social groups (Ferguson 1984:279-80).

The location of the Kwakiutl at the inlets and fjords of the northeastern shore of Vancouver Island and on the small islands in the Strait of Georgia was central in intercepting and diverting the furs to Fort Simpson in the

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\(^{30}\) The advantages of trade posts for the economy of the social groups inhabiting the immediate area may offer a powerful explanation for natives not using military superiority to force out the incoming traders. Allowing their presence offered a powerful economic incentive, which was exploited by many groups.
North which offered considerably better prices than Fort Langley in the South. By 1840, the Hudson Bay Company sought to eliminate native middlemen as they gained full control over the fur trade. They were largely successful. The exceptions were the Heiltsuks (Bella Bella) and later also the Fort Rupert Kwakiutl. The early 1840s seemed to have been relatively peaceful until the northern natives started to come to Fort Victoria for trading.

As noted, the period was marked by significant shifts in territories and population. The former was due to the new opportunities derived from the fur trade, warfare, and tribal mergers. The latter was due to warfare and more significantly the 1835 smallpox epidemic, the measles epidemics in 1848, and to a smaller extent venereal diseases. Thus, the new economic structure provided some native groups with opportunities to enhance their military and economic position. At the same time the region was struck by severe epidemics resulting in serious population decimation in many areas. Increased warfare and population decimation triggered tribal relocations and mergers in the period.

As Robert Galois noted: “Warfare was a significant factor in the territorial changes that took place between c. 1780 and c. 1850.” (1994: 51) He argued that two major territorial movements for the Kwakiutl bands occurred in the period. One probable reason was the Ligwilda’xw-Salish wars, around 1825-1845, which were concluded by Ligwilda’xw Kwakiutl (Lekwiltok) gaining control over Cape Mudge on Quadra Island in 1847, and the Quatsino Sound wars, c. 1800-1820, pushing Nuu-chah-nulth bands southwards. This left the Gsugima’xw Kwakiutl (Koskimo) as the dominant band in the area (1994: 51-56).

Warfare mostly took the form of raiding, and it seems to have been a prevalent feature of both pre-contact and the fur trade period. There may have been different causes for warfare. Notions of insults, honor, shame, and revenge often served as pretext for tribal warfare, but there are also
instances where motivations may have been predominantly economical (Drucker & Heizer 1967: 17-19, Ferguson 1984: 271, Gunther 1972: 126).

As for the part of the Kwakiutl people there is, as suggested above, ample evidence of engagement in warfare. The Fort Rupert bands were dreaded for their raiding, plundering, and enslavement of their neighbors in the North (Ferguson 1984: 305, see also Donald 1997). There is also ample evidence of warfare between different Kwakiutl groups as for instance the 1853 Gusgima’xw (Koskimo) massacre of the Nahwitti (Ferguson 1984: 306, Fisher 1994: 57), and between the ‘Namgis (Nimpkish) and the Dzawada’enuxw (Tsawatainuk). Other Kwakiutl groups infamous for their plundering were the Ligwilda’xw. They conquered the strategically important Quadra Island and Campbell River from the Comox, and from these positions they attacked or extorted tax or gifts for safe passage from by-passers at this narrow point.

In the later period of the fur trade, the condition of many social groups was one of depopulation and changed economic basis. It is likely that the frequency of and wealth involved in potlatching increased as a result of the gains made in the fur trade (Duff 1964: 58-59). It is also likely that the importance of the ceremonial institutions, collectively known as potlatch, flourished as many social positions were left vacant in the wake of the decimated native populations. The potlatch will be dealt with in detail in the subsequent chapters. Suffice it here to say that it was an institution marking the social transfer of ancestral prerogatives. The transfer was marked by the distribution of gifts to those attending the do.

The fur trade was a period where the natives maintained political and social autonomy, and a period of exchange and economic transaction from which both parts benefited (Fisher 1994: xxix, Duff 1964: 54). Some social groups, such as those of the Kwakiutl, probably benefited more than others due to the shift in territorial locus of the trade. This relatively equal relationship was to change altogether in the following years.

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Subjugation, 1849-1951

The political and military sovereignty of the native peoples was jeopardized in the following period. In the period from the mid 19th century to the mid 20th century, social agents such as government and missionaries in various ways sought to forcibly alter the social and ontological structures of the indigenous peoples on the Coast. The Euro-Canadian agents sought to change the identity of the peoples they perceived to be “Indian.” These particular politics of identity can be viewed in a wider process of colonization, appropriately defined by Mary Ellen Kelm:

“I use “colonization” to describe a process that, outlined by James Frideres, includes geographical incursion, sociocultural dislocation, the establishment of external political control and economic dispossession, the provision of low-level social services, and, finally, the creation of ideological formulations around race and skin colour, which position the colonizers at a higher evolutionary level than the colonized. Canadian colonization – as an expression of the relationship between the First Nations and the Canadian state, settler societies, missionaries, and others – conforms to this process-driven definition. Unlike Frideres, however, I do not see the colonization process as operating on a single trajectory, inevitably creating an initially quiescent population of the putatively colonized, who when they finally awaken to their condition are unable to change their “subordinate status”. The power of colonization is never that strong. Rather, I see the processes of power inherent in colonization as being diffuse, dialectical, and subject to competing positions both from within the society of the colonizers and from the colonized.” (Kelm 1998: xviii, my italics)

As Kelm suggests agents within a wider process are diverse, their intentions, goals, and consequences are negotiated and often
contradictory, and they cannot be comprehended within a contingent process of colonization. Similarly, Ann-Laura Stoler pointed out that the political alliances the colonial processes on Sumatra did not follow racial categories but social class (Stoler 1989).

Being theoretically uncomfortable with the concept of “ideology,” (Foucault 1980: 118) I suggest that different areas of resources and meaning followed their own trajectories, rather than they were the result of a unified process of colonization governed by the advancing Europeans. In the case of identities, meanings and entire cosmologies became subject to political struggles insofar as two groups of Euro-Canadian society, i.e. missionaries and government, had an explicit agenda of molding and changing the identities of native people, among other their notions of the person. Some groupings of people of Euro-Canadian descent opposed this policy, whereas some actors of native descent zealously pursued the same aims as the missionaries and government. As will be seen below, colonization is better understood as a multidimensional entrenchment on various levels of social life.

**Mass Immigration**

In 1849 the British Government enhanced its geopolitical position in North America by declaring Vancouver Island a colony in the British Empire. Externally, this was a response to the American surge to the North. Internally, this declaration caused the establishment of military, political, and judicial authority in the area. This conversely diminished native political autonomy in the area.

Initially, the administration of the newly established colony was entrusted to the conglomerate Hudson Bay Company. In the formative years of the colony, company control and civil government were indistinguishable. The population of independent European settlers gradually rose throughout the 1850s and especially in the 1860s, and gradually the legal authority of the company as de facto and de jure government was challenged. The settlers had a different agenda than the fur traders, as they wanted land...
and independence from the controlling policies that H.B.C. sought to impose on the newcomers. On the basis of the notion of equality before the law in the liberal-democratic discourse, they argued that H.B.C. not only attempted to secure an economic monopoly, but also political control through the appointment of James Douglas, an old-time fur trader and H.B.C. executive, as Governor in 1851 (Loo 1994: 38).

After 1851, two processes were set in motion. From 1851-54, the arrangement of treatises for native chiefs to abandon their claims to land. The policy of the British government was one of acknowledging indigenous rights to land already cultivated before the advent of Europeans. Non-cultivated land, on the contrary, was terra nullis, uninhabited land. It was only some native groups in the area of Fort Victoria, Nanaimo, and Fort Rupert that signed treatises. None of the native peoples on the mainland ever signed a treaty31. The reserves allotted for the natives were unilaterally established and considerably smaller than advised by the Colonial Office. By 1860 the policy stumbled on the lack of funding, and subsequent governors chose to ignore native claims to land altogether (Loo 1994: 61).

The other dominant practice of the colonial governmental was the intensification of systematic and fierce punitive military action against natives opposing European settlement and pacification (Knight 1978: 234). Punitive actions were also taken against natives engaged in intertribal warfare, and by 1865 warfare had ended on the Northwest Coast apart from some minor occurrences. Under the threat of British ‘Gunboat Diplomacy’ British rule was imposed upon the natives (Gough 1984). Notably two incidents marked the Kwakiutl encounter with this military presence, namely the shelling of a Nahwitty village in 1850 and the destruction of the Fort Rupert village in 1865, leaving only the H.B.C. trade post unscathed.

31 The problem of land claims is to the present day in the center of native politics in both the Province of British Columbia and Canada.
Following the establishment of military dominance in the discourse of liberal-democratic law, the colonial government conceived of acts of violence between natives and whites as individual matters. This policy would both adhere to British legal discourse and avoid turning the matter into an opposition between natives and Europeans. However, colonial judicial power was first extended into the remotest regions of the colony and later province in the late 1880s, and up till then military presence to assert judicial authority was the rule.

The discovery of gold in the Fraser Valley in 1858 caught the H.B.C. unprepared. The discovery marked the first major European settlement in the area. Some 10,000 miners swept into the area from the USA and Europe. In the same period Victoria’s population increased to 3,000 inhabitants. In the wake of the Gold rush, the territory of New Caledonia was hurriedly transformed into the Colony of British Columbia. Eventually in 1867 the colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia were fusioned.

The new wave of goldminers had different aims and intentions than the established population. The interests and agendas of the Europeans became diversified and more complex by the arrival of this new type of settlers. Employees of the H.B.C. no longer constituted the European population in the business of the fur trade. It also had a vast number of miners, an emerging Victoria-based urban elite and farmers demanding land to cultivate (Knight 1978: 238-39). The former were losing their political and economic influence little by little.

The miners, their motivations, and their actions remained peripheral to the life of the Kwakiutl, but certainly had a huge impact on the lives of the natives in the Interior of British Columbia. The relations between miners and natives were a constant source of tension, as the racial attitudes and actions of the miners did not accommodate to the natives’ way of life.
“The gold miners were the advance guard of the settlement frontier. These newcomers not only had a different set of attitudes from those of the fur traders, but they also made quite different demands on the Indians. The reciprocity of interest between Indians and Europeans broke down because settlers came not so much to accommodate to the frontier as to re-create the metropolis. Vancouver Island and British Columbia were changing from colonies of exploitation, which made use of indigenous manpower, to colonies of settlement, where the Indians became at best irrelevant, and at worst an obstacle, to the designs of the Europeans.” (Fisher 1994: 96)

The settlers came to recreate a different society with different cultural forms and social practices in the new world. While the fur traders relied on native labor and trade, the settlers came to establish a way of life with little room for the indigenous culture. Although settlers still constituted a relatively small, although incremental, part of the population in the 1850s, their aims increasingly influenced colonial politics in general and Indian policy in particular (Fisher 1994: 60).

Another segment of white immigrants who were to have profound influence on native life was the missionaries who were becoming active on the Northwest Coast. Missionary activity was not a part of the fur trade. It was concomitant with the settlement period. The systematic missionization began in the 1860s initiated by the Catholic Church, followed by the Anglican Church, and eventually the Methodist Church (Knight 1978: 244). In 1863, the Catholic Saint Michael Mission was established in Fort Rupert as the first mission in Kwakiutl territory. Despite the intense efforts of Catholic priests it was aborted in 1874. In 1878 an Anglican mission followed. The mission transferred its location to Alert Bay in 1880 (Duff 1964: 90, Gough 1982, Nielsen n.d.).
Robin Fisher has argued that during the 1860s the British influenced the remote Kwakiutl, Haida, Nuu-chah-nulth, and other natives from the Coast and the Interior than less those living in proximity of European settlement. Not until later were they to become affected by the new institutions and practices (Fisher 1994:97, see also Harkin 1997a). The lack of success of early missionization among the Kwakiutl was a likely result of the limited European influence by the 1860s and 1870s.

Another important feature of the period was the major outbreaks of epidemics. First the smallpox epidemic in 1862-63 followed by the influenza epidemic in 1868. A major smallpox epidemic broke out in Victoria in 1862. There was anxiety that the large native population on the reserve in Victoria would be infected, and subsequently houses were burned down and the natives went up the coast of Vancouver Island and spread the disease to the native settlements along the coast. Up to one third of the native population died before the authorities vaccinated them. It is estimated that the Kwakiutl population declined between 74 to 78 percent in the period c.1835-41 to 1881. The subsequent social disorganization from the demographic disaster left many communities with vacant social positions, uncertain lines of succession, and the task of dealing with the apparent political, social, economic, and demographic changes of the region.

In 1871 the Colony of British Columbia became a Province in the Dominion of Canada. The development of industry and the integration in the worldwide capitalist economy would follow, and so would class differences as a political and ideological part of the internal division of Euro-Canadian settlers. The jurisdiction of Indian policies was transferred to the Federal government that would have different objective than the former Colonial Government and the new Provincial Government. The natives remained a majority of the population until the 1880s when the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway stimulated a new wave of European immigration to the region.
Frontier Society

During the later decades of the 19th century, European and Asian immigration to British Columbia was considerable. In the same period exploitation of the natural resources in the emerging industries boomed. The industrialization of the Northwest Coast primarily revolved around the fishing industry. In the following half-century fishery, canneries, boat building, and related trades emerged on the coast. Other industries with considerable importance also emerged such as the logging and mining industries.

There is considerable disagreement on the extent of native participation in the labor force of the frontier society. Robin Fisher on the one hand suggested that “Indians became at best irrelevant, and at worst an obstacle” in the emerging capitalist economy (Fisher 1994: 6). Rolf Knight on the other hand argued that natives, as parts of the labor force, were intimately involved in industrial wage labor until 1930, and that this part of native history must be acknowledged (Knight 1978: 9).

One of the consistently important industries was the fishing industry, and natives were involved from its beginning around 1870. The techniques and skills were not merely extensions of old skills, but the knowledge of fishing sites and waterways provided certain continuity from traditional roles (Knight 1978: 9-11). The canning industry also expanded from the 1870s onwards. Labor was found among the natives and Chinese in particular. The native labor was often recruited by a native who acted as intermediary for the canneries, and subsequently the natives traveled to the locales of the canneries for work. The Fort Rupert bands were among the first to participate in the industry (Drucker & Heizer 1967: 15-18). Knight estimated that in the decade at the turn of the century roughly one third to one fourth of the workers in British Columbian canneries were natives (Knight 1978: 88). However, they gradually seem to have been edged out
of the industry by Japanese laborers. Thus the trend was somewhat reversed in the 1930-40s\(^\text{32}\).

It must be remembered that up until the 1880s, natives still comprised the majority population in British Columbia, and it seems improbable that the majority of a population remained irrelevant to the expanding economy of the region altogether. Natives were engaged in a wide range of different industries, fishing being the most significant, which peaked in the years 1870s-1890s. Thereafter, their enterprise gradually demised due to legislative barriers which restricted native participation in the work force and the economic recession in the region in the 1890s.

Fisher's assertion of the general irrelevancy of native labor may have been accurate, when considering the problem macro-economic scale of the Province. From the mid-1880s through the next half century, the non-native population expanded from approximately 24,000 to 670,000. In the same period native population remained roughly the same. This, however, does not contradict that natives maintained a considerable importance in certain niche industries, where the labor force was divided and recruited along ethnic lines.

In Kwakiutl territory forestry, fishing, and mining industries were established, and its indigenous population participated in the labor force at these sites (Galois 1994: 30). They also traveled to canneries as far away as Fraser Valley. Monetary wealth increased in the period, and very significant amounts were spent on potlatching (Codere 1966: 8-48, 91-96). The relative affluence acquired through wage-labor not only expanded the economic significance of the potlatch, it also changed the seasonal

\(^{32}\) The fishing industry in B.C. was to a large degree organized along ethnic lines with native, European, and Japanese fishers as the largest groups. The gradual marginalization of Japanese Fishermen had a long history of non-participation in the strikes at the end of the 19th century, the anti-orientalism of the Fishermen's union, and eventually the Japanese-British hostilities of WWII (Knight 1978: 94-100).
patterns of Kwakiutl. An illustrative example is the move of the 'Namgis (Nimpkish) from Xwalkw (Whulk) across the Sound to Alert Bay due to the establishment of saw mill, cannery, and mission here. The settlement gradually became permanent.

Economic activity cannot be isolated from other events in this historical epoch. Missionary activity, as noted above, became increasingly influential, and especially the Anglican Columbia Coast Mission of the Church Missionary Society sought to convey the spiritual message in a combination with secular enterprise which, amongst others, brought a cannery to Alert Bay in 1881 and established a sawmill there as well.

**To Christianize the “Heathens”**

As stated above, missionaries started operating on the coast in the late 1850s and more extensively from the 1860s. They reached the peak of their influence in the 1890s through to 1910s.

The three dominant denominations were the Catholic Church, the Anglican Church, and the Methodists. They operated under the same agenda: convert the *heathen Indians* and transform them into civilized, prosperous, and moral Christians. In other words, the missionaries came with an agenda of transforming the native into an ideal Christian Citizen.

Denominational rivalry between the missionaries existed, and the strategies employed also differed. Their areas of influence mostly followed tribal boundaries, making areas solely Catholic, Protestant, or Methodist. The mission offered the chiefs a modified form to continue their authority in a time of rapid changes. This form of authority simultaneously eroded the traditional basis of power. At the same time the Church instigated an institutionalization of its influence through building churches, hospitals, and schools as a basis for medico-symbolic domination.

In the period 1870-90s, a significant number of native men and women acquired wealth through various enterprises in the developing cash
economy. If they did not inherit high-ranking positions, the mission offered a powerful symbolic position to acquire rank in the community (Knight 1978: 245). Early on the missions had profound influence on the reorganization of political power within the bands, and also in the dealings with government representatives of the Department of Indian Affairs and the Province.

The Catholics sought to install a completely new social and political organization in the native community. This required the abandoning of all traditional beliefs, feasts, potlatches, and dances. Often this was combined with a territorial relocation (Duff 1964: 89-92).

The missionaries of the Anglican Church enjoyed early success with the establishment of Metlakathla, a Christian village entirely inhabited by Tsimshian converts and followers of the charismatic Reverend William Duncan. This mission trained many young clerics.

The strategy employed by the Anglican Church was to impose a “Protestant Ethic” as suggested by Forrest LaViolette (LaViolette 1961), and, one might add, “the spirit of capitalism” to complete the Weberian parallel. The strategy involved preaching, personal work, education, medical aid, and in some instances economic enterprise (LaViolette 1961: 26, Knight 1978: 249). The ideal civilization was not “the contemporary Euro-Canadian society of frontier BC, but … a variant of the Victorian English villages.” (Knight 1978: 248)

The Methodists were based in the Nanaimo and Victoria area until the 1870s, whereupon they established a stronghold at Port Simpson in Tsimshian territory. This was partially a response to the success of Metlakathla. As opposed to the Catholics and the Anglicans, they relied on lay preachers among the natives to carry out the ecclesiastical duties. They also relied on medical aid and education as other institutions that would eventually transform many aspects of native communities. Between 1860
and 1910, over 90 percent of the native population became adherents of one Christian mission or another (Duff 1964: 87).33

**Christian Utopia**

The Christian missionaries’ discourse on contemporary Euro-Canadian society amounted to a civilizational critique of the gradually secularising European societies. In this context, missionaries set out on a path of salvation of peoples who were in touch with the advance guard of this civilization. Missionary attitudes towards civilization were ambivalent. On the one hand, civilization and Christianity were intrinsically related, and missionaries were convinced about the superiority of their belief and the progress that European civilization would present to peoples in the New World. On the other hand, the gradual secularisation of society as a whole, the disruption of communal bonds and solidarity in favor of urbanization were also elements of “civilization” which missionaries looked sternly at. Modern, urban space represented both the pinnacle of civilization and its nemesis as a space of temptation, sin, and breakdown of mutual care and solidarity.

Nevertheless, missionaries considered civilization and Christianity as two mutually dependent endeavors that had to be pursued in the salvation of the Indian, although the order of the pursuit was debated among the different denominations. However, different strategies tended to have the same results (Henderson 1974).

The utopia of the missionaries was to inculcate Christian faith, moral virtue, asceticism, and hard work into the aboriginal people living in industrious, self-sustainable communities. The missionary agenda aimed

33 However, this does necessarily imply that Natives were Christianized as opposed to traditional. Reasons to adhere to a Christian denomination often derived from political or economic convenience. Furthermore it does not tell us anything about the religious practice of the adherents, which very well could be a syncretized form combining native cultural practices with elements of Christianity.
towards complete acculturation insofar as native customs had to be abandoned altogether, and adherence to civilized European standards was the objective. It entailed the radical upheaval of native customs, beliefs, and symbolic world. Such was the utopia of the missionaries.

The Church Missionary Society

This discourse was perpetuated by the most successful and prominent missionary on the Northwest Coast, the charismatic William Duncan of the Church Missionary Society, who considered Christianity the only “fit instrument for awakening the slumbering offspring of Adam.” (Duncan 1858, quoted in Fisher 1994: 128) Duncan managed to establish heterotopic space for his Tsimshian followers, segregating the converts from their godless relatives who stayed at Fort Simpson.

The utopian aspirations of the C.M.S. could also be found at the heart of their collaboration with the government at Alert Bay, where they sought to establish a heterotopic site:

“[In 1904] the Department surveyed a forty acre lot belonging to the Industrial School Reserve at Alert Bay into one acre lots, and had it set aside for ex-pupils who wished to build a home and to escape from the environment of villages where the “potlatch” was still being practiced… and this policy has been followed ever since. " (Todd to Secretary DIA 1938/03/29, RG 10, Vol. 6429, file 875-9, part 3, my insertion)

The utopian hope for “progressive” natives was illuminated by space being divided into property exclusively available to former pupils of the Anglican Industrial Boarding School, if they were baptized and renounced potlatching (Spradley 1969: 128).

Due to Duncan’s spectacular accomplishment, subsequent C.M.S. missionaries were sent to Metlakathla for training and to assist him. Among
the missionaries receiving training at Metlakathla was Alfred James Hall, who shortly afterwards established his own C.M.S. mission in Kwakiutl territory and would remain there for some thirty years before retiring (Gough 1982: 76-77). For the C.M.S. missionaries the objectives and agenda were no less than a radical conversion of native life. Based on William Duncan's "laws" for joining the heterotopian community at Metlakathla, converts had to adhere to the following rules:

1. To give up Indian Deviltry.
2. To cease calling in conjurors when sick.
3. To stop gambling.
4. To cease potlatching or giving away their property for display.
5. To cease drinking intoxicating liquors.
6. To cease painting their faces.
7. To rest on the Sabbath.
8. To attend religious instructions.
9. To send their children to school.
10. To be cleanly.
11. To be industrious.
12. To be peaceful.
13. To build neat houses.
14. To be liberal and honest in trade.
15. To pay the village tax.

(Henderson 1974: 305).

The “taming of a race,” as the C.M.S.’ own historian denoted the endeavor, involved a complete acculturation insofar as native customs had to be abandoned altogether, and adherence to European standards was the objective (C.M.S. 1916, vol. iv: 385). The missionaries were confident that adherence to their ways led to improvement and salvation of the heathens. In true Protestant fashion, Duncan symptomatically believed that his sojourn into the hitherto little known New Caledonia was divinely ordained, as he was subject to “the direct mercy from and a special inter-
position of God on my account.” (Duncan 1873, quoted in Fisher 1994: 126)

The conceptions of the Indians were for the missionaries primarily cast in religious and humanitarian terms. On the one hand, the common origin from the hands of God, and hence their humanity, was acknowledged insofar as they were both “offspring of Adam,” but the Indians were conceived of as a vanishing race succumbing to the evils of lesser members of civilization. It was the task of the missionaries to supply the natives with ample aid in the shape of health, knowledge, faith, and eventually salvation and survival in the new world (Columbia Mission Annual Report 1863:18-25)34.

The Indians were at the one and same time superstitious, immoral, infidel, and heathen, yet they were also ignorant, dormant of the light of God, and childlike. These latter categorizations implied a degree of innocence to them as they were being swept away by the evils of the ever advancing, increasingly secularized western civilization. As it was noted in one of the surveys of the miseries of the Northwest Coast natives;

“Poor creatures, they know these things are wrong, but the temptations are too strong. Alas! That white men should be the tempters!” (Columbia Mission Annual Report 1862:7)

Interestingly, the ambiguities of the imaginary Indian coexisted in the discourse of the missionaries. On the one hand, they were conceived of as an infidel, brutish, and atrocious people, but at the same time childlike

34 The ambiguity of the missionaries towards “civilization” was witnessed in their dissent towards the inhabitants of Victoria. The “evils” of civilization could possibly contaminate the “pure” minds of the (noble) savage, and in this way the missionary endeavor was a civilizational critique, an agenda of social change for the betterment of things gone wrong with contemporary civilization. The duplicity of the concept was prevalent in the missionaries use. On the one hand, the Indians had to be protected from its evils, and on the other hand civilization was a concomitant task of the propagation of the gospel.
innocent humans who could still be salvaged by God on the brink of their extermination. The missionaries wanted to save the Red Indians, the term itself implying a difference in race and a common humanity, through guiding them to the path of God and making them recognize their sins and change their lives and barbarous customs (Cf. C.M.S. 1899, vol. ii: 612-13).

**Missionary Policy**

Missionization was thus implemented under the banners of teaching, medical aid, preaching, and in some instances through involvement in economic ventures. The school was arguably the most important institutionalized element in the politics of identity among the natives of the Northwest Coast. Similarly, missionary work regarding the natives' health was political, insofar as it was a struggle over bodies and healing practices firmly embedded in cosmological and moral notions (Harkin 1997: 87-98, Kelm 1998: 102). Therefore, it is also reasonable to speak of politics of education insofar as education is functional at one level, but at another level it is political as its representations are embedded in relations of power of what is taught, how and by whom, where and when (Ball 1990: 2-5)\(^\text{35}\).

It was the strategy of all missions to conjoin formal education with religious instruction. The Anglican missions established day schools, whereas the Catholics relied exclusively on the residential school.

\(^{35}\) Also the burgeoning industrialization of the frontier society carried colonial connotations in Alert Bay. Rev. A.J. Hall engaged in business as a store operator and saw mill owner funded by the mission in order to provide employment for his converted, former school pupils who thus broke out of the economical interdependency of the extended lineage. This engagement earned Hall an unrelenting enemy in H. Spencer, an Alert Bay trader who was married to one of George Hunt's daughters.
This proved to be the most efficient model, and in the 1870-80s the Methodists and Anglicans established residential schools as well. The curriculum was based on the three big R’s – reading, writing, and arithmetic – and vocational training. The emphasis on discipline and obedience was fierce for the thirty to sixty pupils who spent eleven months away from their families (Haig-Brown 1988, Miller 1996, Milloy 1999). The intent of the residential school was complete adaptation to mission standards. Native language and customs were banished and perpetrators subjected to punishment.

Alfred J. Hall expressed what might rather have been an ideal than a description of actual developments. Certainly, his reflections suggest the importance of the education of children as the institutional foundation of “civilizing” the Kwakiutl.

“Moreover, the desire of the educated Indian is to become a White man. He wishes his children to read and speak English, and though he talks to his wife in Indian, to his children he invariably speaks English. Hence we hear of a boy speaking both Indian and English not coming to Sunday school, because he is put into a class taught in Indian. The old people have always objected to the Gospel because it would make them “white men”, and I find that, in a very real sense, their argument is correct. It seems impossible for the children who have spent five years or more in our schools to remain Indian. They have acquired a love for the White man’s food, his clothing, and language, and they will, as they grow in years, if they keep true to the Church, recede more and more from the habits of their Indian parents. With us it is not true that the Indians are dying out, but rather they are becoming assimilated to the white race, and this is their destiny.” (C.M.S. Annual Letters, 1901: 783-84)

From the 1880s the Department of Indian Affairs (DIA) assumed the majority of the operating costs for the residential schools as was the case
with the Alert Bay Industrial Boarding School when it was established in 1894. The DIA and the missionaries had similar interests in the reorganization of the “primitives,” in imposing a “civilizing” behavior through education, and in uprooting traditional values. In fact, the major part of the DIA’s funding was spent on residential schools. On other issues such as land and resource rights, however, the D.I.A. and the missionaries were at odds as their motivations and agenda contradicted each other.

The Canadian Government and the “Indian Question”

British colonial policy was generally constituted of the golden trinity of Christianity, education, and agriculture. This threefold policy towards the aborigines was believed to set a “civilizing process” in motion (Fisher 1994: 68). Later, outside observers would rather coin these processes in less benevolent and Eurocentric terms by coining them processes of colonization.

In 1871 the Confederation made native relations in British Columbia a part of Federal responsibility. Six Indian Agencies were established in 1881. Amongst them was the Kwawkewlth Agency eventually located at Alert Bay. Several other agencies were subsequently established. At each Indian Agency an Indian Agent was appointed who would administer the relations to the natives on the reserves in the agency, and ideally forward their demands and needs to the DIA. The Indian Agent assumed a powerful position as the personification of governance in the agency (Cf. King 1967). At Alert Bay from 1906-1932, the Indian Agent’s authority coincided with the office as Justice of Peace. This, in effect, made him plaintiff and judge in cases against native individuals (Halliday 1935: 172-96).

Whereas agriculture was only possible to a very little extent on the Northwest Coast, the tenets of Christianity and education were perpetuated in the Federal government policy towards the natives. As Chief Superintendent General Duncan Campbell Scott phrased it in 1920, the end of the policy was:
“Our [the DIA] objective is to continue until there is not a single Indian in Canada that has not been absorbed into the body politic, and there is no Indian question and no Indian department.” (Scott 1920, in Cole & Chaikin 1990: 93)

In other words, the aim of the policy was one of complete assimilation. The cultural, social, and racial distinctiveness of natives as a group was to disappear. This was not to be achieved through physical annihilation; rather it was to come about through forced acculturation.

As opposed to agendas of the missionaries, the importance of Christian belief as an end in itself was downplayed in the government’s utopian project. It was an inherent means in the civilizing process along with education and agriculture. The eventual goal was that “Indians” were to possess moral integrity, industry, and the ability to enfranchise into the wider capitalist society indistinguishable from other members of its civil society as citizens of the emerging Canadian Nation. Daniel Francis neatly summarized the government’s ultimate goal of citizen building:

“A property-owning, voting, hard-working, Christian farmer, abstemious in his habits and respectful of his public duties – that was the end product of the government Indian policy.” (Francis 1992: 204)

Although the objective of the policy may have been assimilation, one has to distinguish between the intent and the impact of the policy. Whereas the intent of the policy clearly was assimilationist, all policies did not the serve an assimilationist goal. An example is the establishing of reserves for the native population, which on the one hand were a result of the specific non-citizen status awarded the indigenous population, and as a protection from the “evils” of lesser members of urban “civilization.” On the other hand, the reserves directly worked against the assimilationist intent in the policy, since they served as communities of social and cultural learning.
Thus the policy of allotting reserves to its indigenous population, which was partially a result of the non-citizen status of the native population, their specific ownership of land, and the result of missionary concerns for the welfare of the natives. However, the reserve policy may have worked directly against the overall goals of the government’s Indian policy of assimilation (Cf. Francis 1992: 202-203).

**The Land Question**

From the beginning, the DIA inherited the intricacies of the British Columbian Land title question. This problem the second governor of the Colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia sought to solve by making treaties with the different native bands. Subsequent provincial government ignored any existence of native claim to land altogether and allocated the natives in different reserves much to the protest of the natives. The DIA was faced with a Provincial government that demanded the downsizing of existing reserves, whereas natives demanded their title to land recognized (Fisher 1994: 146-74).

In 1912 the provincial government and a special appointed commissioner formed the *McKenna-McBride Agreement* that would establish a Reserve Commission to make the final and complete allotment of Indian Lands in the Province. Some native bands refused to discuss the allotment of reserves before the question of native title to land was solved. The Commission published its report in 1916 and was ratified by both Federal and Provincial governments in 1924 (Duff 1964: 66-68). The land title question was anything but solved by the ratification.

During the period different native groups, often encouraged by missionaries, sent petitions to the Provincial government, and in 1887 the Nass River natives sent a three-man delegation to conjoin native demands. In 1906 a delegation went to London where they were interviewed, but it did not lead to any immediate results. In 1916 the *Allied Bands* was founded. It was an intertribal organization that sought to make native claims on lands heard and solve the question. They managed to
postpone the ratification of the Reserve Commissions report, but their demands in terms of financial compensation and size of reserves per person were never met.

**Education as Civilizational Measure**

The actions taken to pursue this agenda in the Kwawkewlth Agency ranged from an, in all instances, paternalist policy to outright persecution of individuals who sought to perpetuate their native customs and demand political rights for natives.

The paternalist conception was witnessed in the General Superintendent's conception of the Kwakiutl as unprotected, defenseless, and freely exposed to the mixed blessings of European civilization such as whisky and prostitution. Initially, the lack of “progress” was attributed to the evil influence of lesser subjects of the white race, who were also culpable for the vanishing of native culture.

“This process of Christianizing Indians... is exceedingly difficult, mainly from the baneful influence of White men, whose principles are not at all in accord with such designs, and who live among and freely mingle with them chiefly for the gratification of evil desire. It is no doubt greatly due to the many untoward effects arising from this circumstance, that the present race of Coast Indians is fast disappearing, and at the rate they are now being swept from light and life, it will not be long hence ere they exist only in memory.”

(Chief Superintendent Powell in DIA 1876 Annual Report: 33)

Initially, the Kwakiutl and other Northwest Coast natives were conceived of as hardy and industrious people who had to be encouraged, on their way towards civilization, to engage in business ventures, ownership of land, and learn the benefits of ambition and industry (DIA 1875, Annual Report: 34).
Eventually, a growing concern towards the “immorality” of the Kwakiutl regarding radically different marriage customs emerged. DeBeck, the Indian Agent of the Kwawkewlth Agency was thence convinced that the uncivilized manners could be attributed to the flourishing whisky trade and the loose marriage customs (DIA 1902, Annual Report: 256).

However, it was soon realized that the Kwakiutl people were “a most difficult lot to civilize,” (Vowell in DIA 1879, Annual Report: 112) and hopes were invested in educating the younger generation as the older generations were conceived as incorrigible and regretfully preoccupied with potlatching. Efforts were invested in the younger generation of children placed in an Indian Day School (1881), an Industrial Boarding School (1894), and eventually a Girl’s home (1894, 1913). In 1929, a large residential school was established at Alert Bay, which was residence for native pupils of Anglican denomination from the Kwakiutl territory and further north.

In 1879 the government’s study of the American Boarding School System was made in the so-called Davin Report. The report identified institutionalized education as the most important means in the civilizing process of natives. Children had to be subjected to the rigor of Anglo-Saxon education from an early age. Thereby schooling became the most important institutional site for government and church agents who explicitly targeted native identity as a subject for “civilization.”

As mentioned, the DIA funded the majority of the cost of running the schools, and the daily responsibility was entrusted to the Anglican missionaries from first the Church Missionary Society of England, and later the Columbia Coast Mission which was part of the Anglican Church of Canada. The civilizing hopes that the DIA attributed to schooling were neatly summarized by the long-term Indian Agent in the Kwawkewlth Agency, William M. Halliday:

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“With regard to the progress of the ex-pupils of the industrial school, it may be said that the results are disappointing. It was thought that teaching and training would show the younger generation the folly of the potlatch system that prevails, and though many of them in private express a very decided opinion on the evils of their system, none have sufficient backbone to come out openly and denounce it. However, possibly one expects too much. Our own civilization was not built up in one generation and even at this day there can be found people who call themselves white, and who pass as citizens of our Empire, but who fall away below the standard of the Indians both as regards morality and progressiveness. It is considered by many that the ultimate destiny of the Indian will be to lose his identity as an Indian, but that he will take his place fairly and evenly beside his white brother. It is only by systematically building from one generation to another that this will be accomplished. The ex-pupils merely form the second link in the chain between barbarism and civilization. Some of them are married and have children attending the schools, but they will only be the third link.” (Indian Agent, William Halliday in DIA, Annual Report 1913: 400)

The quotation touches upon a range of prevailing thoughts; the juxtaposition between the barbarism of native customs and civilization of Europeans, and also the evolutionary link between the two. The Indian was conceived of as an unruly infant who would eventually progress to the same stage of civilization as his White brother. This implies that the In-

36 The development in anthropology towards a deconstruction of the term and the actual analysis of the different peoples did not have an impact on the policies of missionaries or federal policy towards the natives. Despite the presence of prominent anthropologists such as Franz Boas and Edward Sapir, their recommendations on the potlatch, and even less their notions of culture relativism, were not a part of the discourse of the aforementioned social agents in the period concerned. For the same reason the anthropological conceptions of the natives of North America are not pursued
dian and the White were separate by race but unified by humanity. Nietzsche once put it, I believe, that two elements have to be of the same kind to be compared and distinguished from one another. The road to the superior civilization of the White man was attained through teaching, morality, and Christianity.

**Judicial Measures**

The allocation of natives onto reserves and education, however, were complemented by another pillar in DIA’s policy; judicial action was also taken to outlaw native practices and knowledge. The first Federal legislation on natives was passed in 1880. Both the DIA and the missionaries had it as their defined task to civilize the “heathen Indians.” In the view of the missionaries the natives practiced what they perceived to be slavery, nudity, sexual promiscuity, cannibalism, superstition, and Indian deviltry (LaViolette 1961: 31).

Both parties realized that the potlatch as a social institution was at the center of native social organization, and they attempted to eliminate or minimize the potlatch through condemnation. This strategy proved unsuccessful as many natives were adamant about continuing potlatches, and even white traders encouraged potlatches as its consumption was essential to their business venture (Cole & Chaikin 1990, LaViolette 1961: 36-37). Helen Codere documented that potlatching of the Fort Rupert Kwakiutl even expanded in numbers and goods involved throughout the period (Codere 1966: 89-97).

In 1884, under the lobbying of the missionaries, an amendment was made to the Indian Act that banned potlatching and winter ceremonials. Everyone convicted would be liable for two to six months of incarceration (LaViolette 1961: 43). The tremendous obstacles of traveling, the remote locations of many native villages, and the limited personnel and funds of here, as early evolutionism remained influential upon the discursive practices of Federal agents.
the DIA made it difficult for the Indian agents to enforce the law which furthermore suffered from ambiguous definitions, making the judge dismiss the first case against a member of the Mamalilikula (Mamalilikula) Kwakiutl in 1889 (LaViolette 1961: 60-63). Some amendments were made to make the section of the act more contingent in 1895, 1914, and 1918 (DIA potlatch files 1913-47). Throughout this period, the natives engaged in potlatching despite the harassment, intimidation, and disapproval of Indian Agents and missionaries alike. As mentioned, some Indian agents acted as Justices of the Peace and could try to convict natives for their participation in potlatching. Hence, the Indian Agent was at the same time law enforcer and expected to represent the demands and needs of the natives. It was first in the late 1910s that measures were taken to effectively enforce the law. The Namgis Kwakiutl Dan Cranmer’s potlatch at Village Island in October 1921 was to mark a significant turn in the enforcement of the law.

Native Political Action

Some participants in the Cranmer potlatch were tried and convicted to the full extent of the law. The regalia involved were confiscated, and the majority was sent to the National Museum in Ottawa before its eventual return to the Kwakiutl communities in Cape Mudge and Alert Bay (Mauzé 1994b, Saunders 1995, 1997). The event marked a turn in policy insofar as the government now sought to actively enforce the law. To the Kwakiutl people the trial stands as a hallmark of injustice, a beginning of active pan-tribal political participation, and a recreation of potlatching in a way that could be undertaken in spite of the law (Cole & Chaikin 1990: 118-24, LaViolette 1961: 90-91, Loo 1992: 127-128).

The potlatch was, symbolically and socially, a central institution for the political struggle, which interlinked the DIA, missionaries, “non-potlatching” native fractions, and Kwakiutl adhering to the potlatch. Throughout the ban of the potlatch the latter engaged in various attempts to circumvent the potlatch law ranging from petitions and parliamentary lobbying to public display of the potlatch. They argued it was a system of credit and gift
exchange, institutions that were present in another guise in Euro-
Canadian culture as well (Loo 1992: 134-36). Some anthropologists
attempted to support the potlatch, among them Franz Boas and Edward
Sapir. Boas maintained throughout his nearly sixty years of preoccupation
with the Kwakiutl that the potlatch was a system of credit (Boas 1897,
1966)\textsuperscript{37}.

Some natives on the Coast, the Kwakiutl in particular, did not only resist
actively, politically, and symbolically against the potlatch law. From around
the 1930s some of the new generation of missionaries, incredibly, seemed
to have realized the injustice of the potlatch law and started backing the
natives in their struggle against the Indian Agents.

The consequences of the ongoing struggle were evidenced in the 1946
revision of the Indian Act. In 1951, certain restrictions on native customs
and practices were omitted. Two years earlier, natives of British Columbia
were granted eligibility to vote at provincial elections. This right was
granted in federal elections in 1960.

The other central issue in native-European relations was the recurrent
question of the title of land. From 1916 the native protests changed from
general claims towards specific demands. Instrumental in this policy
change was the Allied Bands. Now it was native leaders who dominated
the scene, and not whites representing them. Native leaders had become
knowledgeable about the legislation and policy making of Canadian
government, and now held a fluent command of English.

\textsuperscript{37} This view of the potlatch has been contested by several studies, Edward S.
Curtis (1915) and Drucker and Heizer (1967) being the most notable. One
speculates that a reason for Boas not correcting his view of the potlatch or
engaging in a discussion about his assertion may have been the political
consequences of its correction. Today, natives have in fact pointed out that
the two were separate, yet intrinsically interconnected institutions (see chapter
5).
The political activity of the Allied Bands culminated in the parliamentary joint committee hearings in 1927, as the land title question was made a legal claim for the first time. To the natives, this was a huge symbolic victory as it implied some degree of acceptance of their native identity (LaViolette 1961: 129, 143). The provincial and federal governments were faced with the prospect of appearing in court. The provincial government stubbornly refused this, whereas the federal government was forced to develop a policy which thought its own laws to be adequate to solve the question. The result of the hearings was a $Can 100,000 settlement, which was interpreted as a defeat by the natives. Soon afterwards the Allied Bands collapsed.

Three years later, in 1930, a new intertribal organization was established, as the Native Brotherhood became an influential non-governmental organization. This organization was to represent native political and economic interests in the years to come. The Native Brotherhood grew out of handling Coast natives’ interests in the fishing industry, and eventually it gained influence and support by bands of the interior as well (LaViolette 1961: 148-152). In 1942 the Kwakiutl groups joined this organization.

In 1946 the first issue of the Native Voice appeared. This newspaper was to cover native issues, problems, and cultural politics from the natives’ point of view in the years to come and worked to the betterment of conditions for natives and a recognition of their identity as natives. It is very likely that the intensified public voice and support to the Native Brotherhood had a severe impact on the revised Indian Act as their leaders spoke in parliamentary hearings during the years of revision.

After World War II it was impossible for intellectuals and legislators to ignore the underlying racist foundation of Canadian Indian policy when the discussions on native affairs were elevated from oblivion in the Canadian public. In 1946-48, a parliamentary committee conducted hearings on the Indian Act and finally recommended a complete revision. The revised Indian Act was implemented in 1951. One element was the omission of
the anti-potlatch law from the revised Indian Act, which meant that it was, dubiously, no longer illegal (Miller 1991: 220-21).

Confrontation, 1951-1999

In the past half century, native leaders and activists have become increasingly vocal in their demands towards the government. Native rights to land and marine resources and self-government have featured on the political agenda. However, the ways these demands were put forward have varied from the distant rumbles of militant action over alternative manifestations such as road blocks, demonstrations etc. to legal action and political negotiation. Markedly, the political ideology of the government has increasingly shifted towards one of multiculturalism, which simultaneously has created opportunities for native politicians to voice their demands through this discourse (Legaré 1995). It is also notable that the skills of native leaders in political negotiations with Provincial and Federal government have increased immensely over the years.

Education and Rights

The post-World War II era not only marked the continued economic development in Canada, the expansion of the welfare state, it was also an era where the impact of economic and social marginalization of Canada's indigenous population became abysmally evident. Despite general economic prosperity until the early 1970s, and better funding of the economic development in remote regions, the native population in general remained marginalized.

The rate of secondary school graduates from either residential schools or provincial schooling, where native children increasingly gained access, remained despairingly low. The rate of unemployment remained high, natives had higher rates of incarceration, higher rates of alcoholism, and higher rates of teenage pregnancies than their Euro-Canadian counterparts. Despite these massive socio-economic obstacles, the period
saw natives confronting the government on these issues through organized political action on both federal and provincial levels. However, the political system within the native social groups also changed in the period. In 1957, the first Band Council elections were held and thereby formal political leadership was passed on to democratically elected councilors. The system of hereditary chiefs in the Northwest Coast region thereby lost claim to political decision-making in relations to the government.

One illustrative point of the increasing organization and confrontation of natives internally and externally was the 1959 Native Brotherhood of B.C. Land Conference where the unsolved question on land claims was readdressed. The importance of pan-Indian organization and joint action became increasingly apparent, as British Columbia alone has approximately 150 First Nations with averaging a population around 1,000 at the turn of the millennium.

1961 in many ways became a significant year in terms of political influence. Natives were finally granted the right to vote at federal elections and had thus obtained citizen rights equal to those of Euro-Canadians, although the question of their special status as indigenous population remained anything but solved. The same year the first truly national pan-Indian political body, the National Indian Council, was established. The “Indian” as a category invented and invoked by Europeans became a tangible political reality. In the era of decolonization, the issue of internal native colonies in Canada became pressing for the Canadian political establishment.

The 1963-68 Pearson Government was the first to promise consultation with native leaders on the impending revision of the Indian Act. These

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38 As has been the case among the ‘Namgis First Nation, elected council’ors may also be hereditary chiefs, thereby over-lapping the status of the two. The relation between the elected system and the hereditary system is ambiguous internally for First Nations.
series of consultations were commenced just before the Trudeau government took over. The same year internal conflict divided the National Indian Council which split into the National Indian Brotherhood and Canadian Métis Society (Miller 1991: 233). By consulting native leaders, Trudeau’s government gained initial native support. Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau and Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs (DIAND)39 and now Prime Minister Jean Chrétien introduced the so-called “White Paper on Indian Policy” the following. Much to native leaders’ dismay, the policy proposal was merely continuing the policy of assimilation and disregarding the demands of native leaders. At the core of the policy was the idea of abolishing natives’ special legal status. Natives were to be treated as any other citizens, their special rights and services were to disappear as well as DIAND was to be dissolved. In the historian James R. Miller’s rather sarcastic words, the White paper argued:

“Canada’s Indians were disadvantaged because they enjoyed a unique legal status. The problems of poverty, high rates of incarceration, political impotence, and economic marginality were not attributable to insensitive government policies or generations of racial prejudice. It was not because Indians lacked control of their own affairs or because they had been systematically dispossessed of their lands that they experienced severe economic and social problem. No. The explanation was that the law treated them differently, that they had special status as Indians.” (Miller 1991: 226)

Native leaders protested vocally and forcefully of the Federal government’s attempt to abolish its legal and treaty commitments. Obviously, the process of Native involvement and consultation in the policy-making process had been to no avail. The following year

39 Throughout its existence the Department of Indian Affairs led a turbulent organizational life under changing names and changing ministerial authority as Department of Indian Affairs (DIA), Indian Affairs Branch (IAB), and in recent years Department of Indian and Northern Affairs (DIAND).
government started to abandon the policy of the White Paper which had come under vigorous attack from natives and scholars alike. However, the deep suspicion toward government for attempting to implement the White Paper policy one step at a time still lingers to this day.

**Winding down the Residential School System**

From the late 1960s it was evident that the residential school system had failed its official objectives abysmally, which was to educate natives on a par with other Canadian citizens. The native level of education was far below that of Euro-Canadian youth. The access to provincial schooling for native youth did little to remedy the situation. The growing cost of the residential school system and churches and organizations wanting to cancel their engagement in this grand “civilizing” project prompted the Federal government to phase out the residential school from 1969 and onwards. In 1973 the government finally transferred control and funding of education to Indian bands. At Alert Bay, “St. Michael’s Residential School” closed in 1974 after operating for 45 years. Two years later ‘Namgis started their own school with the intent to teach B.C. provincial school curriculum along with Kwak’wala language and traditional cultural activities as a part of the curriculum. Since then a number of bands-run schools have been established all over the Province.

The transfer of funding to social programs from DIAND to the bands also gradually changed its function from being a service agency towards becoming a funding agency. To some extent this was a result of native demands towards self-government. However, the role of self-government for native bands remains economically and politically ambiguous and not clearly defined as it is entangled in the wider constitutional crisis in the Canadian political system, which has dominated the millennium's past three decades.
From Oka to Delgamukw

It can be argued that the previous two periods marked the beginnings of an incremental process of political action and organizations that focus on aboriginal rights. Today, other forms of activities that I coin cultural politics complement this process. At the heart of these political struggles is to this day the issues of self-government and land claims that are intrinsically connected insofar as political control without economic means is meaningless. However, over the past two decades the style of representation and forms of political action has multiplied, emphasizing the increasing professionalism of native leaders.

Symbols have always been powerful rallying points in discourse of nationalist and ethnic movements as they mark boundaries between inclusion and exclusion, between belonging and non-belonging. In recent years, symbols of traditional culture increasingly gained significance internally and externally for native identity on the Northwest Coast (Harkin 1997b, Mauzé 1997a, 1997b). Since the 1980s, canoe gatherings, potlatches, traditional clothing and other kinds of activities and events gained prominence for native politics on the Coast. In this vein Kwakiutl bands succeeded in the repatriation of a large part of the regalia confiscated in the 1921 Cranmer potlatch. The regalia have been divided between two cultural centers, one at Cape Mudge and the other at Alert Bay.

This form of symbolic representation and cultural assertion has been complementing or incorporated into other forms of political assertion: litigation, activism, lobbying, and negotiation. They have dominated natives bands’ and organizations’ relations with Federal and Provincial

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40 This development is by no means original to the Northwest Coast people. It has been part of the strategy for a number of indigenous peoples to symbolically mark their presence and demands towards government, corporations, NGO’s, and other actors involved (Cf. Wright 1998).

41 The history of their establishment and comparison of representation have been vastly documented (Clifford 1991, Mauzé 1994b, Saunders 1995, 1997).
government, and increasingly relations with economic interest groups for forestry, fisheries and mining. The latter groups retain business interests in the land claimed by natives to be their rightful possession. The forceful statements on aboriginal rights also prompted the National Indian Brotherhood to reorganize itself and become the Assembly of First Nations (AFN), symbolically underlining the point that they constitute a multitude of nations that existed before the arrival of the Europeans. The political activities earned some results such as the 1982 Constitution Act which reaffirmed and recognized existing native treaties. However, it did nothing to resolve the question of aboriginal rights and self-government.

A further victory came in 1984 when the so-called Bill C-31 was passed. Native women and children had been stripped of their official “Indian status” when they married Euro-Canadian citizens, and were no longer allowed to take up residence on reserves. Effectively, many were still considered natives in their local communities. Now these women and children were able to reclaim official classification as “Indians.” Today, the First Nation is responsible for accepting new members to the band based on Bill C-31. In British Columbia this effectively doubled the native population, as many women and children sought to regain their native status. Currently more than 150,000 natives with Indian Status live in the Province.

The era marked significant, yet hard-fought political progress for natives that has led to split and dissent amongst the natives themselves several times. In 1985 the Assembly of First Nation split on difference in agenda along the line of treaties, as some members pursued aboriginal rights, and others primarily treaty rights. For the majority of B.C. native bands, they never signed a treaty. The same year the Mulroney government set down the Nielsen Task Force which did not make use of native consultation, but rather relied on external consultants. The report recommended a diversion of funding to the bands, dissolving funding to comprehensive land claims, and cutback on core funding (Miller 1991: 245). It also opted for the government to pursue a strategy of self-government defined as a
municipal style of self-government only granting limited political and judicial autonomy to the First Nations. Natives once again challenged the recommendations of the report and managed to change the federal government's resolve to implement the policies suggested by the report.

**Litigation as a Political Means**

Whereas the above achievements were reached through negotiation or activism, other important victories came through litigation. A number of significant victories were the 1985 ruling that the DIA had mismanaged its responsibility to act in the natives’ best interest in the 1985 Musqueam First Nation vs. the Queen in the so-called UBC Golf Course Trial. Another important decision was the 1990 Sparrow vs. Queen decision that granted aboriginal rights to food fishing. That is, admitting natives non-commercial fishing to supply their communities with fish and thereby overriding the Department of Fisheries’ restrictions on fishing.

However, litigation was not always in favor of natives. In 1991 in the Delagmuukw vs. Queen decision, B.C. Supreme Court dealt all natives a terrible blow by dismissing aboriginal title to land. The Supreme Court of Canada since revoked the decision, which was regarded a huge victory for the native land claims (Culhane 1998). The decision forced the B.C. provincial government back to the table with the First Nations opting for a settlement through treaty negotiations.  

Outside the Northwest Coast the stifling of the Meech Lake Constitutional accord and the Oka standoff in Quebec the same year also served native political awareness and solidarity. However, drastic militant political measures as those in Quebec have not been taken by First Nations on the Northwest Coast.

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42 In 1992, Federal government established a six-stage procedure to conduct treaty negotiations. Not all First Nations have opted for negotiations. This underlines the deep-rooted suspicions to Federal government for adhering to treaties.
Aside from the revoked Delgamuukw decision, the 1996 publication of the Royal Commission of Aboriginal People Report was a significant step. The report analyzed natives’ conditions and firmly recommended future policy measures should be based on native consultation. In 1999 the Nishgaa, one of the plaintiffs in the Delgamuukw case, signed a treaty with Federal and Provincial government granting the band limited compensation for land, future inalienable land rights, and municipal style self-government. The treaty is widely expected to create precedence for treaty negotiations in the B.C. Treaty Commission. For the Kwakiutl bands, 1999 was also a year of cultural celebration as the new Big House at Alert Bay was established after an arsonist burned down the last one.

The next years are critical for the development of the indigenous peoples on the Northwest Coast. Politically, some form of self-government for many First Nations is beckoning through negotiation or litigation as the most probable courses of action. Economically, the recession in traditional industries where Coastal natives found employment such as fishery, logging, and to some extent mining form a trend towards a new local occupational structure. New kinds of employment such as eco-tourism may prove the only alternative to further clientization of the Welfare State. Socially, there are indications that the trend of dysfunctional families, teenage pregnancies, and alcoholism and drug abuse are slowly being reversed. Programs to address healing, and aboriginal justices programs have been set in motion. Culturally, interpretations of past symbols and practices were framed in present contexts and became the basis for popular mobilization. “Culture” has become a powerful signifier in natives’ attempts to define and negotiate a place in contemporary Canada.

**Summary**

The historian James R. Miller aptly sums up the relationship between Europeans and natives in Canada as going through three different stages
from initial cooperation towards subjugation, and finally developing into an era of confrontation (Miller 1991: vii-viii). As the structure of this chapter indicated, the relations on the Northwest Coast may be neatly summarized under the same headings, although the time span differs somewhat, since contact was delayed by three centuries on the Northwest Coast.

As shown above, during the process of contact the relations between natives and Europeans changed form and content. The nature of the economical transactions changed from trade to wage labor. Politically and socially, the natives maintained their autonomy during the fur trade. It was an era of cooperation. Gradually, Europeans enhanced their political and military position, as native communities weakened due to massive depopulation and subsequent instability in the social organization and continuity. British military dominance was secured by the mid-1860s, but political dominance in the remoter regions did not follow until the late 1870s and 1880s.

Emerging European settlement, territorial expansion, enterprise, and the determined missionary penetration of native communities marked the colonial period. Gradually, the interplay between natives and Europeans became more complex as new agents entered and became active in the region. Their agenda, motivations, and activities differed. During the process it was no longer solely the presence and interests of the fur traders that natives had to deal with. Urban settlers, crofters, gold miners, missionaries, colonial government, and eventually the Indian Agents and the federal government were all agents to be reckoned with.

The Euro-Canadian dominance and impact on native life continued in the periods after the Confederation, as distinct institutions as Indian Agencies, residential schools, missions, a system of law, and hospitals were established on native reserves. I argued that government and missionaries played a pivotal role in the change of native communities. In the same period, Euro-Canadian society also changed: from the early fur trade to vast immigration. This process was marked by agriculture and en-
terprising in the area, and eventually colonization became manifest as province in the Dominion of Canada. In this period not only economy and social organization changed, so did attitudes towards natives.

After the 1920s, native political activity and organization became present, most notably in pan-tribal organizations such as the Allied Bands and subsequently the Native Brotherhood who challenged the conceptions, laws, and rights imposed on them by Canadian society.

The incremental political organization and activities of natives tribally and intertribally have gained momentum until the present. It was an era of subjugation.

After the 1940s liberal democracies, with their notions of individual freedom and equality before the law, became dominant in the Western world. Natives, albeit not always in consent, have increasingly confronted Federal and Provincial government for its discriminatory policies. Through political competence and the use of negotiation and litigation they have gained considerable influence over their own affairs. Some native leaders argue it is not sufficient. They are opposed by some corners in the political establishment and the population as a whole that are not sympathetic towards native claims for aboriginal rights and self-government. Thus, natives became increasingly vocal culturally and politically, representing themselves in the quest for economic integration and political influence and justice. Over the past half century the influence of the clergymen has nearly vanished, and the direct influence of the Department of Indian Affairs has been limited. The processes of globalization have increasingly linked the figuration as a whole not only to the rest of Canada, but also to the United States and the global economy as a whole.

By conceiving of the region as a historical figuration with inherent and changing relations of power between different agents in different interrelated fields such as economy, law, politics, religion, and culture, I
have sought to show the development of native-Euro-Canadian relations and their most significant changes.

While local events in Kwakiutl territory have been addressed throughout the chapter, a concerted effort to understand the socio-cultural fabric of these communities, and how they responded to colonization and the encroachment of these institutions, remains largely unexplored. The subsequent chapters will focus on this level of analysis and investigate these developments.
Chapter 5. 19th Century Kwakiutl

Analyzing 19th century Kwakiutl social formation is inherently a reconstructive effort, which bears certain ramifications. On the one hand is it an abstraction, which is not lending much to the historical or individual particularities of individuals or collectivities. The level of individual and collective production of meaning under specific historical conditions is not the scope here. Rather than that, I seek to delineate the cultural and social formation present at a time, i.e. the 19th century, prior to the time when Euro-Canadian colonization gained its momentum. On the other hand there also exists an imminent danger in such reconstructions per se of projecting today’s information onto 19th century Kwakiutl. Somewhat awkwardly, this bias may constitute a “retrospective prospective historical narrative.” The course of history following its many branching points highlights a complexity of actions and interdependencies, where specific consequences are mostly unpredictable. I do not seek to impose a retrospective teleology, a historical “necessity” onto the narrative. Such trajectories are rather a result of narrative construction than a tacit representation of historical causality.

In chapter two, I proposed that personhood was linked to the social order. I also proposed that the study of social institutions in which categories of the personhood are constituted, learned, and enacted may be an interesting avenue to understanding the politics and poetics that constitute specific identities. While this chapter is mainly concerned with the socio-cultural fabric on a local level, the analysis of Kwakiutl personhood is consistent with this analysis, but it is confined to chapter 8 for reasons of analytical clarity.

In this sense, this chapter provides an understanding of the social institutions in which Kwakiutl personhood is constituted. I hope that the subsequent chapters sufficiently address the “lack” of agency displayed in
the analyses in chapters 5-8. Certainly the textual presentation does not imply an immutable social structure prior to European contact.

Therefore, this chapter, upon an introduction to the geography and demography of the Kwakiutl, focuses on the socio-political structure of these people. In the chapter I argue that rank pervades this structure within and along lines in the extended families, numaym. I will also analyze how rank is connected to the interlinked institutions, known in ethnographic literature as potlatch.

Clarifying “Kwakiutl”

The term “Kwakiutl” is far from unambiguous. In various scholarly contexts the term denoted: (i) A language, (ii) a dialect, (iii) an assembly of social groups, and (iv) one single tribe (social group). To clarify this confusion I will shortly address these notions.

Firstly, until about 25 years ago “Kwakiutl” as a language denoted an overall category including languages spoken by neighboring groups. It constituted not only the name of one overall language group, but also one of its three dialects, Kwakiutl, Haisla, and Heiltsuk.

Secondly, the language of the Kwakiutl people has been recognized as a language in its own right, which is known as Kwak’wala. Thence, Haisla and Heiltsuk are also regarded as languages in their own right.

Thirdly, in earlier Northwest Coast literature the assembly of Kwak’wala speaking people was referred to as “Southern Kwakiutl.” The term

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43 Kwak’wala is also subdivided into different dialects spoken by various Kwakiutl First Nations. Li’kwala is the dialect spoken by the Ligwilda’xw nations in the South, Na’kwala is the dialect in the far north, and Kwak’wala is spoken by the First Nations in the center. The Gwatsinuxw (Quatsino) and Gusgimaxw First Nations speak the dialect Gus’kwala. The Musgamakw nations also speak a distinct dialect.
“Northern Kwakiutl” was reserved for the Haisla and Heiltsuk speaking groups. Once the faulty linguistic foundation for these terms was recognized, the term Southern and Northern Kwakiutl made little sense.

Finally, the term “Kwakiutl” also refers to one particular social group that is located at Fort Rupert (Powell in Galois 1994: 12-13, MacNair 1986)44. Therefore, in 1980 the U’mista Cultural Center suggested the term “Kwak’waka’wakw” (“those-who-speak-the-Kwak’wala-language”) to be used for the assembly of communities previously known as “Southern Kwakiutl.” Meanwhile each individual community were to be known by its own name45.

However, I will retrieve to the anthropologically more familiar term Kwakiutl to refer to the assembly of First Nations comprising of Kwak’wala speakers in general. In the following I will refer to the four groups located at Fort Rupert as the “Fort Rupert Kwakiutl” or by the specific name of each social group. In example the ‘Namgis people at Alert Bay will be referred to as ‘Namgis Kwakiutl.

Regional Context

The Kwakiutl inhabited a territory in a region sharing substantial similarities in subsistence base and political, social, and cultural practices. This region consisted of different ethnic groups. General classifications are based on a criterion of language rather than effective social and political unity (Duff 1964: 12-15, Kroeber 1939)46. As I outlined in chapter,

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44 The term itself is not unproblematic since it may construct a social category which was not socially and historically effective. The term remains contested by indigenous speakers and anthropologists alike (Canizzo 1983, Saunders 1997).
45 See appendix B for overview of these names.
46 Although the notion of culture areas has been dismissed as untenable in anthropological theory, connections of trade, intermarriages, warfare, and potlatches linked together the inhabitants of a larger area (Goldman 1975: 71-136
4 intertribal relations were far from peaceful in the fur trade periods. What little ethno-historic evidence there is suggests that this was the case in the pre-contact period. On the contrary, Leland Donald’s comparative and painstakingly documented survey suggests that imminent danger of raids or other forms of military incursion was a permanent fixture of the region (Donald 1997). Warfare was not a type of social exchange necessarily directed outside the linguistic groups. Both oral history and ethnographic records suggest that shifting alliances and intra-Kwakiutl warfare occurred. Insofar as recollections of intertribal exchange, whether peaceful or military in kind, transcend the era of contact with European traders, it is likely that Kwakiutl were fairly knowledgeable of the geo-political distribution in the region. But it is also likely that the fur-trade enhanced contact with remote settlements.

**Geography**

As the figure 4.1 indicated, the Tlingit speaking people lived in the far north between Yakutat Bay and Cape Fox. The Haida speakers lived further south on Queen Charlotte Island and the adjacent southern parts of Prince of Wales Island. The Tsimshians lived in the region of Skeena River on the northern mainland to Prince Rupert Island in the South. Southeast of the Tsimshians lived the Bella Coola. Further to the Southeast in the area of Gardner and Douglas Channel lived the Haisla speakers. Further east lived the Salish speaking Bella Coola from the Burke and Dean Channels to the lower parts of the Bella Coola River Valley. Further south of the Haisla speakers and west of the Bella Coola lived the Owekeeno, speakers of Heiltsuk, primarily around Milbanke Sound and Rivers Inlet. To the south of the Heiltsuk speakers lived the Kwakiutl peoples. They inhabited the shores of the mainland, its adjacent isles, and the northeastern part of Vancouver Island. The Nuu-chah-nulth (Nootka) inhabited the West Coast of Vancouver Island. Southeast of the

72, Ferguson 1984: 301-302). However, the boundaries of this region were vague insofar as patterns of migration, trade, and warfare also existed between people of the coast and the interior (Ferguson 1984: 273-298).
Kwakiutl lived Salish speaking peoples extending as far as the bays of the Gulf of Georgia, Puget Sound and the Olympic Peninsula, and most of western Washington to the Mouth of the Columbia River\textsuperscript{47}.

Figure 5.1. Kwakiutl Territory, c. 1880

Geographic and linguistic boundaries were not static and shifted several times. Generally, Kwak’wala is linguistically a part of the Wakashan

\textsuperscript{47} The linguistically based categorizations of Northwest Coast geography elude a number of historic instances of indigenous practices. Border communities between linguistic groups have a rich history of appropriating meaning and gaining political alliances from both directions. This is highlighted in a recent study of the Comox people in bordering Kwakiutl communities in the North and Salish communities in the South (Everson n.d.).
language family which also comprises Haisla, Heiltsuk, and Nuu-chah-nulth. These languages are significantly different from other languages spoken in the region (Powell in Galois 1994: 12, Berman 1994). Evidence suggests that significant territorial movements occurred in the post-contact period due to changes in demography, economic conditions, seasonal patterns, geopolitical considerations, warfare, and mergers of groups (Taylor & Duff 1956, Galois 1994: 50-56). This by no means excludes that such transitions may have occurred prior to European influence on the Coast.

Examples of post-contact geographical appropriation to new conditions were the establishment of the Hudson Bay Company trading post, Fort Rupert, in Kwakiutl territory. Subsequently four groups, Kwakiutl, Walas Kwakiutl, Kwixa, and Komkiutis moved to Fort Rupert to enhance their position as profitable intermediaries between other natives and European fur traders. Another example is the southward movement of the Ligwilda’xw groups, another assembly of social groups within the Kwakiutl people, which eventually resulted in their conquest of the geo-politically important Quadra Island and adjacent shores from the Salish speaking Comox around 1847 (Galois 1994: 55).

From this position the Ligwilda’xw could intercept the trade, and tax or raid oncoming canoes at the narrow entrance of the Discovery Passage (Mauzé 1992: 41-65). Geographical patterns changed for the Fort Rupert bands and Ligwilda’xw bands, and subsequently other Kwakiutl bands occupied their previous locations. Generally, the combination of population decline and growing integration in Euro-Canadian cash economy by the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century produced a tendency towards altered geographical and seasonal patterns for the Kwakiutl bands (Galois 1994: 58-59). It is reasonable to assume that the economic integration, meta-political structure, and advancing military technology produced an intensified regional pattern of resettlement and eventually permanent settlement.
Demography

The numerous estimates of the size of the pre-contact indigenous population on the Northwest Coast differ substantially, but a reasonable estimate is around 200,000 (Boyd 1990: 135). The obscurity of pre-contact population has also been the case for the Kwakiutl population. One of the more recent estimates of the pre-contact population is 19,125 made by Robert Boyd (Boyd 1990: 144). A more conservative estimate of the 1835 population is 8,500. The large disparity may be partially explained by epidemics, increased warfare, and very uncertain survey methods at the time. However, it is known that epidemics and warfare subsequently reduced the Kwakiutl population until it reached an all-time low in 1928 with only 1,088 survivors (Codere 1990: 367). In the course of 132 years since first contact in 1792, the Kwakiutl suffered a staggering 88 - 95% population decline. Especially the 1863 smallpox epidemic was devastating to the Kwakiutl as it was for many native communities along the Coast. The effects of the decimation on social organization and cultural practices and institutions were ubiquitous.

Michael Harkin’s fine study of the neighboring Heiltsuks may provide a convincing parallel to productions of meanings and courses of actions taken following this disaster (Harkin 1997a). However, as opposed to the Heiltsuks who in the course of a few years transformed to paragons of Christian virtue, the response was far more ambiguous among the Kwakiutl. The entire population never took to Christianity in such a way. The following chapters will address this development at length.

Ecology and Residence Patterns

The commonly held assumption in Northwest Coast ethnography was for many years that the ecological conditions of the area provided an abundance of natural reserves with varied flora and fauna throughout the coastal area (Drucker 1955, Codere 1966). More recently, various scholars
have challenged the notion of natural abundance\textsuperscript{48}. While Brian Ferguson emphasized that the control over means of subsistence was a cause of warfare in the pre-contact period, this scenario of scarcity seems more applicable to West Coast peoples than to the Kwak’wala and Salish speaking groups (Ferguson 1984).

Despite variance between social groups socially, culturally, and ecologically, the following pattern can be said to have general application to the different Kwakiutl peoples. While the fall and winter prevented effective food gathering and the Kwakiutl were preoccupied with their winter ceremonials, spring and summer were periods of intense food gathering. The seasonal pattern was divided into two: summer and winter.

In the summer the Kwakiutl peoples were primarily fishermen, hunters, and gatherers. Their residence changed depending on the resource they needed, and each social group exploited several resource sites to which rights were carefully defined. Therefore, Kwakiutl did not have permanent residence in the summer, whereas the winter residence was somewhat more fixed. The nomadic character of the Kwakiutl seasonal cycle is aptly illustrated by the Big Houses, where the skeleton of beams was left standing, while they packed the boards and brought them along to erect their summer residence.

Their economic techniques were highly sophisticated. Along with the natural resources and storage techniques this enabled a stable subsistence base. Varied marine life, dense vegetation, woods, especially cedar, and animals such as mountain goats, bears, and deer supported Kwakiutl livelihood. However, the marine life provided the main source of subsistence added by berries, seaweed, and other produces. As mentioned, the rights to the means of subsistence were owned by the

\textsuperscript{48} Cf. discussions between Suttles, Vayda, and Piddocke neatly summarized by John Adams (Adams 1981: 373-74).
nobility who received a part of the game from members of his numaym allowed access to the means of subsistence.

The essential means of transportation were canoes that varied in size from two to fifty persons. Technically, canoes were refined dugouts, and the canoes proved very navigable. They were mostly employed in near coast sailing. In the pre-contact period clothing was made of skin and strings of cedar bark.

Socio-political Structure

In the course of history, the Kwakiutl have been comprised of more than 30 different independent groups. Fusions and fissions of these groups took place as results of population decimation. For strategic reasons such as military, security, and economic assessments as well as internal conflicts, new formations of social groups occurred. These social groups, or as some anthropologists may have it, bands or tribes, were politically autonomous, and it makes no sense to speak of one politically integrated Kwakiutl nation. Irving Goldman argues that 13-15 of the social groups comprised a “ritual confederacy” connected by trade, exchange of gifts, intermarriage, and in some instances even warfare (Goldman 1975: vii, - 21, 31-35). However, this confederacy only involved social groups in proximity to and with strong relations to the Fort Rupert Kwakiutl which Boas gathered his information from. This data also provides the basis for Goldman's analysis. Moreover, this “ritual confederacy” may very well be a construction of the late 19th century due to population decimation and influx of monetary wealth, increased intertribal ceremonial events as well as a pragmatic concern of filling empty “seats” with relatives from adjacent groups. If the “ritual confederacy” itself was not a construction of the time, certainly its role was enhanced in the late 19th century and onwards.

49 See Helen Codere for a particularly illustrative overview (Codere 1990: 361) (Appendix C).
Franz Boas counted 20 bands excluding the four Fort Rupert bands, which he accounted for as sub bands, and the six Ligwilda’xw bands (Boas 1966: 38-41). While accurate, Boas does not provide much information on the contemporary population or existence of the groups at the time of his writing. Robert Galois, based on the geography of settlement patterns in Kwak’wala territory, estimated that 23-27 groups existed in 1850, and that the number declined to 19-20 by 1914. The decline in numbers corresponded to a period of warfare, epidemics, and relocation that contributed to tribal mergers (Galois 1994: vii-ix, 50).

Numaym

Each social group was comprised of 2-7 numayms\(^50\). The social unit of the numaym has tantalizingly evaded anthropological kinship categorization. After various descriptions as a clan, sept, and patrilineal descent group, Boas resorted to applying the emic term, numaym. In his ground-breaking study Claude Lévi-Strauss compared the numaym to the European noble houses (Lévi-Strauss 1982: 163-187). The numaym comprised lineages (’namdlala) sharing the same ancestor. The majority of members of the numaym were biologically related, although this was not always the case.

Wayne Suttles appropriately summarized the numaym in the following way:

“It was a social entity that owned one or more plank houses in a winter village, and several seasonal sites where it had the right to harvest certain resources. It had its own tradition of origin, identifying its first ancestor and its rights to its resource sites, hereditary names, and ceremonial privileges. The numaym consisted of a head chief, lesser

\(^{50}\) Following Robert Galois I use the singular; numaym and plural, numayms as advised by the U’mista Cultural Center. This is opposed to Boas’ use of numaym and plural numayma, and Goldman’s numema.
chiefs, and commoners, together with their families. The numaym chief was identified as the descendant of the founding ancestor and inheritor of his power, but other families within the numaym might have other origins (Boas 1935a: 43). The numaym can also be described (Boas 1966: 50) as a set of ranked positions, each associated with a name and certain privileges.” (Suttles 1991: 86)

Thus, a defining principle for the social organization within the numaym was rank based on genealogical proximity to the first ancestor.

**Rank**

That is, the numaym possessed a limited number of *seats* that needed to be filled. These seats, rather than the boundaries of the group, constituted the nucleus of this form of social organization. Undoubtedly, the numaym comprised the pivotal social and ideological unit of the Kwakiutl. While social groups were ranked the ranking system did have limited political impact outside each numaym. One Kwakiutl social group did not hold political office over another. The ranking was merely a ritual order.

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51 Boas (1966: 38-41) lists 97 different numayms, which is likely to be less than the actual number. Boas estimates that each numaym consisted of 100 individuals (Boas 1966: 47). More probing estimates list the number between 80-120. Assuming that each numaym was comprised of 80-120 individuals, the total Kwakiutl population ranges between 7,760-11,640. Robert Galois estimated that between 23-27 social groups existed in 1850. In Kwakiutl oral tradition the number four is sacred and described as the ideal number of numayms per social groups. With 23 social groups comprising between 80-120 individuals, the population around 1850 was between 7,360-11,040. With 27 social groups comprising between 80-120 individuals, the population around 1850 was between 8,640-12,960. Galois’ complete list of social groups recorded numbers 32. If all existed at the same time comprising between 80-120 individuals, the population would range between 10,240-15,360. All estimates are far from Robert Boyd’s estimate of 19,125. Using this methodology, the lowest population estimate is 7,360, and the highest 15,360. I am reluctant to believe that more than 15,000 Kwakiutl lived in the pre-contact era.
While this ranking can be perceived as inter-tribal, there also existed an intratribal ranking between different numayms within one settlement. Again, internal ranking bore symbolic rather than limited political authority. Each numaym had a chieftainship, “ugwame” (the very top rank) or “kla’ugwugame” (you stand right at the top). The highest ranked person of the highest ranking numaym was considered the chief of the social group, although decisions were made in counsel with chiefs of the other numayms in the settlement. That is, the ranking order was politically and symbolically significant within the numaym, while it was primarily symbolically significant in relation to other numayms. An example is that no numaym chief could force another to join in war by way of political authority alone. Such decisions needed skilled negotiations calling for the shared ancestry of the groups and possible gains of such military endeavors.

The residential patterns of the settlements also illustrated the intratribal ranking. Typically, the four highest nuclear lineages of each numaym lived in a Big House, “gukwdzi,” while lesser families of the numaym lived in an adjacent Big House. When painting house fronts became prevalent in the second part of the 19th century, the numaym chief’s Big House would display the crest of the numaym at the house front (Jonaitis 1991: 72), while the Big House of the lesser families would not. Furthermore, the Big House of the highest ranked numaym would be located in the middle of the village. Generally, all houses were situated in a row facing the water. However, some settlements such as the ancient settlement X̱aw̓ xe medicinal plant inhabited by the ‘Namgis was fortified and built on the slopes facing the river mouth.

**Political and Ritual Authority**

In other words, the key to ritual and political authority was ascription based on ancestral prerogatives. To some extent achievements could add to the social stature of a person through sponsoring numerous ceremonies and the acquisition of additional ceremonial prerogatives. In Kwakiutl cosmology, a supernatural being such as the killer whale or the wolf gave
life to the first people and established their ancestral homes. Ideally, the head chief of the highest ranked descendant was a direct descendant of the supernatural being through a line of primogeniture. Such stories pertaining to the origin of the numaym were at any given time embodied by persons. Individuals personified the sacred names of the numaym. These names can be understood as “titles” or “seats” which are transferred from one generation to another.

The titles denoted a social position within the numaym and carried certain rights and obligations. Titles were emblematic in crests decorating house fronts, memorial poles, masks, headdresses, and later button blankets. Titles carried along symbolic property in the form of rights to performing songs, dances, origin stories, carved masks, and other regalia.

The titles, however, also carried along material property in the form of economic rights to exploitation of certain resource sites. The seat gave the person ownership to harvest the resources of a specific resource site. The ownership of the site was traced to oral histories, which authenticized the ownership of the land. Kinsmen or others who were to make use of these resource sites had asked for permission and paid tribute to the titleholder. The total symbolic property, or title holdings, of the numaym was called “lada” (treasure box).

Several numayms shared names and crests. It remains unknown to what extent this coincidence was a result of symbolic exchange of certain crests, or the symbolic borrowing and ritual inspiration which pervades the whole Coast52.

52 Marianne Boelscher established transactions of crests among the Haida (Boelscher 1988: 140-150). Franz Boas was unable to establish an interrelationship between ancestors of the different numayms of different social groups by the same name. Nor was I able to trace any record back to transactions of origin crests. This, however, may not lead to dismissing an assumption that this is the case. Rather, it is inconclusive based on my ethnographic record.
The person holding a certain title was referred to with this title as his name. Thus the individual, the name, and the social position were identical in public discourse. I shall explore this further in chapter 8. Suffice it here to say that the title was thought to hold a symbolic property, “lugwe” (supernatural gift), which gave the person specific symbolic and ritual authority. In this sense symbolic and political authority were intrinsically related. Those carrying symbolic authority were also political and economical authorities through the prerogatives of the titles.

Titles were the source of social inequality. Each numaym held a limited number of titles. It has been a subject of great discussion in ethnographic literature whether Northwest Coast communities were rank based or class based (McFeat 1995). In some respect this discussion was timely ended after 50 odd years by Leland Donald’s study documenting widespread slavery on the Northwest Coast, thus introducing an ignored strata of the societies to the debate (Donald 1997: 272-93). Donald’s study shows that most communities had slaves who were either war captives or items of barter. In emic classificatory systems, slaves (“baku”) were hardly

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53 George Hunt recounted that the 13 social groups: Kwakiutl proper, Walas Kwakiutl, Komoyoi, Kwixa, ‘Namgis, Tlalitsis, Ma’amtagila, Da’naxda’xw (Tenaktak), A’wa’etlala (Awaetlala), Dzawada’enuxw, Gwawae’nuwxw (Gwawaenuk), Ha’xwa’mis (Hakwamis), and Kwikwasutainexw altogether held 658 positions (Boas 1925: 83). Several large social groups are not included, e.g. Mamalilikala, Gwasala, ’Nakwaxda’xw, Gusgimaxw, and the Ligwilda’xw bands. In aggregate, the thirteen social groups comprise 57 numayms (Boas 1966: 38-41). Divided by 658, this gives an average of 11,54 seats per numaym. Although numayms may differ in number of seats, this suggests that positions were limited in each numaym provided it consisted of 80-120 individuals. I estimate that each numaym has between 25-60 adult males. At the very most half of the males would hold noble positions. Similarly, Marie Mauzé among the Ligwilda’xw groups Walatsame, Wiwaikai Wiwaikam, and Kwixa examines two potlatch books which list respectively 185 and 182 titles for the entire congregation. Depending on the number of numaym, which can be 11 or 15 in the first book, this gives an average between 16,81 and 11,56 titles per numaym. For the second book in which 17 numayms are listed, this gives an average of 10,71 titles per numaym (Mauzé 1992: 106-108).
considered persons in the sense that they were not beings of social significance.

Apart from the highest ranked seat of the numaym, certain persons inhabited positions considered to be high ranking ("noxsala"). These nobles were counselors to the chief and opposed the title-less commoners, called “wiwulsilaq” (poor-ones)\textsuperscript{54}. Numayms consisted predominantly, but not exclusively, of kinsmen and women (Boas 1966: 46-48). In Kwakiutl folklore the red cedar tree, “Tla\textit{xw’mas},” served as a metaphor of the numaym with the log itself symbolizing the chiefly line, and its branches symbolizing the lower ranking lines all of noble descent. Arguably, the lineage served as ideological metaphor for both consanguine and affinal relations within the numaym, which emphasized social solidarity as essential. The name numaym (“we-are-all-one”/ “one-of-a-kind”) itself serves as a case in point as the members were united by their links to the fellow first ancestor\textsuperscript{55}.

Marriage

While the numaym was ideologically patrilineal in its rules of succession, bilateral relations were strongly emphasized as well\textsuperscript{56}. This can be

\textsuperscript{54} Seemingly the term “xamalla” was also used. As Daisy Sewid-Smith wrote: “The term xamalla goes back to the time shortly after European contact when commoners tried to force their way into the investing institution named P’asa.” (Sewid-Smith 1997: 596, Kwak’wala orthography altered)

\textsuperscript{55} Irving Goldman argued in his study of Kwakiutl cosmology and social organization that Boas failed to consider the numayms to be lineages as he considered them clans and thereby lost a fundamental structuring principle among the Kwakiutl (Goldman 1975: 29-31).

\textsuperscript{56} A case of the emphasis on bilateral relations is the case where no male is suitable for succession, where the chief’s daughter retains the title until the maturity of her son (Boas 1925: 65-71). Boas concludes that “this system is consistently bilateral without distinction between paternal and maternal line” (Boas 1966: 49) I am inclined to believe that Boas’ conclusion is based on the
appropriately illustrated in Kwakiutl marriage practices. When daughters menstruated for the first time, they were considered ready for marriage.

Marriage was symbolically and semantically associated with conquest and raid, thus a wife was “obtained in war,” “wina’nam.” (Boas 1966: 53) Ideally, a young man of high rank should marry a young woman of equal rank. Such agreements were made by spokespersons approaching the father while paying of a bride price. The marriage would be sealed in ceremonial events of a marriage potlatch (“kadzi‘chla”). The bride’s father would reciprocate the payment in the form of goods and food. Sometimes a copper would also follow the bride (Boas 1925: 271-81) 57. At the time of the marriage or upon the birth of the first child, titles and supernatural privileges would be given to the husband to be bestowed upon the child of the marriage (Boas 1966: 54).

When the first child was born, the obligations of the contracting parties had been filled, and arrangements to repay “the marriage debt” took place. The goods repaid exceeded what the wife’s father received. Upon repayment of marriage debt, the wife was expected to move back and remarry. After four marriages her high rank was established and she was expected to stay with her last husband (Boas 1966: 54-55). Wifes sometimes stayed with one husband, but this was considered uncommon.

Although the majority chose patrilocal residence upon marriage, examples of temporary or permanent matrilocal residence also exist. Marriage depended on social status. Highly ranked persons married exogamously of the numaym. Edward Curtis contrasted the social inequalities in the following way:

peculiarities of historical conditions, where shortage of ranking persons increased flexibility towards matrilineal descent.

57 Copper “shields” were, and are, traded between natives as a token of great symbolic and economical value. All coppers are designed and have particular names and carry with them the history of their previous owner. The owner of a particular copper can boast the prestige of its previous owners.
“Among the poor, marriage is unaccompanied by formal rites, but people of rank are betrothed and wedded with considerable ceremony. Each tribe, and in many cases each gens, has certain wedding customs peculiar to itself—customs obtained, supposedly, by its first ancestor from some supernatural source. In their general aspects, however, these ceremonies are very similar, and the preliminary negotiations and arrangements are almost identical among the bands.” (Curtis 1915: 124)

Franz Boas summarized marriage relations in the following manner:

“Marriages in the consanguineal group are not customary...By far the greatest number of marriages are between members of different numayma. Among some families of high rank, endogenic marriages within the narrow family group are favored. A man may marry his younger brother’s daughter, and half-brother and half-sister who have the same father but different mothers may marry.” (Boas 1966: 50)

Arguably, the latter strategy of numaym endogenic marriages may be a result of the peculiar historical circumstances of a severely decimated population and lack of suitable marriage partners, but I am also inclined to think that there was more at stake, as such marriages were also “protective strategies.” Such endogamous marriages prevented the numaym from transferring titles and privileges of their “lada” to the groom of a different numaym. Therefore, endogamous marriages may have been a pragmatic option in cases where too many marriageable girls would cause a pending deficit in the exchange of privileges with other numayms. It should be noted that titles and privileges of the numaym of a sacred character or pertaining to its origins were not transferable. Therefore, there was a distinction between transferable and non-transferable titles (Goldman 1975: 40).
“The Potlatch”: Institutionalized Transgressions and Transfers

The transfer of titles provided a backbone in the cultural and social reproduction of the Kwakiutl. I will deal with this in detail in chapter 8. However, social transfers of titles or other significant events were, as in most cultures without a writing system, marked by institutionalization. The most significant institution is known as the “potlatch,” and it has been subject to immense anthropological scrutiny. The term itself is not indigenous. It originates from Chinook, a simple trade language used along the Coast. In fact, the term at best condenses, at worst confuses its functions. To obscure the concept entirely, no indigenous institution was known as a “potlatch” in the 19th century, but today this institution is practiced in many communities on the Northwest Coast. That is not to say that this institution is “innovated.” Rather, it is a contemporary reinterpretation and condensation of a number of different institutions and rituals.

Therefore, it seems more reasonable to retraction to the indigenous terms. “P’asä” was a system of investments, in which only nobility were participants. To participate in this investing system, one had to hold a title or seat as a “gigame” within one of the numayms in the community. Only nobility were supposed to personify these titles.

This institution was closely associated with, or success therein was a precondition for, sponsoring the rituals, where social transfers of titles, “glixid” (to pass on), or markers such as marriages, first menstruations, correction of wrong doings, redemption of marriage payments or deaths were commemorated. The actual ceremonies in which dances and songs were performed were known as “Ye’wixala” (Sewid-Smith 1997: 601), where witnesses were paid to validate events.

Another important distinction is that “p’asä” was an intratribal phenomenon. That was a system of distribution between the numayms of a given settlement. Boas’ data, convincingly compounded by Helen
Codere (Codere 1966), suggests that the scale and intensity of the intertribal “maxwa,” Codere called it “potlatch,” increased between the 1870s and 1920s. These intertribal relations were known as “maxwa,” and the ceremonies as “hawana’ka.” Furthermore, the occasion for gathering people had different terms such as marriage (“kadzitla”), eulachon grease potlatch (“tlinagila”), a rival potlatch (“tliila’la”), or a feast (k’ilas’). What is common to all these different types of events is that people were gathered to witness an activity of social significance. Most frequently this would be the passing of a title from father to son, which was marked as a historical event by the assembly. As participants and witnesses in the event, guests were paid for their role.

At this event, the symbolic property of the chief and his numaym was on display. Not merely the tangible property in the form of masks, head pieces etc, it was also the dances and songs associated with particular titles that were on display and performed by members of the numaym or other relatives of the chief.

However, the occasion, scale, duration, and participants differed. The system of investment was thus often a precondition for successful participation in and sponsoring of such events. In this way these institutions were inextricably related to one another. This form of gift giving was famously analyzed by Marcel Mauss in his essay on forms of exchange (Mauss 1990).

Ceremonials

As was the case with the hierarchical ordering of social categories, the categories of ceremonial life were also hierarchically ordered (Boas 1897: 431-499). Ceremonial life was divided into two seasons, the sacred winter ceremonies, “tsek’a,” and the less sacred summer ceremonies, “tla’sala.”

58 See Suttles for a differing account of the Kwak’wala terms (Suttles 1991: 104-105)
The seasons were called “tsek’a” and “ba’xus” (profane) (Boas 1897: 418)\(^59\).

The distinction was not only temporal. It was also spatial. As opposed to the “tla’sala,” participation in and access to the winter dances were strictly limited to the nobility. The nobility were bequeathed with titles or names that were endowed with supernatural powers, “nawalakw.” Endowed with this spiritual power, nobles, according to rank, could act as mediators and interpreters of supernatural powers. Thus, access to the supernatural was generally restricted to the nobility\(^60\). As opposed to the sacred winter dances, participation in the “tla’sala” was accessible to everyone.

Franz Boas asserted that during the winter ceremonies the social organization of the numaym broke down in favor of the organization of ranked secret societies (Boas 1897: 418-419). However, such organization was significant symbolical rather than social. Arguably, the organization also depended on the scale of the ceremony. It is likely that organization according to secret society remained secondary when intertribal ceremonies were held, while it took on a greater role in intra-tribal potlatches.

The dances and their sacredness were strictly confined to the time and space of these ceremonies. Judith Berman (Berman 1991: 686) for the Kwakiutl and Michael Harkin for the Heiltsuk (Harkin 1997a: 10) suggest that the winter ceremonial was the time where the world was turned upside down, as supernatural beings hunted humans, while as humans preyed upon animals during the remaining time of the year. The ordering of space and time during the winter ceremonies was of utmost importance to intentionally direct the otherwise uncontrollable supernatural beings who prevailed during the ceremonies.

\(^59\) Boas notes that the term “ba’xus” also denotes those people who are not initiated into a secret society – that is – commoners (Boas 1897: 418).

\(^60\) A notable exception was the healer, “paxala,” which was an office that was also accessible to commoners.
The best known of these dances is the “Hamat’sa” complex, which is also inappropriately known as the Cannibal dance. While most anthropologists identify this ceremony as Kwakiutl, it was originally acquired from the neighboring Heiltsuks in the mid-19th century (Curtis 1915: 219-221). The Hamat’sa complex rapidly became the most sacred and important part of the winter ceremonies. Analysis of the Hamat’sa seems to be on the oeuvre of any Northwest Coast scholar, and I shall refrain from it here (Cf. Benedict 1934, Berman 1991, Goldman 1975, S. Reid 1979, M. Reid 1981, Walens 1981).

In short, an adolescent of nobility was secluded in the forest for up to four months. Here the Man Eater from the North End of the World, Baxbakwku’alanuxsiwe, captured him. Upon his capture he returned to society in a state of frenzy and uncontrollable lust for human flesh. It is known, that slaves were slain to satisfy the Hamat’sa and it still remains uncertain whether cannibalism was merely symbolic or practiced in the ceremony. Following lengthy taming rituals, the initiate had finally “come

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61 Irving Goldman makes an important point as he argues that “Baxbakwku’alanuxsiwe” was not a cannibal as it was a supernatural being. Hence, he was not a fellow man, but a supernatural being preying on human beings. A more appropriate translation would be the “the Man Eater [at the North end of the World].” It then follows that the Hamat’sa initiate is in a state of frenzy, a state of non-humanity while he is transformed by Baxbakwku’alanuxsiwe. Thus he was rather a man-eater than a cannibal. Susan Reid interprets the Hamat’sa complex as a restoration, a rite de passage, of the young initiate into society (Reid 1979). The Hamatsa’s position remained ambiguous. During the ritual Baxbakwku’alanuxsiwe on the one hand possessed him, and on the other hand he was a human eating, or thought to be eating, flesh, which literally made him a cannibal. The elaborate purification process after the initiation lasted between one and four years depending on social group (Goldman 1975: 90-95). Upon restoration into society, Hamatsa’s remained feared and often they were the ones to strike fear into misbehaving children (Ford 1941: 78).

62 Jim McDowell’s book hardly does the subject any justice, as he deals rather with contact stories on the West Coast than Kwakiutl and Heiltsuk Hamat’sa rituals, despite the compelling title. However, he does highlight the European
through” and after extensive time of purification he was installed in a role as an adult social person.

It is likely that the “tlasala” ceremonials marked the end of the winter and the beginning of the foodgathering season, “ba’xus,” where human beings again went to hunt animals, restoring the world to its normal state. Also, the division of seasons was emphatically underlined by the fact that persons allowed to participate in the ceremonies changed their names to ones associated with dance societies (Boas 1897: 418). In the summer season more secular purposes of subsistence prevailed.

To Marcel Mauss, the ceremonial complex and the investment complex known as “potlatch” comprised a total social fact. He argued that the institution addressed all major aspects of social life: economic, political, religious, and social organization (Mauss 1990: 38-39). Surely, Mauss was right, and one is tempted to add that the social institution also functioned as an educational site insofar as the young nobles learned the manners of speech, interaction, reciprocity, and performance expected of a young noble man in this setting. This is not to say that instruction did not happen elsewhere. In the setting of the “p’asa” and the winter ceremonials, situated learning through social practice was ubiquitous. Therefore, in these social institutions Kwakiutl notions of the person were constituted and reproduced.

Learning and the Division of Labor

While the “p’asa” and the ceremonials formed social settings for learning, this form of learning was restricted to that of young nobles. Therefore, we need to address the gendered division of labor to address other forms of learning. The primary division of labor followed the lines of gender, as men were hunting and fishing, whereas women played a crucial role in food preoccupation with the (perceived) cannibalism of the exotic “other.” (McDowell 1997)
preparation and preservation, and in gathering roots, berries, and shellfish.

Women were also responsible for child rearing, while learning, depending on gender and age, was the responsibility of both paternal and maternal numayms. The nuclear family had little autonomy in the upbringing of the child. It was a matter for the whole numaym. Children grew up within their extended family, and thus grandparents, uncles, and aunts played crucial roles in the educational process of the child. Looking, listening, and learning featured prominently in the educational process. Children were made to look at and eventually participate in the work of adults from an early age, being corrected along the way (see also Miller 1996: 15-31). Pre-contact education was generally not institutionalized, but some formal, ritualised ceremonies such as rites de passage were part of the educational and individuation processes of the child.

As opposed to schooling with its inherent notion of the democracy of learning within the classroom, learning was stratified among the Kwakiutl. Nobility and commoners did receive differentiated education, as did apprentices of shamans (“Paxgla”), designated warriors, and performers of other specialized tasks. Also, the knowledge and skills involved in the elaborate winter ceremonies were differentiated.

Examples of the designated division of labor from an early age were the select group of men designated as warriors and sentinels of the settlements. The leader was often a younger brother of the head chief. They were trained and hardened to become warriors from an early age (Boas 1966: 105-119). It was also the case for the various healers, “Paxgla,” that they received specialized training, as was the case with

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63 Only little has been written on pre-contact Kwakiutl learning (Cf. Codere 1995 (1956), Boas 1966, Ford 1941). However, some general tenets can be reconstructed by using existing ethnographic data and to some extent my own field notes.
George Hunt who gave a vivid account of his selection and training process (Boas 1930: 1-56). Other special positions based on talent and specialized training were positions pertaining to the oral history of the social group such as the name keepers (Boas 1925: 79-85), investors in the “p’asa,” and speakers for the chief at the potlatch.

**Conclusion**

This chapter provided an overview of 19th century Kwakiutl social structure. In particular, I focused on the numaym as the core social unit in the social structure of the Kwakiutl. I also sought to show how rank interpenetrated relations within and between communities. Ranked seats organized each numaym. The seats were personified by titles that were, ideally, passed on through primogeniture. The seats also entailed symbolic and material ownership of certain privileges and rights to harvest the resources of specific sites. I also addressed the institutions referred to in anthropological literature as potlatch, and showed how these institutions marked the social transfer to or transgression of one of its noble members. Witnesses were invited and paid for their attendance. These transfers and ceremonies spun a fine web of reciprocation which was political, economic, religious, and social. I argued that the institutions also provided a setting of situated learning for the expectations and competences entailed by a specific identity.

I shall elaborate on this argument even further in chapter 8. However, prior to this I will provide an overview of Alert Bay as a contemporary Northwest Coast community. This chapter will also serve to illuminate the scale of changes over the past 120 years.
Chapter 6. Contemporary Kwakiutl

Whereas chapter 5 dealt with a general description of the 19th century Kwakiutl people, this chapter is concerned with contemporary Kwakiutl at Alert Bay on Cormorant Island, predominantly members of the ‘Namgis First Nation.

In this chapter I outline the interconnections of the community to other Kwakiutl communities and the growing urban Kwakiutl population. Also I outline the general features of socio-economics and politics at Alert Bay. Within the sphere of public culture I delineate some of the institutions that will be discussed in further detail in the subsequent chapters, such as what is now locally referred to as potlatch. Other institutions such as schooling and soccer will also be dealt with in detail in later chapters. The chapter thus provides general background for relations between social institutions, politics of identity, and personhood discussed in Part Five of the dissertation.

Although geographic, economic, and cultural variation exists between the different Kwakiutl people, I believe that a presentation of life in Alert Bay parallels life on many other reserves in the territory specifically and to some extent on the whole Coast generally. Similarly, this chapter outlines social life at a local level, while the micro-analytical level focusing on contemporary personhood will be analyzed in detail in chapter 13.

Pretext

As described in chapter 4 the ‘Namgis moved to “Yalis,” Alert Bay, in the 1880s. Historically, it was a resource site for a number of the bands of the Kwakiutl nations belonging to the ‘Namgis. Two entrepreneurs, Spencer and Huson, established a cannery here in the 1870s. In 1880, they convinced C.M.S. missionary A.J. Hall to relocate his mission from Fort
Rupert as a consequence of the resistance from the chiefs towards his work (Gough 1982). Adjacent to the mission, a day school was built. An Industrial School and a Girls' Home later supplemented this school in 1894. Before the turn of the century a sawmill and stores were built, and shortly there after a hospital was also established in 1909. The ‘Namgis Kwakiutl traveled across the sound to engage in wage labor. The move gradually became permanent.

The island community of Alert Bay was not only a safe harbor for naval traffic up and down the coast. The Indian agents office was also located at Alert Bay. Until the 1960s Alert Bay was the commercial, administrative, educational, and religious center of the region. From early on the community was interethnic divided by the community of Alert Bay to the southwest and the ‘Namgis First Nation reserves to the northeast.

Today the regional importance of Alert Bay has declined, which is largely due to the North Island Highway on Vancouver Island. As commercial traffic has moved on shore, Alert Bay is largely by-passed. The crisis of British Columbia fisheries is well documented, and Alert Bay has been very much dependent on this single industry in its economy, and most of its fishing fleet remain at dock for the entire season. Administrative and ecclesiastical affairs have parted elsewhere. On most socio-economic variables, Alert Bay today resembles most remote British Columbian communities. Despite these grievances, the population has remained fixed at around 1,300 inhabitants with more than half being natives.

**Flux, Global Culture, and Migration**

While Alert Bay, as a crescent shaped island clouded in mist situated in the strait between Vancouver Island and the mainland of British Columbia, tantalizingly resembles the ideal object of inquiry of the golden age of ethnography, its connections to wider British Columbian and Canadian society cannot be ignored.
Connections to Vancouver Island are regular through the B.C. Ferries’ tri-island ferry shuttling between Port McNeill, Sointula, and Alert Bay several times per day. A number of people own gas boats or skiffs that regularly go to Port McNeill or elsewhere. Occasionally, float planes land or pick up passengers at Alert Bay. The island also has a small airstrip, but no regular flights are scheduled.

An increasing number of Alert Bay residents, native and non-native people, have in recent years acquired cars. Sport utility vehicles, four wheel drives, and normal sedans frequently sport bumper stickers announcing native soccer tournaments, canoe journeys, or other native events or belonging, and a few have personalized license plates denoting their identity. Most cars have dream catchers or other little items in their cars also denoting some sense of native identity.

Urban migration is significant. Almost half of the 1,472 individuals enrolled on the ’Namgis First Nation band membership live off the reserve. Most of these non-reserve residents live in the larger cities of the province, Vancouver and Victoria. However, urban and reserve populations are not entirely fixed. There is a considerable flux of population, and most on reserve residents have at one time or another lived in an urban environment. Education and employment opportunities are major reasons for permanent or semi-permanent urban residence, while shopping, selling native arts and craft, visiting relatives, and the fun of exploring “the scene” are similar important reasons for shorter visits to urban settings.

Extended Families

Extended families acknowledge and maintain kinship ties despite the differences in urban-reserve residence, and family members travel to Alert Bay for a number of public events such as potlatches, weddings, funerals, anniversaries, soccer tournaments, and feasts. Thus there is a strong inter-relationship between the Victoria, Vancouver, and Alert Bay native residents.

The majority of the Kwakiutl living at Alert Bay are members of one or several of the 15-20 extended families that dominate the island. One individual is not simply regarded as belonging to one extended family. Belonging is multilateral, and kinship ties that can be traced several generations back, such as a mutual great great grandfather, are still socially effective. Thus, kinship ties are acknowledged and central in social discourse. The successful negotiation of kinship ties may be central to elucidating favors, generating jobs, and accessing events.

Most individuals master their genealogy several generations back and can trace the kinship relations to a large number of individuals in the community. Kinship remains at the heart of most social and political relations in the community.

While some individuals are knowledgeable about the numayms they can trace their ancestry to, the term numaym is not used frequently in public discourse when English is spoken. Potlatches are not referred to as held by a specific numaym, but identified with an extended family, such as “the Alfred potlatch” or “the Speck potlatch.” Nonetheless, crests are still associated with these specific extended families. In many respects, extended families are a generic term loosely connected to numayms, although not entirely overlapping as members of extended families may identify themselves closely with as much as four different extended families through parents, and paternal and maternal grandparents.
Interethnic Relations

Other residents of Alert Bay are non-status natives, non-native permanent residents plying a number of different trades, professionals such as school teachers, administrators, nurses, doctors, Royal Canadian Mounted Police Officers, and construction workers. The latter categories are more or less transient, but some become permanent residents.

Interaction with the non-native community of Alert Bay has improved over the years. From times of segregation or more or less muted hostilities, better relations have been forged. In 1999, collaboration was formalized by the signing of the “Alert Bay Accord” promising cooperation between ‘Namgis First Nation and the Municipality of Alert Bay. A benchmark of the recent collaboration is the erection of a new hospital for the whole island on reserve land which commenced in 2000.

Mass media also extends itself to Alert Bay through the CBC radio broadcasts and more importantly, television. Most households have cable or satellite dishes, and global fashion trends in clothes, hairstyle, music, and other forms of consumption are well established in Alert Bay.

Approximately 850-900 residents of Alert Bay are statutory natives. The vast majority lives on the ‘Namgis reserves or the “Whe-la-la-U” reserve which is a multi-band reserve comprising families from a number of adjacent Kwakiutl communities. Some live off reserve. “Status Indian” means that the individual qualifies for a number of Federally induced programs, exclusively available to natives such as tax exemption while working and living on reserve. With the introduction of the Bill C-31, mentioned in chapter four, women who married Euro-Canadian males and their children were eligible to regain band membership over the last 15

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65 A number of non-native residents are biologically related to natives. Friendships, relationships, or working partnerships are other forms of informal relationships also in existence.

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years. Today the Band Council can assign “Indian status” to applicants who can document native 50% ancestry to one or both parents.

**Economics and Employment**

Following the demise of the fishing industry, employment opportunities are limited in Alert Bay. In the fishing season unemployment is between 40-50%. The rest of the year the unemployment is closer to 60%. The prosperity of Alert Bay generated by the fisheries has declined gradually since the 1960s, and a few very successful fishermen apart, the community suffers as a whole from the decline, because structural problems of relative isolation, one-resource dependency, and a low-educated work force has hindered development of alternate economic opportunities. In recent years, a number of small enterprises in eco-tourism have been established, and tourism is gaining significance as an income for the community.

‘Namgis First Nation (NFN) is by far the largest employer on the island. Altogether it employs more than 100 individuals, administering and implementing programs largely funded by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND) ranging from welfare, public health, and education to economic enterprises such as a hatchery.

Among the significant accomplishments of the NFN is the band administered elementary school, “T’lisgalag’ilakw School,” which runs from nursery and kindergarten to grade 10. For the remaining two years of secondary school, pupils need to travel by ferry to North Island Secondary School (NISS) in Port McNeill or go live with relatives in the large cities. In the year 2000 the ‘Namgis First Nation also finished the erection of a new recreation center for sports and leisure complementing the existing Elders center and youth center.
B.C. Ferries are operating 15 hours daily, and the company is the second-largest employer of the island. The majority of the crew, however, is non-native. Most commerce is located on municipal land and owned and operated by non-natives, although several natives find employment here.

Other employment opportunities are forestry and fish farms. However, government transfer payments such as welfare and unemployment benefit remain the two common sources of income for half the community. However, a number of men find employment through producing native art and craft such as intricately carved cedar masks, rattles, and other regalia. Carvers such as Doug Cranmer, Beau Dick, and Wayne Alfred have all won international acclaim for their art craft, and many other talented artists have been products of carving apprenticeships that were once formal and now informal. Vancouver and Victoria provide stages for artistic acclaim, and most carvers venture to the cities to sell their artifices to galleries and tourist shops depending on the market they supply.

Non-monetary additions to the economy derive from local abundance of resources. In the summer, berry picking provides households with a variety of foods. Fish are relatively abundant, many households use small boats to go fishing, set up crab traps, or go clam digging. During the summer, some community-concerned native fishermen go “food fishing” for the whole native community and provide them with vital supplies of mainly salmon.

The families work together in the important preservation process of cleaning, cutting, and canning, smoking or drying the fish. Fresh fish are

66 In the 1970s, master carver Doug Cranmer was employed to teach a carving program, where many young artists sophisticated their trade. Today, these artists serve as informal mentors or masters for young apprentices learning the skills of carving masks and other artifices.

67 The fishermen who go food fishing are mostly considered “well-off” by local standards, and they accost the trip themselves. Community members or NFN provides no compensation for fuel, maintenance, or wages.
often prepared by traditional methods such as barbecuing on wooden frame by open fire or in smoke houses. Other seafood such as seaweed, herring eggs, and eulachon oil, “tlina,” add to the nutrition and are highly valued delicacies. They are bartered or given away in the community. Hunting game plays a smaller role as another source of nutritional variety. What Michael Harkin states so precisely for the Heiltsuks could be said for the ‘Namgis as well.

“Altogether, traditional resources are very important to the Heiltsuks from both economic and nutritional points of view and for the connection they provide to traditional Heiltsuk lifeways. Not only do they supplement the common Heiltsuk diet of rice, potatoes, and imported meats and vegetables, but they also represent important markers of ethnic identity. This point was stressed especially by the elders with whom I spoke. Clearly, it is not merely the type of food per se – seafood and local land food versus imported and processed agricultural products – but also the entire social process enveloping the production and consumption of these traditional foods that is so significant to the Heiltsuks.” (Harkin 1997a: 27)

Members of the community emphatically stressed to me that the sharing and generosity of food as well as the ability to “live off the land” were important as native distinctiveness and virtues.

**Socio-economics**

The “culture of poverty” as defined by Oscar Lewis (Lewis 1966) constitutes a large part of life for many individuals in contemporary Alert Bay. High rates of suicide or suicide attempts, domestic and public violence, sexual abuse, drugs, and alcoholism are a major concern. I

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68 See also Ulf Hannerz’ study of an urban, African-American neighborhood (Hannerz 1969).
would estimate that one third of the adult population are non-drinkers or very moderate drinkers. One third are habitual drinkers, and the remaining one third to one quarter of the adult population are alcoholics to an extent that it impairs participation in the work force or otherwise.

Teenage and out-of-wedlock pregnancy is extremely common as are considerable high school drop out rates. Although the figure is improving, only 14% have graduated from high school. These social issues are being addressed by the ‘Namgis First Nation through a variety of programs ranging from employment training programs, women’s shelter, treatment programs and center, support groups, and counselors.

Households consist mostly of nuclear families, although it is not uncommon that three generations live in the same house. A housing program has ensured that many live in modern houses built within the last decade. The most recent spatial expansion is the establishment of an entirely new subdivision at the back of the reserve. Houses are bought and sold on the reserves, although the land is juridically inalienable from the ‘Namgis First Nation. The band administration has a waiting list on new houses. Access to new housing depends on residence. Band members living on reserve are given priority to new housing.

**Politics**

Politics seems ubiquitous at Alert Bay. However, its forms can be divided into four different interconnected levels. (i) Hereditary, (ii) local, (iii) provincial, and (iv) national. The distinction remains important, because the basis for political office differs. Thus, hereditary politics differ from the other forms of politics, insofar as the “political office” is inherited, while the others are results of Band Council elections.

Firstly, hereditary politics is also somewhat differentiated from the others since it does not carry any political office or political decision-making
powers in relation to the legislation of the Federal Government. However, hereditary chiefs are acknowledged as leaders on a number of public ceremonial occasions as well as "in the Big House." Thus, politics are usually played out in or around potlatches, where the hereditary chiefs interpret and display their ancestral privileges.

Their presence in relation to the governmentally recognized political body remains unresolved. One future scenario is the establishment of a "House of Lords" for the hereditary chiefs if self-government is realized. There is some correlation between "hereditary chiefs" and other "chiefs" hosting potlatches, and Band counselors, but the relation is ambiguous and not subject to any formal preconditions69.

Secondly, Band counselors are elected for office for tenures lasting two years. Until the year 2000, only members residing on reserves were allowed to vote and run for council70. Political affiliation and rivalries tend to follow family lines and to some degree extended families. However, political influence cannot simply be equated to participation in the elected band politics. It is also based on inherited rank, public actions, and achievements such as organizing events and holding potlatches and feasts, and to a limited degree economic attainment. As opposed to many First Nations, 'Namgis has a local native band manager and assistant band manager.

69 An example is Richard “Dick Dick” Dawson, who is a member of and an elected band counselor for the 'Namgis First Nation, while he is also a hereditary chief for one of the numayms of the Dzawadaen'uxw. Another example is Chief counselor William Cranmer, who is hereditary chief for the Haxwa'mis (from Jim King) and also holds the seat for one numaym of the 'Namgis (from Johnny Drabble).

70 Due to British Columbia Supreme Court ruling, all native individuals belonging to the First Nation are now allowed to vote in band council elections. This is significant as 50% of the members reside off reserve, and their interests and motivations may differ substantially from those of the on-reserve population.
Thirdly, on a provincial level ‘Namgis First Nation seeks to be represented in a number of organizations, thus gaining influence on intertribal political decisions, actions, and allocation of funding for economic, cultural, and educational programs. This elaborate strategy of organizational participation and gaining influence has left band counselors with extensive and time-consuming traveling. As opposed to what disgruntled voices in the local discourse suggest, ‘Namgis First Nation has not been subject to mismanagement and misallocation of funds casting a shadow on aboriginal aspirations for self-government.

Fourthly, in relation to the Federal Government ‘Namgis First Nation is a member of the B.C. Summit, an organization of First Nation seeking to address the issues of self-government and land claims through negotiations and settlement with the Provincial and the Federal Government. At the time of writing, NFN has agreed on the framework for the negotiations. It is likely that the treaty process will be settled within the next decade depending on the political will sweeping the offices in Victoria and Ottawa. At this point, ‘Namgis First Nation claims to territories and resources of the land and the sea are being defined in negotiations with adjacent Kwakirul First Nations. Meanwhile the specific content of self-government has not yet been defined, although the discussion at council and communal level has commenced71.

Thus, two different political orders prevail, one maintained by hereditary chiefs based on ritual authority, and one maintained by a formal, democratically elected political body, where decision-making powers are based on (formal) political authority.

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71 For updates on the ‘Namgis First Nation status in the treaty process see: http://www.bctreaty.net/index.html

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Public Culture

Two churches are located on the reserve; the Pentecostal “House of Prayer” and the Anglican Church. Both denominations have small congregations in a secularizing community. Attendance is low and consists mainly of individuals 50 years old or older. Today some ambiguity towards the Church exists. On the one hand, elders acknowledged to have carried on traditional knowledge and practices are devout Christians, and Churches are acknowledged for having cared about the welfare of people. On the other hand, both Anglicans and Pentecostals are considered agents of oppression. I describe the involvement of the Anglican Church in the colonization process in chapters 9-10. Whereas the Anglican Church today endorses syncretism of native and Christian spirituality, this is strongly at odds with its former policy. The policies of the Pentecostal Church remain more ambiguous. Officially, the divide still persists, but most of its members accept or partake in neo-traditional cultural activities. The Kwakiutl at Alert Bay were denominationally Anglican until the 1940s and 1950s when many converted to the emotional evangelism of the Pentecostals. The municipality of Alert Bay also supports a United Church and a Catholic Church, but neither of them has a resident preacher, and their native following is minimal.

Funerals

Funerals and weddings are held according to standard Christian liturgy, yet appropriated to local conditions. I witnessed that funeral practices varied considerably. Some extended family insisted on four days of mourning. Here the extended family gathered for communal mourning prior to the funeral, which is an appropriation of traditional mortuary rites. In other instances some possessions of the deceased were burned. These belongings are believed to be sent to the deceased to be used in his or her afterlife. Also, some food is placed in the coffin as supplies for the journey to the “Land of the Dead.” Other families less involved in traditional practices opted for more conventional Christian funeral
practices. To all, it is significant that relatives and friends travel from far
away places to attend the funeral.

A Christian service is held, mostly at the Community Hall which can hold
far more people than the tiny churches. Hymns in English and Kwak'wala
are sung, and specific persons, mostly from the close family, are invited to
give speeches, present hymns, and give a eulogy. Following the service,
the assigned pallbearers, mentioned in the printed funeral pamphlet, carry
the casket to a car. A large procession follows the casket to the graveyard,
where the preacher delivers a last speech. Male participants take turn
filling the grave. A wooden cross is placed at the end of the grave with the
deceased’s Christian name, dates of birth and death inscribed. Frequently,
the cross is adorned with a native design like a plaque or mask signifying
the crest of the deceased’s numaym. Public displays of mourning such as
veiling occur. Upon the burial the procession return to the hall. Here
speeches are delivered, sometimes in Kwak’wala, stressing mourning and
the need for healing and comforting the survivors of the deceased. Often
the funeral is followed by a memorial potlatch close to one year after the
deceased passed away.

**Weddings**

As it is the case with funerals, weddings are generally large events where
extended families and friends travel to attend the do. After the Christian
ceremony speeches are given in English and sometimes in Kwak’wala,
where it is stressed that two families have come together. Often alcohol is
banned until after dinner, when children are asked to leave, lights are
dimmed, and dancing commences. More recently, marriages in the Big
House complement or substitute a Christian ceremony\(^\text{72}\). This is another
example of appropriation between traditional customs and contemporary
life. Historically, marriages were arranged. Today, individuals choose their

\(^{72}\) To this day, the Government does not recognize aboriginal marriage
practices. Such practices have to be complemented by an official civilian
registration to become legally binding.
own partners, although the liaison may be condoned or not by the respective families.

**Contemporary Potlatches**

In the 1990s, English prevails as the language spoken in most public settings. Ironically, the indigenous ceremonies coined “potlatch” by European observers is now referred to as such. Alert Bay still remains at the center of Kwakiutl cultural activities and ceremonial life. The newly rebuilt Big House at Alert Bay hosts 6-10 potlatches per year. Its modern facilities, size, and accessibility compel many to hold potlatches at Alert Bay. A few are still held in Big Houses in Fort Rupert, Kingcome, Guildford Island, Campbell River, and Comox. Some are held in the Gymnasium at the “Tsalgwadi” reserve in Port Hardy as well.

The form and content of the potlatches have changed considerably over the time span analyzed in this dissertation. These changes will be the subject of discussion in chapter 12. To some extent contingency exists in the development of the potlatch. As Kwakiutl intellectual Gloria Cranmer Webster writes:

“...The reasons for giving potlatches are still the same as they were in the past – naming children, mourning the dead, transferring rights and privileges, and, less frequently, marriages or the raising of memorial totem poles... A modern potlatch takes much less time to plan than those of earlier days. Our old people say that preparing for a traditional potlatch would take years...Today there are no longer loans made or to call in. “Nowadays, you just put your hand in your own pocket,” one of our old people said, in comparing past and present potlatches. Today, from the time it is decided to hold a potlatch until it happens takes about a year.” (Webster 1991: 229)
Estimated costs for potlatches provided by informants who had potlatched themselves ranged from $20,000 – 50,000\textsuperscript{73}. The statement, “nowadays, you just put your hand in your own pocket,” is probably more metaphorical than factual. Certainly, my evidence suggests that the majority of the extended family contribute financially and, just as significantly, with labor to the potlatch preparations. Also significantly, the investment system, “p’asa,” is no longer in operation.

The form and content of the rituals also altered to appropriate to contemporary conditions. Gloria Cranmer Webster explains some of the concerns in the following manner:

“A typical modern potlatch is much shorter than in the past, when one potlatch might last over several days or a week. Today, many of us work at regular jobs, which leaves only weekends free. Some of our family members live away from home, so their travel time must be taken into account. We also have to consider the people involved in the increasingly competitive and uncertain fishing industry for whom limited openings are a major concern. As a result, a potlatch must be compressed into less than twenty-four hours, beginning in the afternoon, so that mourning songs can be sung before sunset, and ending in the late evening or early hours of the next morning.” (Webster 1991: 229)

The duration of the potlatch has changed from the several days to typically two days. The season also changed. Earlier, winter ceremonies were held between October and April. Now most potlatches are held in May and June and following the end of the fishing season in September.

\textsuperscript{73} One estimate went as far as $100,000. This particular potlatch was a “T’ilinagila,” where many gallons of eulachon oil were given away. If the value is calculated based on its “retail price” in the informal Kwakiutl economy ($200 per gallon), then this estimate is fair.
Christian rituals such as baptism are sometimes included as are presentations of special guests (Wolcott 1996). Admission also changed from being exclusively for those holding seats or aristocratic titles to being a communal event where all natives are invited. At times, non-native participants also attend the potlatches. Some opt to attend the whole ceremonies, whereas others, especially youth, seem to drift in and out of the event.

Also significantly, in the contemporary potlatch the “tsek’a” ceremony and the “tlasala” ceremony both take place at the same event, albeit symbolically separated by a hard beat on the log and participants ceremoniously removing their red cedar bark headdresses.

**June Sports**

More than 40 years ago, an indigenous soccer tournament took place at Alert Bay. The soccer tournament, later to be called “June Sports,” holds significant public attention. Local identities prevail, and much rivalry between the respective Kwakiutl soccer teams exists. Throughout the 1990s the local team, “Cormorants,” dominated the tournament displacing teams from Kingcome, Guilford, Fort Rupert, Hopetown, and other non-Kwakiutl native communities. The teams are named after specific historical events, ancestral attributes, or geographic location, thus marking the specific local identity of the team. The players are expected to be role models and during “June Sports” often perceived as “warriors” in public discourse.

**Canoe Journeys**

Where soccer is a form of competition which gives new form and life to old rivalries, the canoe journeys are a different form of non-competitive neo-tradition where mutual bonds are formed. More or less every year a canoe gathering or journey takes place. At these events many of the coastal First Nations are represented with a cedar canoe or fiberglass canoe, adorned
with crests and named after legends of the respective people, or with the perceived attributes necessary for completing the journey at hand.

Notably, most public events are orchestrated through women’s role as organizers bringing the event together. Although women speak relatively infrequently at public events with a “cultural” agenda, their efforts in bringing together the event are omnipresent.

**Schooling**

The T’lišalagi’ilakw School was established in 1976, and it was one of the first schools run by natives for native pupils. Established at a time where “Indian control over Indian Education” was a nation-wide concern, the school has prospered from having few students till the present where more than 120 pupils attend the school. Children from a large number of Kwak’utl bands are enrolled at the school. The ends and motivation of the school, established by young natives, at the time perceived to be “radicals,” was considered dubious by some members of the Band Council.

Today, most natives pride themselves of the school, although concern is expressed about the academic quality of the education. Throughout the region, the school is renowned for its cultural program that comprises Kwak’wala immersion in nursery and Kindergarten, Kwak’wala courses from grade 1-8, classes in culture and history, teaching of traditional skills such as cedar bark weaving, singing, and dancing. Other native children attend “Alert Bay Elementary School,” which is a part of the B.C. Provincial School District. As mentioned before, for secondary education the youth must go to “North Island Secondary School,” or down the island to complete high school.

**Cultural Institutions**

The “U’mista Cultural Center” displays one interpretation of Kwakwaka’wakw culture and history. The institution is renowned in
anthropological and museological circles along with its twin – the “Kwagiulth Museum” at Cape Mudge. Both museums house the “potlatch collection” confiscated by the Indian Agent in 1922. In many years, Gloria Cranmer Webster was curator for U’mista, and the imprint of the influential Cranmer family is tangible in the structure of the exhibits. Throughout her tenure many important programs were initiated that are still widely used in the community today. Gloria Cranmer Webster’s significance as an interpreter of, and gatekeeper to, “Kwakwaka’wakw culture” cannot be overestimated. Since her departure in 1990, reduction in grants has left the institution fighting an increasingly difficult battle to secure grants for its operation. As it is the trend in most cultural institutions, U’mista sought alternate avenues of income through expanding its merchandising, thus becoming a significant retailer for native designed clothes, jewelry, carvings, and cultural resources for the community and the increasing number of tourists. In the past decade, some of the major achievements are the physical expansion of the center, and the creation of a genealogical database widely used by locals.

In practices, writings, public discourse, and physical space, 'Namgis connections to history find their interpretations. With the ambivalence and competition of these interpretations of the past, the interpretation, construction, and practice of “tradition” is a very significant feature of contemporary politics of identity. In contemporary discourse, the predominant voices call for continuity of knowledge and practices that link present and past, thus, paradoxically, reinterpreting the actions and meanings of social actors of another era that sought to do the very opposite (Cf. Harkin 1997a: 35, Glass N.d.).

**Conclusion**

In this chapter I showed the intertwining of late modern material amenities, institutions, commodities, and technology with indigenous practices in Alert Bay. In several ways, life at Alert Bay resembles that of many coastal
British Columbia communities, but the presence of the native population adds to the meanings and practices that are produced and negotiated within the community.

The social and symbolic significance of some social institutions persists, such as those of the extended family and the "potlatch." However, these institutions have been modified over the course of the century and a half that will be investigated further in the remaining parts of the dissertation. Politics has changed considerably since a democratically elected political body has been instituted, recognized by the Federal Government as the legitimate basis for decision-making. However, I also showed that this body co-exists with a hereditary political body of chiefs that also yields some form of influence in the community.

Following the framing of the Kwakiutl in a structural and historical context, the remaining parts of the dissertation will discuss the intricacies of meaning, negotiation, and production as pertains to Kwakiutl personhood.
Part Three. The Self and the Other
Chapter 7. Analyzing Kwakiutl Personhood

In chapter 5 provided the historical and local framework for the analysis of 19th century Kwakiutl personhood. In the following two chapters I will deal with the issue. This chapter is concerned with other ethnographic records that contributed with analyses of Kwakiutl personhood. In the next, I analyze the empirical phenomenon in relation to the analytical approach I suggested in chapter 2.

In this chapter, I examine the accounts so far that deal with 19th century Kwakiutl personhood. Some of these accounts are significant contributions to the regional ethnography as well as anthropological theory such as the accounts of Ruth Benedict (Benedict 1934) and Marcel Mauss (Mauss 1985). The examination is important from both an analytical point of view and on methodological grounds, as it is important to present the key findings of these accounts because they offer alternate ways to comprehend Kwakiutl personhood, and must therefore be examined to comprehend their insights and shortcomings. This examination may help to enhance the external validity of the present account.

Anthropology and Kwakiutl Personhood

Despite ample ethnographic evidence on cultural constructions of the notion of the person, there have been only few explicit attempts to analyze categories of personhood and social selves among the Kwakiutl (Mauzé 1994a). Arguably, a number of studies tacitly offer an interpretation of Kwakiutl personhood (Cf. Benedict 1934, Goldman 1975, Walens 1981). Although scattered sentences pertaining to personhood appear in the voluminous body of Kwakiutl ethnographies, I concentrate on contributions that on an analytic level or otherwise relate to the topic in a more concerted fashion.
Dionysian and Megalomaniac

One such study is Ruth Benedict’s seminal essay on the “Patterns of Culture” (Benedict 1934). This study, one of few anthropological writings which transcended disciplinary boundaries and found a popular readership, is regarded as a crucial turn for culture and personality studies as a legitimate field of study in American anthropology. Ruth Benedict sought to identify a dominant theme that reflected a particular people’s culture. This was also the case of the Kwakiutl who were one of the peoples analyzed in her essay. This dominant cultural theme in turn was extrapolated to the personality of the individual:

“By the time he is grown and able to take part in its activities, its habits are his habits, its beliefs his beliefs, its impossibilities his impossibilities.” (Benedict 1934: 3)

In other words, individuals and their personality were molded, or socialized, by society. The prevailing cultural theme was internalized in the individual’s mind. Ruth Benedict identified the dominant theme in Kwakiutl culture as “Dionysian.” That is, seeking ecstasy and excess in its ritual ceremonies. This was opposed to the perceived quest for order in the universe as displayed by the “Apollonian” Pueblo Indians (Benedict 1934: 175). Furthermore, in the religious practices of the potlatch she found evidence in songs and speeches of:

“An uncensored self-glorification and ridicule of all comers. Judged by the standards of all other cultures the speeches of their chiefs at their potlatches are unabashed megalomaniac... All the motivations they recognized centered around the will to superiority.” (Benedict 1934: 190-91)

Ruth Benedict portrayed Kwakiutl preoccupation with social rank as an obsession (Benedict 1934: 193). In her comparative scheme of social cooperation and competition she stated that self-glorification and preoccupation with rank was:
“The segment of human behavior which the Northwest Coast has marked out to institutionalize in its culture. [It] is one which is recognized as abnormal in our civilization... The megalomanic paranoid trend is a definite danger in our society. It faces us with a choice of possible attitudes. One is to brand it as abnormal and reprehensible, and it is the attitude we have chosen in our civilization. The other extreme is to make it the essential attribute of ideal man, and this is the solution in the culture of the Northwest Coast.” (Benedict 1934: 222)

The above quotation suggests that Benedict’s underlying aim was to give a diagnosis of contemporary American society through the detour of other cultures (Caffrey 1989: 206-40). Benedict’s work, read as a civilizational critique of contemporary American society, thus inscribes itself in a longstanding tradition dating back to the Enlightenment in France, where “Indians” were portrayed as ideals to or a reprehensible backdrop to western civilization (Berkhofer 1978).

However, this interpretation is at odds with her own initial pledge to understand every culture on its own terms (Benedict 1934: 11-14). This stance she adopted from her mentor Franz Boas at a time when social-Darwinian theory, eugenics, and National-Socialism gained increasing notoriety in the Western world. However, Benedict’s study has a number of empirical, methodological, and theoretical implications which historical context alone cannot account for.

Firstly, Benedict assumed that knowledge followed a well-defined general pattern (Benedict 1934: 18), in the case of Kwakiutl: The Dionysian. This assumption, per se, is theoretically simplistic, and her evidence was principally based on speeches and ritual performances. The content of these speeches she attributed to megalomanic features of the culture and the speaker, not rhetoric requirements, expectations to performance, and
the particular social organization of the ritual. This assumption ignores an understanding of meaning from the very context where it is produced.

Secondly, she set out to study the variations and distributions of human universals (Benedict 1934: 18-19). In this vein, she embarked on a study which demonstrated dominant cultural themes in the solution of universal human problems. Here, the analysis suffers from a major flaw as she portrayed Kwakiutl culture as excessive, paranoid, and megalomanic while arguing that these attributes were a virtue in Kwakiutl society. This assertion fundamentally ignores that there may be another logic and (ethno)psychology in another society, in which these practices are a constituent and meaningful part of a wider politico-religious system74.

Furthermore, her unproblematic fit between society, culture, and personality ignored sociological dimensions of relations of knowledge, power, and social organization. At this cost, her analysis of Kwakiutl culture still failed to understand the psychology of meaningful behavior of the culture in its own terms, which was her initial task. In effect, the internal and external validity of Benedict’s analysis renders its conclusions improbable.

Thirdly, Benedict’s evidence stems from a particular historical period of social and cultural upheaval. Benedict based her analysis on data from a period when rival potlatches with lavish distribution of goods were predominant. Rival potlatches of this scale and frequency were a phenomenon of the post-contact era, when primary items of exchange too became standardized in the form of H.B.C. blankets (Codere 1966, Goldman 1975: 135, Sahlins 1988). The fierce rivalries for social positions seem to have been a derivative phenomenon of the demographic decimation, increased sources of wealth, and the subsequent societal disorganization, where inheritance of titles was uncertain (Kobrinsky 1975, Masco 1995, Mauzé 1986, Wolf 1999). In this context, disputes between

74 See Stanley Walens (1981: 31) for a similar critique.
social actors who claimed legitimate inheritance to titles was produced, and the potlatch changed from an institution where titles were affirmed and validated to an institution where acquisition and validation took place (Mauzé 1986: 23-25).

In sum, Ruth Benedict’s analysis was fraught with theoretical simplifications and argumentative incoherence, and it dehistoricized its empirical evidence. This renders her analysis and conclusions on Kwakiutl personality improbable. In other words, her contribution to a concerted analysis of Kwakiutl personhood is very limited.

Kwakiutl Body Images

Another interesting study was Susan Postal’s brief paper on body images and identity among the Kwakiutl (Postal 1965). This essay used content-analysis of myths to elicit recurrent themes referring to the body and the self. The paper, rather than venturing to connect these conceptions with the socio-political structure and religious notions prevalent in Kwakiutl culture, took the avenue of a comparative analysis which underlined the specificity of body images, but not the web of meaning they are spun into. Similarly to later studies she concluded that the Kwakiutl body was conceived of as a container embodying valuables. The strengthening of the body was a form of boundary maintenance that helped controlling the valuables inside the container.

Her methodology points to a number of interesting themes in Kwakiutl cosmology concerning boundary maintenance, threats, and means of overcoming these. However, conceptions of the body are but one element of personhood which must, I argued, be understood in relation to the social order and the social institutions in which specific identities are produced. Although Postal’s paper suggested several interesting avenues, the scope of her paper and its methodology fall short of a comprehensive analysis of Kwakiutl personhood. Her contribution is interesting as the analysis exemplifies conceptions of the body from different modes of analysis, thus helping to triangulate Kwakiutl body notions from several 182
different approaches. Her methodology notwithstanding, I find her conclusions on Kwakiutl body notions tenable.

**Symbolic Analyses**

Susan Reid's analysis of the Man-Eater figure, Baxbakualanuxiwa, is another partial contribution to an investigation of Kwakiutl personhood. Reid used a psychoanalytic approach to highlight the ambivalence between the human and un-human in Kwakiutl cosmology as displayed in the Hamat'sa complex. Here, she offered an interpretation of the ambivalence between individuality and cooperation in Kwakiutl social formation (Reid 1979).

The tensions between the individuated and the social aspects of personality were to be solved in the Hamat'sa ritual as a rite de passage, where individual excess and social reintegration coincide in the taming of the Hamat'sa. Her essay is clearly argued and offers an interpretation of the social conflict dimensions of the Hamat'sa dance. However, her psychoanalytic scope prevents her from exploring further Kwakiutl conceptions of the person which are integral to the emotive, cognitive, and social processes she sought to explore within the social structure that defined the very tension. Thus, she does not explore the production of meanings by intentional social actors, but the collective display of ambivalence unconsciously performed by individuals. While she leaves the political and power aspects out of her analysis, she alludes to structural tensions in Kwakiutl but does not quite explore them.

Stanley Walens (1981: 48, 66) and Irving Goldman (1975: 128) both suggested that the conception of personhood may have been different among the Kwakiutl, but they did little to expand their tantalizing suggestions. Both studies were concerned with discerning the moral and symbolic order of Kwakiutl cosmology.

Irving Goldman’s study, “Mouth of Heaven,” is a benchmark in studies of the Kwakiutl as it was one of the first to make a concerted effort to conduct
a symbolic analysis of Kwakiutl religion and ideas by integrating Boas’ data into a coherent analysis. Some observers tend to classify his study as structuralist (Cf. Walens 1981: 6-7), but its methodology stretches the understanding of structuralism beyond what I am prepared to classify as structuralist, insofar as his approach to the analysis of symbols is far more concerned with its relations to the political order than with underlying binary oppositions structuring Kwakiutl cognition. Furthermore, Irving Goldman was a celebrated scholar at the University of Chicago in the 1960s at a time when symbolic analysis grew in prominence under Clifford Geertz and David Schneider. This hermeneutical approach was also apparent for the next generation of scholars from the department, notably Sherry B. Ortner and Paul Rabinow who were students of Goldman.

Goldman's study offered a critical reading of Boas’ data, especially a number of his misconceptions which seemed to have become conventions in Northwest Coast studies and beyond. Fellow scholars received Goldman’s study critically (Holm 1976, Reid 1977). However, it offers persuasive insights into the relation between religion, the symbolic, and the political order. The study relied heavily on Boas’ data, and in this sense it is prone to the same empirical and methodological limitations as Stanley Walens’ study that I will describe below.

Kwakiutl notions of the person were not Goldman’s explicit objects of analysis, but his study of the relations between the social and symbolic order is inextricably related to notions of the person. In his discussion of the Kwakiutl “soul” he inferred certain notions onto the Kwakiutl:

“The name is not a guide to personal character, but to the collective representation of the tribe or the lineage. Accordingly, the concept of name as a soul is not to be taken in the personal sense. The personal soul is distinct. The name stands rather for the collective immortality or continuity of the descent line. The personal soul departs at death to join with owls or other animals. The name soul remains forever among men… Nothing in the Kwakiutl
Goldman suggested that nobles possessed three kinds of soul: (i) Name soul, which is a collective representation of the tribe or lineage and the relation to its ancestor according to his or her rank. (ii) Form soul, which is a reification of the ancestral supernatural beings depicted in their animal form in masks, dishes, blankets, songs, dances, and legends stored in a specific box. These are valuables carefully protected and honored. (iii) Personal soul, which is distinct to the individual. The latter left the body and retreated into a shadow existence as the person died. The commoners, who did not have names, did not possess the name and form souls, which are extensions of ancestral powers, but they had personal souls (Goldman 1975: 62-64). While Goldman's study is based on persuasive argumentation, he admits to the speculative character of the argument, and its basis stems from an Eskimo rather than Kwakiutl data. As documented by Marie Mauzé (1994b) and in chapter 8, by conflating name and soul, Goldman obscures Kwakiutl personhood rather than clarifying our understanding of the phenomenon.

Walens’ study shows a strong structuralist influence. Compelling in its argument, his study makes a number of valuable points concerning Kwakiutl ontology and epistemology. Walens’ study is based exclusively on Boasian data, as he seeks to discern the ontological and moral basis for social action:

“Our task is to gain understanding of how the fundamental postulates of Kwakiutl ontology and morality are created and how they operate. To do this we must consciously ignore traditional concerns of anthropologists in order to gain a picture of the model of the universe and a man’s role in it as
it is developed through Kwakiutl metaphors. I have thus chosen to ignore, for the most part, the standard analyses of Kwakiutl culture...Nor have I extensively utilized most of the works on the Kwakiutl that were based on fieldwork after 1935, for by this time the more traditional values and ideas Boas recorded between 1888 and 1931 were drastically altered by the demographic and economic collapse of Kwakiutl society. Instead I have concentrated on one set of sources, the extensive ethnographic and textual materials Boas and George Hunt collected over a period of more than forty years.” (Walens 1981: 7)

This leaves him at a convenient point where he immerses himself in the richness of Boas' body of literature. His analysis is based on compelling, coherent, and suggestive arguments. However, Walens operates on a level of abstraction which suspends the predicaments of historical circumstances. While social action certainly is structured by cultural schemes, it also entails an element of pragmatics defined by its situatedness in time and space, by actors and their mutual interpretations in an environment which defines the conditions of possibility of social action. By suspending history from his narrative, herein ignoring archival, documentary, and ethnographic sources, the expenses of his analytical path become untenable. Social action becomes ideal constructs devoid of historicized actors and the predicaments of circumstances. He ignores a wealth of data readily available for making his analysis plausible.

Walens' study situated Kwakiutl culture "outside" history, rather than "within" history. Boas' data were representations, derivatives of historical and political circumstances like all other narratives. Thus, the cost of accepting Walens' analysis is a reification of "traditional" Kwakiutl culture as immutable, enclosed, and static rather than inscribed in ongoing social processes. However, this is not enough to dismiss Walens' analysis altogether, as elements may prove persuasive and contingent combined with the proper historical context. In other words, his analysis must be subsumed in a Historicization of his findings. His analysis of causation, the
relation between social and symbolic space, mortuary practices, and pregnancy cast light on Kwakiutl personhood and are integrated into the analysis in chapter 8.

Goldman and Walens' analyses provide numerous insights to the structure of Kwakiutl cosmology and ontology that structure time, space, and causation. Although they do not grasp the nature of Kwakiutl personhood, elements of their analyses are tenable to understand some of the relations governing a comprehensive analysis of personhood. While the accounts above dealt indirectly with Kwakiutl notions of the person, the following accounts by Marcel Mauss and Marie Mauzé deal directly with this kind of analysis.

The Person as Mask

The first approach to understanding cultural constructions of the category of the person was made by the ingenious Marcel Mauss in his canonic essay from 1938 "Une Catégorie de l'Esprit Humain" (1985). As was often the case with Mauss' contributions to anthropological theory, his enduring legacy is due to his imaginative ability to gain new insights rather than stringent modes of analysis. His writings on the body, the category of the person, and reciprocity are not seminal based on their theoretical coherence or empirical rigor, but on the ability to break new ground (Mauss 1973, 1985, 1990). His works evolved from analyses of structures of exchange, conducted in a diagnostic Durkheimian fashion towards a focus on aspects of the individual as a part of these wider cultural and social structures. The perspective of his later period separated him from his French, and European, contemporaries75.

However, I need to take a closer look at Mauss' brief comments on the Kwakiutl names carrying ancestral prerogatives. Mauss sought to historicize the notion of the person within a, even at the time, somewhat

75 Mauss' notion of habitus (1973) is just one aspect which has since been elaborated by his French successors in this line of thought (Bourdieu 1993).
outdated evolutionist framework (Mauss 1985: 3). While drawing from different cultural contexts, he sought to delineate the particularity of Western categories of the person. Within this context he portrayed Kwakiutl ceremonies as a drama, which;

“is more than an aesthetic performance. It is religious, and at the same time it is cosmic, mythological, social and personal... What is at stake in all this is more than the prestige and the authority of the chief and the clan. It is the very existence of both of these and of the ancestors reincarnated in their rightful successors, who live again in the bodies of those who bear their names, whose perpetuation is assured by the ritual in each of its phases. The perpetuation of things and spirits is only guaranteed by the perpetuating of the names of the individuals, of persons. The last only act in their titular capacity and, conversely, are responsible for their whole clan, their families and their tribes.” (Mauss 1985: 7-8)

Similar to his rendering of the potlatch as a total social phenomenon, Mauss argues that the ceremonies are personal and social insofar as the ancestors are reincarnated into the new chief. It seems that Mauss assumed an incarnation of the whole identity, from one individual to another, through the perpetuation of the name, things, and spirits (Mauss 1985: 8-9). As Goldman did later on, he inferred a correspondence between soul and name.

For Mauss, the term “person” (French: personne) did not entirely correspond with La Fontaine’s later definition of socially significant categories. To him, this referred to “that of the name, the social position and the legal and religious “birthright” of every free man, or even more so, of every noble and prince.” (Mauss 1985: 7)

He subsequently suggested that the ceremonials were a masquerade (Mauss 1985: 9), and the crests and their embodiments were “forming a
part of the persona of the owner” (Mauss 1985: 10) In this sense Mauss suggested that Kwakiutl personhood was a mask, a role (personage) donned in a masquerade, implying that there was a really real self underlying the persona. This underlying self was essentially an individual consciousness and was elevated to being the condition for reason (Mauss 1985: 22). Ultimately, the persona reflected a stage in the intellectual development towards the enlightened subject of Reason which was eventually realized in the Western world. A conclusion that reflected Mauss’ neo-Kantian position towards the Enlightenment project (Collins 1985).

Mauss’ compelling analysis of Kwakiutl personhood entailed notions of the Subject and Reason that eventually failed to understand the Kwakiutl construction of the person and the social formation of the self as something qualitatively equal to Western constructions of the person. Mauss offered some insightful suggestions to the understanding of Kwakiutl personhood, but his assumption of an underlying self as the condition for consciousness and pure reason remains an obstacle to the understanding of Kwakiutl personhood.

Distinguishing Soul and Name

More recently, Marie Mauzé made, arguably, the most significant contribution to understanding Kwakiutl personhood (Mauzé 1994a)76. Her careful study of Kwakiutl notions of the person revised previous contributions and provided new insights. Most significantly, Mauzé clarified the relation between soul and name through a focus on reincarnation. As opposed to Goldman and Mauss’ assertions, she convincingly argued that there is no direct correspondence between the transfer of soul and name (Mauzé 1994a: 177-182).

76 Not being familiar with this essay before, my reading of this essay has, along with fieldwork evidence, caused me to revise my interpretation of Kwakiutl personhood considerably in comparison with my prior analysis (Nielsen n.d.: 42-53).
A careful study of her approach reveals a convenient, if slightly misleading, appropriation of Joan La Fontaine’s distinctions between person, self, and individual (Mauzé 1994a: 178-179), while Mauzé distinguishes between body, soul, and person as separate levels of analysis and elements in indigenous cognition. When she concludes that “the soul is the substance of being, which makes the individual, while the name is an attribute which defines the social person,” she omits the analytical category of the self from the analysis (Mauzé 1994a: 188)\(^{77}\).

On a methodological note, her study drew from several sources, mostly from Boas’ research combined with indigenous linguistic categories. While she did not place her account in a historical framework, she has elsewhere demonstrated a keen attention to historical detail (Mauzé 1986, 1992). In fairness, the historical dimension can be said to be beyond the scope of her brief paper. Below I draw from her analysis of Kwakiutl personhood, and elements of her accounts will be further scrutinized in this context.

**Conclusion**

In this chapter I reviewed various contributions to understanding Kwakiutl notions of the person. I argued that Ruth Benedict’s approach held little value for the study of personhood. Meanwhile, Susan Postal’s analysis of Kwakiutl notions of the body provided partial insights to the phenomenon. The analyses of Susan Reid, Stanley Walens, and Irving Goldman also gave partial insights into elements of Kwakiutl cosmology and rituals that are beneficial for further analyses. Marcel Mauss’ analysis was the first

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\(^{77}\) While pressing La Fontaine’s analytical distinctions to their limit, she inadvertently demonstrates that the concept of the self may be difficult to use when dealing with a generic notion of the person. The self may prove more useful to analyze social processes, while shifting the level of analysis to that of social actors in processes of culture acquisition and learning (Cf. Tybjerg 1987).
concerted effort to understand Kwakiutl notions of the person. However, I remain skeptical towards his analytical framework as well as his findings. On the contrary, Marie Mauzé’s recent analysis provides a fine study that will be scrutinized and used at length in the subsequent chapter.

There, I will draw together these elements from the present chapter such as the notions of the body, soul, and name into one comprehensive account. These data will be combined with my own findings and subsequently situated in the historical figuration in which their symbolic production and social organization was meaningful, negotiated, and enunciated. The remainder of the dissertation seeks to do exactly that.
Chapter 8. 19th Century Kwakiutl Personhood

In this chapter I analyze Kwakiutl personhood combining ethnographic evidence from earlier ethnographies and my own findings. I seek to situate the analysis in historical figuration of 19th century Kwakiutl society where its symbolic production and social organization were meaningful.

In this chapter I analyze 19th century Kwakiutl personhood. The analysis sets out from the conceptual vantage point of the “total social person” as discussed in chapter 2. In this chapter I will show that names are centrally important in structuring Kwakiutl personhood. I will argue that the social transfer of names is central in constituting the Kwakiutl person in the cosmological and social order. Also importantly, names are of differential importance, and position the person as an agent-in-society accordingly. This follows Harris’ analysis which approached it from both processual and structural angles, shedding light upon both the range of identities in the social order as well as changing identities in the social careers of individuals. I will show that these social identities are intricately connected with types of names.

However, personhood cannot be reduced to what is said about the person, that is a cognitive level. Personhood also needs to be related to what is done. Therefore, I also look at Kwakiutl personhood as spatially situated and formed in society. That is, how particular identities are inscribed on and enacted by the body. Again, the stratification of rank and particularity of social positions are illustrated by the body.

My final argument is that Kwakiutl personhood is not merely an overarching construction – it comprises the ideals, categories, and bodily and emotive forms through which the individual understands him- or herself and operates in society.
Names and Kwakiutl Personhood

While conducting an analysis of Kwakiutl notions of the person, I make three propositions.

Firstly, I suggest that names provide an inroad to understanding different states of personhood. Following Marianne Boelscher I do not assume names to be arbitrary signs. On the contrary, I agree that:

“The conventions of naming and the semantic content of names are codifications of the social, political, and cosmological order, exhibiting both its underlying properties and its inherent dynamics.” (Boelscher 1988: 152)

Secondly, I argue that Kwakiutl notions of the person reflect the social structure, the prevailing morality, and cosmology.

Thirdly, I suggest that the formation of the self as a social person is strongly tied to the social unit of the numaym. Using the devised concept of the total social person, I argue that its constitution and reproduction can be elicited from a structural and processual analysis of cognitive, social, emotional, and physical elements.

Types of Names

Marianne Boelscher, in a study of Haida oratory and social practice, lists six different kinds of names prevalent among Haida. (i) Childhood names, (ii) potlatch names, (iii) chief names/titles, (iv) teknonyms, (v) nicknames, and (vi) from the late 19th century, Christian names (Boelscher 1988: 153).

This is roughly equivalent to the kinds of names used by Kwakiutl. I suggest that the following types of names are relevant for the Kwakiutl.

Childhood names. This class of names was given to the child in the first four years of its life cycle. Immediately after its birth, the child is named after the place it is born, e.g. “Yalis.” Hereafter, children of nobility start to
receive minor title names marking a social position and commencing their social career in the ceremonial world. In infancy, both paternal and maternal grandparent bestow childhood names onto the child.

*Teknonyms.* These names were relational terms like brother, sister, father, and mother, and in late adulthood pet dog names. To underline the significance of the numaym as a social and ideological unit, the system of classification was not based on biological descent. First cousins were referred to as “sibling.” The generic terms for siblings were based on birth order rather than gender: “wa’kwa”. An older brother or sister was coined: “nu’la” (the oldest). The younger brothers and sisters were coined: “tsa’ya” (the youngest)\(^{78}\). The biological grandparents’ sisters and brothers were thus referred to as grandparents. Thus, close categorical affinity existed within the lineage: ‘namlala (the-ones-that-stand-together) but also between all the lineages that comprised the numaym. The acknowledgment of the genealogical relations of the individual was a central component in social and political discourse. The mobilization of relatives, “glidladlola”, through skilled use of kinship categories was instrumental for gaining support in ceremonial and practical matters.

The importance of the numaym pervaded all aspects of social life. - It was not unusual for childless couples to adopt children from close relatives. Similarly, uncles often trained their nephews, and grandparents raised first-born children for extensive periods. In old age, some elderly would assume names after pet dogs. Boelscher notes similar cases among the Haida (Boelscher 1998: 159). It was explained to me that such practices stemmed from the high regard for dogs as sentinels. The old people would act as sentinels and sleep by the entrance to the Big House, and upon attack they would be the first to be killed while alerting the remainder of the extended family and allowing the young children to escape through

\(^{78}\) Categories for father wa: “os” (more recently: “amp”). The mother was named: “abas” (more recently: “abamp”), while the grandfather was referred to as “ga’amp”. A grandmother was called : “gagas” and an aunt was coined “gnis”. An uncle was referred to as: “k’wali”
secret exits. They would give their life in exchange for those of the younger generation

*Everyday names.* Examples of this type of names were nicknames used affectionately in informal social situations. Similar to those names were other referential names used in the secular and private realm. These names were the only type of names given to the residual group of commoners who were not bequeathed titles or ceremonial names.

*Ceremonial Names.* Both tl'as̓a̓la (winter dance) and tsek'a (summer dance) names referred to positions in dance societies. Most ceremonial names were transferable through marriage, war, or vision quests. Some ceremonial names, however, were considered very sacred and closely associated with the first ancestor of the numaym. Therefore, this kind of name was used on specific ceremonial occasions in the winter dances and was subject to differential importance. The Hamat'sa dances acquired from the Heiltsuk, for instance, were considered a centrally important dance, and the individual embodying the ceremonial privilege was feared and respected.

*Titles.* These names were rather to be understood as seats, or social positions, within the numaym and a precondition for participating in intertribal potlatches. Title names were non-transferable to individuals outside the numaym, and related to the origins of the numaym. It was first when the severe population decimation in the 19th century struck the Kwakiutl that this rule of transfer disintegrated. George Hunt wrote about the chief’s title names that:

“They never changed their names from the beginning, when the first human beings existed in the world; for the names cannot go out of the family of the head chiefs of the numayms, but only to the eldest one of the children of the head chief. And the names cannot be given to the husband of the daughter, none of the whole number of the names, beginning with the ten-month child’s name until he takes
the name of his father, the name of the head chief. These are called myth names. The only names of the head chiefs of the numayms that can be given in marriage are the names he obtained from his father-in-law, and also the privileges, for he cannot give his own privileges to his son-in-law.” (Boas 1921: 823-24)

These titles were transferable to others within the numaym, but not to individuals belonging to other numayms.

Christian names. These names were gradually adopted by the end of the 19th century. As Wilson Duff wrote on the adoption of Christian names:

“The adoption of the English language and British law made it necessary for the Indians to adopt English names. Partly it was a matter of convenience, for the whites could not pronounce, let alone write, most Indian names. (i) Sometimes a man was given a first name; for example, Tom. This would then become the surname of his children; for example, Sam Tom or Lizzie Tom (Which might become Samuel Thomas and Elizabeth Thomas). Grandchildren usually kept the same surname (Jack Tom), but in some cases they chose to continue the custom of using the father's first name (Jack Sam). In this way many Indian families came to have English first names as their surnames. (ii) It was another common practice to take the name of a missionary or other patron at the time of baptism, which may account for the Whites and Goods at Nanaimo and the Collisons at Skidegate, or to take the name of some famous person, as did old chief Edenshaw of Masset when he was baptized Albert Edward Edenshaw after the British king. (iii) In some cases the Indian name was translated into English and

79 While George Hunt used the term “myth names,” I use the term “title” as I find this term appropriately describes its social significance within the numaym of its bearer.
used as a surname: “Maquilla” of Salmon River became Johnny “Moon”… (iv) In other cases the Indian name sounded somewhat familiar to an English surname, and the Anglicized spelling was adopted: At Alert Bay “Walas” (“great”) became “Wallace”… Often the Indian name itself, somewhat simplified, could be used as for example; Clutesi, Siwid, Muldo, Neeselowes.” (Duff 1964: 103-4, my insertions of numerals)

The Social and Cosmological Significance of Names

Below, I venture into detail with the differences between kinds of names. Boelscher also distinguished between different aspects of meaning which can be exhorted from names.

Cosmologically, names also mediate between the supernatural and the social world. Certain names are thought to originate from supernatural ancestors or events, thus “reinforcing the constant flux between information from the supernatural world and socio-political activity.” (Boelscher 1988: 153)

Spatially, they link a name to a lineage and places and privileges owned by that lineage, which is explained through the oral history of the numaym.

Temporally, names link past generations with present and future generations. They classify a person synchronically in relation to contemporary society, and diachronically to previous holders of the same name.

I shall return to the signification of names and naming. In chapter five, I provided a description of Kwakiutl social structure, and the numaym as the core social unit. However, I did not provide a closer description of Kwakiutl cosmology, which is, following my argument, a precondition for
understanding its significance for Kwakiutl notions of the person. In a recent paper Joseph Masco wrote:

“To appreciate the complexity of pre-colonial Kwakw’ak’wakw cosmology, we must begin by distancing ourselves from a set of Eurocentric analytic categories which have limited utility on the Northwest Coast. These categories involve the assumption of a natural opposition between secular and sacred activity and the uncritical application of particularly capitalist definitions of economic property. An understanding of the total value of material goods in pre-colonial Kwakwa’kwakw society is contingent on recognizing the role that they play within a symbolic economy which employs material items as metaphors for spiritual wealth. The imposition of secular and sacred distinctions within Kwakwa’kwakw practice obfuscates the totalizing influence of this symbolic economy, which ties together everyday practice with the maintenance of an overarching religious world view.”
(Masco 1995: 45-46)

In other words, to comprehend Kwakiutl cosmology one must appreciate the interconnectedness and exchanges between the different realms in the Kwakiutl cosmic order. Contemporary Gwawa’enuxw Chief Robert Joseph summarized the basic tenets of Kwakiutl cosmology as follows:

“Thus, it is important to reflect on the genesis of the First People on the Pacific Northwest Coast. This genesis is predicated on the belief of all First Nations people that the Creator brought into being the First Ancestors. Specifically, the First Ancestors evolved from and followed the creation of Heaven and Earth. According to the primal worldview of our people, the definition of the world around us breaks down into four realms – the Sky World, the Undersea World, the Mortal World and the Spirit World. Ancient voices spoke of a time when the world was one, indicating
In Kwakiutl cosmology, the four realms of the universe were fundamentally interconnected and could be accessed by creatures from the other realms through the intentional use of supernatural powers. Whereas spirits endowed with such powers roamed freely in the Mortal World, particularly in the winter, as human being’s connection to the other realms could only take place through channeling supernatural powers. Examples of such channeling are the taming of the Hamat’sa initiate in the winter ceremonies and the re-transformation from an un-human to a human state, or sending the belongings of the recently deceased to him “on the other side.” Burning some of his most coveted belongings would bring these items to him or her, since smoke from fires was thought to be a channel to other realms.

The conception of the interpenetrating realms through metaphors of eating or being eaten was pervasive. This hunger had to be controlled by elaborate reciprocal relations between human and animal, and humans and spirits (Boas 1935b: 125-170, Goldman 1975: 183-95, Walens 1981: 5-7). Without careful control of bodily and verbal conduct, the forces of the universe could be unleashed.

Thus, every species of the universe was perceived as distinct. It was an imperative to maintain symmetrical relations between the different realms. In order to empower human beings to catch animals, it was necessary to perform careful ritual practices to transform, and temporally embody, the powers to penetrate another realm. Salmons and animals were believed to be humans donning themselves in animals’ skins and masks, which they shed when separated from human beings.

In Kwakiutl cosmology, the interdependency of the different realms had to be eternally produced and reproduced. Irving Goldman eloquently interpreted the relations thus:
"The Kwakiutl see each community as an incomplete segment of the wider universe. No part, no person, no tribe, no species, no body of supernatural beings is being self-sufficient." (Goldman 1975:177)

This fundamental reciprocity and interdependence of animals and spirits was recognized and collectively performed in the winter ceremonials, where it was believed that the spirits came to the winter villages and their powers were transferred to young members of the community. The young people, who were members of secret societies would, through initiating performances, be able to transcend the condition of the human beings and temporarily control supernatural powers (Boas 1897: 398-430, see also Reid 1979). Thus, privileges obtained in vision quests, war, or marriage were embraced and performed by persons thought to be “dlugwala” (blessed) with supernatural powers (‘nawalakw).

However, this capacity was socially structured. It was restricted to individuals who were descendants from the ancestors of the numayms. In this sense, cosmology was effectively connected to the socio-political order described in chapter 5. The head chief was believed to be a descendant of the first ancestor of the numaym. Similarly, most origin stories of the numayms capture how the first ancestors transformed from supernatural animals into humans. Thus, the head chief was thought to be an incarnation of the first ancestor possessing privileged supernatural powers.

Ranking of the seats within the numaym corresponded to the genealogical proximity to the first ancestor. Descendants of the first ancestor continuously embodied these supernatural powers. The powers and privileges were symbolically and materially bestowed through title names, ceremonial privileges, masks, regalia, house posts, and dishes. As Joseph Masco summarized, the relationship between the cosmos and the social order can be conceptualized like this:

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“While the number of commoners and slaves is fluid, the nobility presents a more fixed and fragile system. Ranked seats, if left unoccupied, can be lost; and since each seat was created by a founding ancestor, no new seats can be produced. To lose track of an inherited name is to lose supernatural power attached to that name, eliminating from human influence a vital means of controlling natural resources and protection against the destructive forces in the universe. Thus, in pre-colonial Kwakwaka’wakw thought, the stability of the ranking system was linked directly to the stability of the cosmos. To combat the dangerous vulnerability of the ranking system, the Kwakwaka’wakw were always on the lookout for ways to supplement their rank by gaining rights to perform the rituals of neighboring groups...The realization of a new ceremonial privilege transformed the noble’s social identity and increased the spiritual power of his numaym during the winter ceremonials.” (Masco 1995: 47)

While I concur with Masco’s general description, I am at odds with his assertion that new ceremonial privileges transformed the person’s social identity. On the contrary, this new privilege added to the prestige of the person, but it did not transform his social identity, as this remained fixed like the seat he held. Arguably, social identities were codified as names. An act of renaming or a shift of name, depending on numaym, denoted a shift in social identity.

Thus, names were closely associated with the cosmos in a mytho-social order. In Bourdieu’s terminology, symbolic capital was inherently a political currency also. However, the significance of names could not be limited to understanding their relation to cosmos in a more esoteric sense. As I will investigate below, it was also an economic and moral order.

The politico-symbolic power vested in names became evident in the ceremonials, “potlatching,” where title and ceremonial names were transferred, and the powers and practices that the carrier of these names held were displayed. Thus, on the one hand ceremonials marked the
temporal transition of social identities for nobles, and also spatially displayed the powers that the bearer of these names held. In other words, in Kwakiutl ceremonies Kwakiutl notions of the person were instituted and dramatized. As far as it was a religious, political, and economic phenomenon, it was also as indicated by Mauss a personal phenomenon as it signified an individual’s transgression from one social identity to another when title names were transferred (Mauss 1985).

**Connecting Names and Space**

Spatially, title names symbolized a relation to a particular numaym and the places and privileges owned by the numaym. As Chief Robert Joseph explained, the relationship between place and people was believed to derive from the first ancestor’s transformation on earth. Places were linked with their mythical origins of the lineage, which was explained through the oral history of the numaym. An essential attribute of the title name was the title to certain land and marine resources of these places. Ownership of resource sites was inextricably linked with title. The symbolic and material property was jealously guarded by each numaym. Economically, the name also carried weight, as the titleholder controlled access and use of the places. Parts of the game had to be given to him. In this sense, names were important elements in essentializing an unequal distribution of economic, symbolic, and social power.

The notion of control, or containment, of physical and social space was pivotal in Kwakiutl cosmology. As Stanley Walens argued, there is a strong analogy between the structuring of physical and social space.

The physical universe was conceived of as containing the village which again would contain the house, and the house would contain boxes. Similarly, the social universe contained the social group, the social group contained the numaym, and the numaym contained the individual bodies. The equivalence in the structuring of space is summarized as follows.
Table 8.1. Analogy of Space

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical universe</th>
<th>Social universe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Village</td>
<td>Social group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Big House</td>
<td>Numaym</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box</td>
<td>Body</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Adapted from Walens 1981: 50-56)

Although Walens’ analysis remains speculative, the similarity in form makes the analysis plausible. The container was conceived of as a place of storage of treasures. The masks and ritual paraphernalia associated with the ancestral beings were stored in a specific box. Similarly, the body was conceived of as a container. Particular names were the attribute that situated the individual spatially within the physical and social universe: as a member of a social group, in a particular numaym, and carried on by a specific body.

**Connecting Names and Time: The Social Career of a Kwakiutl Chief**

While I investigated some of the structural features of names marking social identities, the temporal, or processual, aspect of personhood still needs to be examined. Names also have a temporal dimension insofar as they link past generations with present and future generations. They classify an individual person synchronically in relation to contemporary society, and diachronically to previous holders of the same name. In other words, names provided a social record of acquired and inherited social status throughout a person’s life history. As Marie Mauzé wrote:

“One of the most fundamental aspects of the constitution of the person is the acquisition of names. In Kwakiutl society naming permits the incorporation of the individual in the numaym and allows the continuity of the descent line. The affiliation is not always through the paternal line. The name also places the individual in society and thus operates as a social marker. It gives an identity to the individual and assigns him a position and a role, according to his rank of birth.” (Mauzé 1994a: 187, references omitted)
By tracing the social career of an individual, we gain an understanding of the ways that different kinds of names interrelate and the act of naming provide a micro-trajectory of the formation of the individual as a person. An example of how an individual was known by several names throughout his or her social career is the social career of a Head chief of the numaym, Yaax’agamae, of the Komoyo/Kwixa, eventually known as L’asot’walis. His social career is summarized in Table 8.2. This social career described by George Hunt to Franz Boas may serve as an “ideal type” of social career of a chief around the late 19th and early 20th century. The table lists the approximate time provided in Boas’ text and age estimate of the individual in the first two columns. In the third column, the number and types of names he receives. In the last column, I recount the act of naming as a form of social transfer ascertained by the distribution of property to varying witnesses. The scale of the ritual varied depending on the social significance of the transfer.
Table 8.2 The Social Career of Chief L’asotí’walis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Age estimate</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>By birth</td>
<td>1 day old</td>
<td><em>First name.</em> He received a childhood name that denoted the place of birth. (Boas 1925: 113)</td>
<td>He was named immediately. No distribution of property.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After 10 moons</td>
<td>10 months old</td>
<td><em>Second name.</em> He received his second childhood name, his “ochre-name,” given by the paternal grandparents. (Boas 1925: 115)</td>
<td>Call all village of Fort Rupert. He had his face painted with ochre, adorned with leg and arm rings, scorched off hair, washed body. Gave away kerchiefs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After 14 moons</td>
<td>14 months old</td>
<td><em>Third name.</em> He receives his third childhood name given by maternal grandparents. (Boas 1925: 118)</td>
<td>Invited all young men of the village, removed leg and arm rings. Gave away kerchiefs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After four years</td>
<td>4 years old</td>
<td><em>Fourth name</em> was a “paint-giving-away-name.” A title name denoting a young noble. (Boas 1925: 121,123)</td>
<td>Invited all young men of the numaym. They sang and invited all young men of village. Shirts given to all other men/boys with “paint-giving-away-names.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At adolescence</td>
<td>13-17 years old</td>
<td><em>Fifth name is a “spreading out name,”</em> he received a title name, which enabled him to distribute property. A prince name. (Boas 1925: 125)</td>
<td>Father assembles blankets, calls for nobility of numaym, gives blankets to all titleholders of the village. He was accepted as a titleholder (gi’game), and invited to feasts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four years later</td>
<td>17-21 years old</td>
<td>Given a very significant winter ceremonial name, he previously held lesser ceremonial names for</td>
<td>Secluded for two days, caught and initiated in winter ceremonies. Member of a secret society.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two years later</td>
<td>19-23 years old</td>
<td>Sixth name. He received a new title name as a prince from his father. (Boas 1925: 135-41)</td>
<td>Blankets to be loaned to all men, nobles, and commoners in the village (The other three tribes of Fort Rupert). Given new song that went with the name.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One year later?</td>
<td>20-23 years old</td>
<td>Seventh name. He received a chieftain title name as his father transferred his chief position of the numaym to him. The name was after his paternal grandfather. (Boas 1925: 145-47)</td>
<td>Sold copper, father announced that son takes over. Raised a pole and held large intertribal potlatch.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two years later</td>
<td>22-25 years old</td>
<td>Received a copper, but did not receive names. (Boas 1925: 241-45, 273-81)</td>
<td>Requested marriage with chiefs as messengers, vying the bride. Gave marriage gift to father and received copper as dowry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22-25 years old</td>
<td>Eight name. He received a feasting ceremonial name that his paternal grandfather held. (Boas 1925: 287-289)</td>
<td>Feast for the tribes of the village, giving away blankets.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The description, however, only focuses on three kinds of names: childhood, ceremonial, and title names. And from the text it is evident that the names listed are not exhaustive. In fact, it neither offers an exhaustive list of his ceremonial names, the use of teknonyms, everyday names nor of his Christian names. In this sense, the narrative of the Kwixia chief offers an account of the kind of names which were of social and symbolic significance rather than a complete list. This differentiation of social significance was multifaceted, and it was exhibited in cognitive and emotional and bodily aspects of Kwakiutl personhood. Thus, everyday names, teknonyms, and Christian names did not bestow spiritual powers and politico-symbolic property.

Insofar as these titles and ceremonial names were passed on through generations or acquired through marriages, their names and accompanying legends and myths reinforce the importance and knowledge of the numaym in past and present generations. Thus, the historical trajectories of the names account for the oral history of the numaym.

**Person and The Formation of the Self**

So far the analysis of Kwakiutl personhood has been generic, insofar as I have used data that connotes bias towards nobility, adult, and male. I shall seek to rectify that, although it is ramified by the scarcity of data. As stated in chapter five, apart from nobles, Kwakiutl society also consisted of groups of commoners in each numaym. Furthermore, each numaym consisted of a number of slaves.

In Marie Mauzé’s analysis of Kwakiutl, she first argued that commoners are merely “individuals” understood as “mortal beings” defined by La Fontaine, while nobles are persons. First she collapsed the distinction by
degrees of personhood, and then she reestablished the dichotomy between person:individual, noble:commoner:

“I use La Fontaine’s definition of the individual as a “mortal being” who exists in and of himself or herself and the person as “an object of social significance” (La Fontaine 1985: 126). I will show that in Kwakiutl thought not everybody becomes a person or at least a full person, and that there exist degrees or gradations of personhood: only a “real” person is a full person. This is typically the case of the chief; the nobles are persons and commoners individuals.” (Mauzé 1994a: 179)

I argue that both commoners and nobles were persons, however their respective statures as persons were differentiated. Mortal human beings who were not acknowledged as persons were slaves. What defined persons as opposed to other human beings in the Mortal Realm were names, as Mauzé rightly stressed; what differentiated them was the access to and acquisition of a certain class of names: title names that made the nobility “real people.” (Mauzé 1994a: 184-85)

However, Kwakiutl personhood cannot be reduced to the relations of power and access to symbolic and material resources represented in title names. It has ramifications further into the constitution of the person as a physical, emotional, social, and cognized entity.

In Kwakiutl ontology, human beings were composed of material substance as well as immaterial substance. The configuration consisted of (i) a soul, (ii) a body, and (iii) names. Siding with Mauzé, I distinguish between soul and names, as opposed to Irving Goldman and Marcel Mauss. As empirical evidence shows, the soul does exist as an emic category, and analytically maintaining this distinction enables us to comprehend two simultaneous processes: one of social integration, and one of social stratification. The importance of this distinction becomes poignant once conceptions of life cycles, death, and reincarnation are considered.
The Soul

The soul was not the privilege of man. All beings had souls. “The generic Kwak’wala term for soul is “bexwune,” which stems from the etymological root “bekw” (man) and its cognate “bekwanemene” (manhood, quality of man) (Mauzé 1994a: 180; also Boas 1921: 1451-52). The etymological root suggests that the soul is defining for the individual as a human being.

However, animals were said to be humans clad in animal forms, which at least suggests that the term was not the defining distinction between animal and human. Rather, the humanness is permeable insofar as the first ancestors were animals and animals were said to incarnate some souls. This proposition is convergent with Kwakiutl cosmology.

Souls were located in the head and had a somewhat autonomous existence as entities that could travel separately from the body, especially when asleep. The journeys of the soul were said to cause dreams and mediate to the realm of the dead. Such parting of the body and the soul constituted real and immediate danger for the individual. Without the soul, the individual was weak. The soul’s relation at biological death is somewhat ambivalent. Contemporary informants state that the soul left prior to biological death, whereas other sources stated that it left on the fourth day after death as it entered the “Land of the Dead,” where the spirits reside (Curtis 1915: 53-61). Differing opinions may be accounted for by different beliefs among the different Kwakiutl social groups. Burial was followed by a long period of mourning, and the widow or widower was not allowed to remarry until one year after the death of their spouse80. Social death occurred following a memorial potlatch.

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Following the death of the individual, the body separated into two parts, the physical corpse and the ghost (Boas 1966: 168). For the ghost to separate from the body, the burial caretakers (“a’aphila”) cracked open the bottom of the square coffin for the ghost to exit the body (Curtis 1915: 55). In cases where the deceased passed on within the house, the coffin was removed from the house through an exit of removed sideboards. Later, when windows were installed, the coffin was removed through the window. This was done to prevent the ghost from finding its way inside the house again (Ford 1941: 221). The ghost was said to be the skeletal double of the corpse (Boas 1921: 626-27; Boas 1966: 168). Ghosts lived in an underworld which was an inversion of the human world, and perhaps all four realms of the universe81. It was a place where creatures existed in human, skeletal form, but without the material substance of flesh or the symbolic substance of humanness. Kwakiutl chief, Charley Nowell, suggested that the ghost was a double that returned if a soul was regenerated in another individual. Thus on the one hand, bones were transient physical remains. On the other hand, bones formed part of the ghost in the analogic, inverted underworld, and to return they had to be treated through careful, ritualized burial practice (Curtis 1915: 53-61).

Upon death, souls were said to travel to the animal realm of the Mortal World. Twins were said to become salmons, and conversely twins inherited the salmon dance in the Tsek’a ceremonies. Commoners were believed to become owls (Boas 1921: 727). Mauzé speculates that masks were channels that allowed humans to travel to the animal realm. It is unsubstantiated whether affiliation to dance societies or belonging to a particular numaym decided what kind of animal the soul traveled to82.

81 Irving Goldman suggests this is the case (1975: 196-197).
82 Mauzé seems to think the latter: “It appears that in the Kwakiutl system of belief the soul of the human has to reach the animal realm and inhabit an animal in order to be reborn in the body of another human. By the same token it is the social grouping which is significant in terms of the place of residence of the soul before reincarnation.” (Mauzé 1994a: 182)
Souls were reincarnated in individuals within the numaym. As Marie Mauzé summarized the journey of souls:

“What is important is that souls return to the common stock of souls of the numaym… The immaterial part of the human being is thus part of a substance – a substance of being – which exists before the individual, and a fortiori before the person, and which will survive him. The idea of the soul is thus that of a “flow” of substance around a closed system, so that at death the soul returns to a stock of substance, owned by the group of which the individual is a member. It appears that the question of ancestrality cannot be separated from the idea of reincarnation of a soul at each birth and a recuperation of a soul at each death. Man is thus conceived of as being the result of a process that (1) materializes a body, (2) gives it a soul from the common stock, and (3) articulates a body and a soul to make an individual. The individual is singular by its body but through the soul participates in the perpetuation of the group.”
(Mauzé 1994a: 183-184)

There exist several records of reincarnation in the Kwakiutl ethnography (Cf. Ford 1941: 29; Spradley 1969: 188). Similarity in physical attributes and features were said to be indications of reincarnation, as are actions and specific skills. The soul channeled such attributes from the individual body of one generation to another while skipping one generation. The interval before regeneration was supposed to be until the body was completely decomposed. The generational sequence or the time interval was negotiable. The sex of the previous bearer of the soul did not play a role for the individual who incarnated it.

The Body

To constitute an individual two elements were necessary: body and soul. The body was the container of the soul in the Mortal World. The body as a material substance was believed to be transient, as opposed to the soul
and name which were believed to be durable. The body perished, whereas the name transferred to a new bearer, and the soul eventually transferred to a new body.

The biological birth and death of the individual body did not precisely correspond with the social birth and death of the person (Mauzé 1994a: 179). As highlighted by the social career of the Kwixa chief above, the constitution of the person was a contiguous process towards full personhood. The social death of the person did not take place before a memorial potlatch for the deceased approximately one year after the biological death83.

The attributes of the body could to some extent be subject to human action. Human life was believed to be the result of sexual intercourse and the resulting pregnancy. The gender of the child could be manipulated as the Kwixa Kwakiutl Charley Nowell recounted:

“When my wife and I got married, I wanted a boy, and I made four small wooden wedges of yew wood and bow and arrows which men would use, and put them under our bed and kept them there. I wanted all boys. We had all boys straight. After about ten years, my wife wanted a girl, and without my knowing it took away these wedges and bows and arrows and got four small mats and four small baskets and put them there instead. When this baby girl come, I say: “That wedge is no good. That bow and arrow is no good. I’m going to make some new ones.” I went to look under the bed, and they was gone, and there were mats and baskets instead. I said, “When did you put those things there?” And she said, “Before I carried.” Then I said there must be something true about this, but I didn’t change it, and we had girls right along while they was under there.”

(Ford 1941: 157)

83 On rare occasion social death also occurred due to actions that irredeemably led to the social death of a person.

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This manipulation of the gender was caused by a manipulation of the forces of nature. As was the case with witchcraft, there existed practices or rituals of analogic causality (Walens 1981: 22). Thus the gender of the body was believed to be determined by such interventions by parents or close relatives. As mentioned, the sex did not play a role for the soul to be reincarnated in the particular body.

“The body is the house of the soul” Boas translated (1921: 724). In other words, the body was a container in which the soul resided. This attribute of the body constituted the human as an individual. It was the container of valuables. Like the box contained material property, the body contained the immaterial property of the soul that constituted the body as individual.

The metaphor of containment implies the demarcation of the boundaries between the inside and the outside. The distinction on the body was marked by the same idea of transgression of boundaries as in the spatial structure of the house and the universe. This distinction is evident in bodily practices and bodily aesthetics as well as in morality.

In Kwakiutl myths, orality is a central theme. In the transgression between the different realms, the mouth constitutes the intermediate boundary in the flow from the outside-in. Therefore, openings of the body, the eyes, the anus, and especially the mouth were subject to rigorous control. The primary locus of interlacing the inside and the outside was the head. It was symbolically the lid of the box through which things could transcend to the level underneath the surface. The head was also the locus of the soul. Thus, control of the mouth was a prerequisite for controlling the dangerous state of the soul leaving the body.

Premeditated control of bodily conduct such as utterance and affection was carefully nurtured from early on. Indiscretions by nobles, youths, or adults were subject to close social sanction through embarrassment and shame, and public redemption was necessary (Ford 1941: 74).
Sentiments were kept inside, or hidden from the outside. Sentiments believed to find their expression in the face, especially through the grimacing of the mouth and the expression of the eyes. One example of the carefully nurtured bodily control is Charley Nowell’s account of his passive expression when enduring pain (Ford 1941: 93).

Another example is the training of the socially marginal warriors. This group maintained an ambivalent attitude to the rest of the band. On the one hand, they were to be relied upon for the physical security of the village; on the other hand, they were considered as rough and disregarding of social rules. To toughen their bodies, they were treated roughly by their fathers, were carefully hardened by bathing in cold water and drilled in swimming, diving, and weaponry (Boas 1966: 106). Similar practices of hardening the body through bathing and beating oneself with hemlock branches were common among noble men.

Thus, bodily conduct was subject to training and learning throughout childhood. Proper bodily and rhetorical conduct were regarded essential attributes of moral action. Improper display of affection in social situations was regarded as a weakness shaming one’s family.

The body was not only conceived of as a container of the soul and carrier of names. Bodies were specific and differentiated. The outside of the body was decorated to display its specificity. The corporeal aesthetics of the body represented wealth, beauty, and strength (Postal 1965). In this sense, cultural aesthetics were always inscribed on the body, and conversely, it is shaped by cultural ideals (Falk 1995). Irreversibly marking the body such as the practice of head-flattening among Gugsimaxw women, which was considered especially beautiful84, and the facial

84 It is likely that this was also a technique of the body in other Kwakiutl communities.
tattooing of high ranked individuals, inscribed hierarchical social identities on the individuals (Jacobsen 1977: 38).

Reversible body markings also appeared as part of the aesthetic of the body through braiding of hair, wearing nose rings and abalone earrings, and the painting of faces. Bracelets, necklaces, and the rubbing of bear grease into the hair were all features of marking and displaying the particularity of the body (Walens 1992: 36-37). On some occasions, clothing, as the body’s outer layer, distinguished the ancestry of one numaym from another85. Clothing such as different kinds of furs, hats, and button blankets all differentiated Kwakiutl bodies.

Bodies as boundaries, or barriers, to the outside and containers of the inside were further elaborated by the notion that they shielded from threats from the outside. It was important to strengthen the skin through bathing in cold water and rubbing the skin with hemlock branches. This was especially important in the ceremonial season when the powerful spirits governed by hunger would appear in the Mortal World and could permeate the body. Control of the outside of the body was central to contain the soul inside and embody the title name.

**The Person**

Outer bodily aesthetics distinguished the nobility from commoners within the numaym, and the social identity of one numaym to another. However, the substance of the inside constituted the valuables of the Kwakiutl person. One could say that the body was the *container* of the soul, while a person was by definition the *carrier* of a name.

85 The same analogy can be made between the house and the body. The house was perceived of as containing the ancestral spirits during the winter ceremonies. The front of the house was decorated with the crests of the numaym, and quite often the door would be the carved mouth of a mythical being incorporated in a totem pole in the center of the front. One would enter the realms of the valuables through the mouth.
Above, I showed how different names were assigned with differential values within Kwakiutl notions of the person. The non-transferable title names, which were by essence only transferable within the numaym, secured a social standing within the numaym, whereas ceremonial names were rather an additional source of supernatural power which did not carry any social power.

However, there existed a correlation between carriers of non-transferable title names and transferable ceremonial names enhancing the mytho-social power of the nobility. Teknonyms and everyday names did not entail any social power, and commoners did by definition only have everyday names as opposed to the nobility. Thus, becoming the carrier, or the embodied repository, of a title name was the perfection of the Kwakiutl person. It was a “real” person. In this sense, personhood was hierarchical in terms of gender and class. The “real” person was a noble, having ascended, through successive stages of naming, to becoming a “real person” endowed with social and supernatural powers. As Marie Mauzé eloquently puts it:

“All elements – body, soul, and name are necessary to the making of a person, but the name is what differentiates a person from an individual, what perfects an individual to make it a person. The reiterated perfecting of a man throughout his life is accomplished through the acquisition of different successive names. It is in acquiring, achieving, and upholding names related to positions in the numaym that a person becomes a “social” person and a “moral” person aware of its self and destiny.” (Mauzé 1994a: 184)

As opposed to Mauzé, I am skeptical that commoners were “merely” individuals – they were persons, albeit lesser persons than nobles. Slaves, arguably, were on the brink of human kind. On the one hand, they were sacrificed in rituals to satiate the supernatural beings’ hunger for human flesh, which suggests an acknowledgment of their humanness. On the other hand, they were apparently not acknowledged to have a soul that
was reincarnated. Women’s role was somewhat ambiguous. They could hold important title names, but they acted as men in that capacity. It is likely that this occurred if there was a shortage of men in the line of descent from the first ancestor. Women also could hold ceremonial names, and some were acknowledged as nobility while others were commoners. Thus, the overarching principle of Kwakiutl notions of the person was one of gradation and differentiation of personhood, where commoners were a residual group not endowed with full personhood, and slaves were on the brink of humanness.

All members of the numaym held souls, reincarnated from ancestors of the numaym. In this sense, all members of the numaym were socially integrated at a horizontal level of incorporation. The ascribed, by rule of descent, potential towards full personhood through title names, however, differentiated the social significance of the individuals within the numaym. In this sense, names incorporated individuals at a vertical level. This element in an analysis of the total social person remains to be explored, insofar as the “moral” aspect must be given due attention from both the cognitive and emotional points of view.

In the hierarchical social structure of the Kwakiutl an explicit notion of rank existed. In each numaym some siblings were assigned title names and rank, whereas other siblings would not inherit any title names or gain the concomitant spiritual power. Such social differentiation and individual gradation between next of kin, arguably, was a source of potential friction within the numaym. A potential rivalry between brothers could occur. However, within the numaym there also existed an ideological notion of solidarity and cooperation in all aspects of social life.

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86 This interpretation is prepositional, as data on the issue is lacking.
Metaphorically, the numaym was an extension of the person\textsuperscript{87}. Politically, the head chief was the corporeal extension of the numaym. In the intertribal winter ceremonials, the chief was the personification of the numaym, the embodiment of the first ancestor mediating relations between the supernatural beings and humans. This suggests that the noble’s experience as a social being was an ontological, religious, and political state that emphasized the interests of the numaym rather than the self. This emphasis was on obligation, and “the gift of self” is a recurrent theme in origin stories, as for instance of the ‘Namgis people where the First ancestor transformed into the river Gwa’ni (Nimpkish River) in order to secure life and abundant resources to his people.

Furthermore, a basic ontological notion was that the world was inherently conflicting and could only be ordered by controlling hunger. Only humans were considered able to do so, and similarly hunger was seen as an attribute of selfishness. To uphold the order of the universe, cooperation at the expense of personal desires, such as hunger, was vital (Walens 1981: 70). To the Kwakiutl people, the nobility were “real persons” who were compelled and obligated to act likewise.

His or her actions were expected to be moral actions when protecting and preserving the unity of the numaym. Simultaneously, the actions were the embodiment of his spiritual, political, and personal qualities. If the chief failed to act properly as a moral being, and grew too great, there were legends recounting the slaying of the chief (Boas 1935b). The event could very well have been a didactic instruction, an inversion of moral action, and a historical event as a result of the structural tension between conflict and cooperation within the numaym.

Sergei Kan, in his fine study of matrilineal Tlingit, stated a similar ambivalence in social structure, ethos, and public discourse:

\textsuperscript{87} The Kwak’wala rendering of numaym translates to: “we-are-one,” “one-of-the-same-kind” or “people-of-the-same-kind.”
“Members of the same lineage or clan did not have equal knowledge of or access to the groups *shagón* [the supernatural powers derived from the first ancestor]. The ethos of love between matrikin, united by their reverence for the ancestors and the ancestral crests, as well as the bonds of sharing, mutual care, and collective responsibility, coexisted with inequality, hierarchy, and the subordination of juniors to seniors, women to men (in certain contexts), and especially commoners to aristocrats.” (Kan 1989: 77, original italics)

This structural tension between inequality and solidarity was also present among the Kwakiutl. Among the Kwakiutl people, the denial of self-interest and de-emphasis on the self were predominant in public discourse and oral history (Cf. Boas 1935b) either as a guideline or the hilarious *faux pas* of the trickster figures. Both discourses acted as significant schemes in the apprehension of morality and competent schemes for moral action. Selfishness was considered as uncontrolled, immoral, and fundamentally anti-social. Similarly, the negatives of social death and abandonment were other dominant themes in the legends (Cf. Boas 1935b, Postal 1965).

As ethnopsychological research suggests, the Western dichotomy between emotion and reason may obscure the understanding of emotions as psycho-social phenomena (Cf. Lutz and White 1986). Rather, emotions should be viewed as a set of learned expressions to certain sets of social situations and/or violation of codes of conduct. In this sense, emotions can be considered as socially recognized and elaborated expressions of the person. The term sentiment may cover the individual and private feeling that does not have a public expression (Cf. Ito 1985, Rosaldo 1980).

The Boas - Hunt collection on this topic is limited and at best indexical. Nevertheless, some of the data collected on pride, shame, and grief combined with other material provide an example of an emotional structure with different expressions (Cf. Boas 1935a: 66-77). Other
examples are the forms of social control that surrounded indiscretions of an individual, ranging from minor mishaps, such as stumbling and children fighting, to grand mishaps in ceremonial protocol. Thus, the numaym would distribute gifts or in severe cases hold a potlatch (Spradley 1969: 23). A father would be ashamed of the egotism and excesses of his son or members of his numaym. Shame was not only personal, it was also felt by the people with whom the individual making mistakes was closely associated. Shame and ridicule acted as the predominant forms of social control in a public discourse where mutual love among relatives was, and still is, emphasized. It is also notable that forms of conflict solution such as the rivalry potlatches were not a course of action appropriate for solving differences within the numaym, since this would be to fight oneself.

The embodiment of a different emotive structure is clearly demonstrated by acts of grief involved in the death of close relatives of high rank. It was believed that the individual should not travel alone to the Land of the Dead, and subsequently a war party engaged on a headhunting expedition where an individual, preferably of equal rank, was beheaded whereby his soul was released and would accompany the deceased on his journey.

Similarly in warfare, bodies of slain enemies were decapitated and brutally devoured, often their heads were covered with down and stuck on poles near the beach in the village of the victors (Boas 1966: 105-119). Their faces were skinned, and pieces of skins were worn by the Hamat’sa in the winter ceremonials as a display of and tribute to his ferocity and bravery (Boas 1966: 105-118; Ford 1941: 220-21). Arguably, the pieces of skin

88 Large mishaps could be redeemed through performing a “digita” (wiping-away-shame) where the individual was cleansed, and the event was never to be spoken of again. Minor mishaps could be rectified by the so-called “gwadagilichl” (giving-away-quarters). The term itself suggests that the act may have had another name in the pre-contact period before monetary economy was introduced.
denoted the ability of a warrior or Man Eater to penetrate the contained body making the human utterly vulnerable. Further, organs of slain enemies were kept. Possibly, this had to do with the right to acquire the name and ancestral powers of slain enemies. Again, I speculate that the head associated with power and the locus of the soul was kept in order to claim the prerogatives and powers that the slain person carried. Thus the bodily organ could be interpreted as a material form of this power. Similar practices were present amongst the neighboring Nuu-chah-nulth (Wike 1967: 52).

Another example of such bodily practices could be found in the religious context of the Hamat'sa dance. In the course of the dance, the Hamat'sa was said to have devoured bodies of slaves and bit spectators before he was tamed. It remains unconfirmed whether flesh was actually eaten in the course of the Hamat'sa ritual. Although slaves were not considered persons, they may have had an acknowledged human quality that sufficed to embody human beings in the Tsek’a. On the one hand, such practices symbolized the frenzy and insatiable hunger of the Hamat'sa. On the other hand, the dissection of skin and flesh may have symbolized the vulnerability of human beings in the universe despite elaborate containment of its powers in the body.

**Conclusive Remarks**

Initially, I made three propositions. (i) Names codified the social, political, and cosmological order of the Kwakiutl. (ii) I argued that Kwakiutl notions of the person reflected the social structure, morality, and cosmology. (iii) I suggested that the formation of the self was tied to the social unit of the numaym.

In the analysis I highlighted the different types of names and the varying social importance of names and naming in, and for, the cosmological, social, and political order. Title names were embodied by and a
constituent part of “real” persons, while connecting past generations with present and future generations. Meanwhile, title names also differentiated social significance of persons as embodied repositories of mytho-social power. Personhood thus corresponded with the social organization of Kwakiutl society. Souls, on the contrary, also found reincarnation within the numaym, but not through a line of descent. In this sense, the regeneration of souls, as a dimension of Kwakiutl personhood, was instrumental for social integration. Thus, the person was the temporal carrier of names of differentiating quality, while the body was the spatial container of the soul which established the individual as a human being. In public discourse, the de-emphasis of the self was a guide for moral action as well as constituent in a different emotional order. Thus Kwakiutl notion of the person facilitated a profound experience of the self as a being situated in the social and cosmological order. Using the analytical framework of the total social person pointed out that this experience was cognitive, physical, emotional and social for the self and its relation to society.

As a perspective, Norbert Elias’ concepts psychogenesis and sociogenesis articulate the relation between social structure, mental processes, and emotional expressions as being culturally and historically specific. In a certain historical figuration a social structure and its inherent relations of power form a particular rationality, cultural modes of action, conceptions of the universe, the person, self and others, and ultimately of what is human. In the processes of history, these developments also affects the configuration of emotions (Elias 1987).

Above we saw how individuality was de-emphasized in public discourse, self-interest was discouraged, and loyalty and solidarity towards the numaym poignantly formed the basis for moral virtue and action. Among the Kwakiutl, there was no distinction between political, religious, and social obligation. The person, as an embodied repository of a title, was identified with this social position and these obligations in the public discourse.
This is not to say that there was no self-awareness reflecting upon this social identity. Oral history provided numerous didactic examples of the difference between public expectations and private feelings. The self as an individuated social actor was a rather muted part of the public discourse. Individual thought and sentiment remained private and controlled. Several legends recount the sadness of young nobles who leave society to commit suicide because they are at odds with the expectations of their fathers.

As shown, practices in relations to others were radically different from contemporary Western standards, such as molesting or slaying enemies, adorning dismembered parts of their body, and killing slaves for religious purposes. In today’s value systems, these actions would be considered atrocious and certainly pathologized in public discourse. In 19th century Kwakiutl personhood, it was an act of acknowledging the other on the fringe of humanity, as was the case of slaying captives. Such killings were rather a symbol of pride, bravery, and prowess than an act of pathological atrocity. In Elias’ terms, Kwakiutl personhood embodied a different psychological and social structure with an alternate structure of the universe and the beings within it. This conception of the personhood prevailed by the time of the advent of Europeans in the mid-19th century.

In the proceeding chapters, the politics of identity and notions of personhood became one of the central points of internal and external conflict in the frontier society where aforementioned missionary and government agents implemented the colonial incursion into Kwakiutl territory.
Part Four. A Most Difficult Lot toCivilize:
Contesting Personhood, 1880-1951
Chapter 9. Schooling and Politics of Identity

The following chapter will investigate the impact of schooling in the wider scenario of continuity and change at Alert Bay by the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. I will argue that the school, albeit a novel social institution, became a central tool in the specific politics of identity evoked by government and missionaries. In this chapter I explore the workings of the school on the everyday life of the Kwakiutl children who attended school. I argue that the school constituted an institutionalized utopian site, where school days were designed to instill an identity of non-native citizen into the children based on divisions by occupation, age, and gender. As I will show, these practices pervaded everyday life at the school. I also argue that the impact of the school cannot merely be understood by what was learned in the school, but also what was not learned.

While schooling commenced with the establishment of the Anglican Mission at Alert Bay in 1880, the establishment of the Industrial Boarding School in 1894, a Girls’ Home, and an Indian Day School were all institutional sites that symbolized a concerted missionary and government office to “educate” native children. While only a dozen children attended the first school classes by Rev. A.J. Hall, in the 1930s almost all Kwakiutl children went to school.

In 1929, the two former institutions were replaced by the far larger residential school, “St. Michael’s.” The Indian Day School and the Indian Residential School(s) led a co-dependent existence at Alert Bay, but I concentrate on the residential school, since the workings of this kind of institution were considered the most efficient by its operators, and because the institution markedly signifies the relations of power at work in education. However, these processes were at work in both institutions.
The establishment of Indian Schooling at Alert Bay is but one instant of the Government Indian policy. This policy has to be seen within the wider discourses and social processes of modernity – their national enunciations in the policies of colonization are distinctly inscribed in the nation-building of the infant nation-state Canada – yet its rationalization and institutionalization is similar to policies enforced in the colonized world, and indeed towards deviant “others” in Europe as well. Nonetheless, local responses to these processes and structural changes differ considerably from community to community, and from individual to individual.

As Michael Harkin eloquently stressed, local events on the Northwest Coast, such as the pandemic diseases scourging the land in the second part of the 19th century, are not isolated. Euro-Canadian actions and agenda were inscribed in a larger international and national framework of knowledge and means of power becoming increasingly prevalent at the time:

“Less obvious, but also significant, is the coincidence of the high tide of colonialism with the European development of discourses and technologies of the body, making bodily practices a conscious object of colonial and missionary policy.” (Harkin 1997a: 77)

Education, institutionalized and formalized in the school, was one form of knowledge and one form of institutionalization of governance which sought, forcibly, to alter the political, social, and ontological structure of its new subjects. However, this was not the sole measure taken by government and missionaries towards natives.

“Europeans deployed a three-part strategy of subjugation… The three constituents were the biomedical clinic, the Protestant theology of discipline, and the carceral institutions, including the jail and the residential school. Each leg reinforced and augmented the others. The theology of discipline was spiritually “hygienic” and was
enforced by the carceral institutions. The clinic deployed quasi-theological concepts such as purity, filth, and redemption. Indeed, the three are homologous; each pursues a strategy of isolation and control that in its final stage is self-imposed.” (Harkin 1997a: 79)

While Michael Harkin’s analysis of Heiltsuk’s response and production of meaning to colonial incursion is a very fine piece of ethnography, he pays only limited attention to schooling as an element of colonization. Others have demonstrated the importance of schooling as a pillar in Canadian “Indian policy” (Miller 1996, Milloy 1999), but these accounts are concerned with the general history of the residential school system rather than specific case studies of the impact of schooling on a specific group of native people. Also, they do not explore how schooling as a social practice worked on the individual and, for that matter, on a whole community in conjunction with other legal, economical, and military modes of colonization.

The Politics of Education as Politics of Identity

The concepts of politics of education and politics of identity conjoin insofar as the learning, or acquisition, of formal knowledge, cognitive schemes, a bodily habitus, and a practical sense (Bourdieu 1993) are all essential to the social formation of the individual as a social person and the reproduction of society (Cf. Bourdieu & Passeron 1979). Education is tied to a politics of identity insofar as social agents actively used education as an institutional means to overthrow the conceptions of self, cognitive schemes, and bodily habitus by displacing children from the family setting to the school setting. In other words, controlling learning processes is simultaneously political and forming for particular identities (Ball 1990).

The Canadian Government was well aware of the politics imbued in education as a device of social engineering. From 1879, the Government increased the emphasis on formal education as a “civilizing” tool. With the
relative failure of the Indian day schools to attain the goals of civilizing the “Indians,” the Government conformed to Nicholas Flood Davin’s recommendations to implement and in some instances expand the residential school system. The residential school, of course, in its totalizing, carceral form was the most rigorous form of institutionalized education and control of the learning processes of its subjects.

The Heterotopia of the Deviant: The Boarding School

By institutionalizing the setting of learning within confined physical boundaries, the government and its church partners sought to control the learning processes of native children in time and space. As mentioned, the institutionalization of, in the eyes of the Euro-Canadians, racially deviant is not unlike the policies implemented towards “other” groups of marginalized peoples in the Western world such as the mental hospital, the reform prison, the medical clinic, and the boarding school.

I suggest, on the one hand, that the “St. Michael’s” and its forerunners, the Industrial School and the Girl’s Home, can be regarded as total institutions in Erving Goffman’s sense (Goffman 1967). On the other hand, the residential school also constituted a heterotopia in the Foucaultian sense. According to Michel Foucault, two of the defining principles of the heterotopia are its structuring of time and its limited accessibility in space, which concur with Goffman’s definition of the total institution.

Goffman defined the total institution as having the following properties: (i) Fixed setting under the auspices of the same authorities, (ii) all activities of the individual were carried out in conjunction with other individuals treated equally. (iii) Daily life was carefully structured by tasks. The implementation was defined by sets of formal rules and supervised by personnel, (iv) the compulsory tasks were all inherent in a greater rational scheme which apparently served to attain the official goals of the institution (Goffman 1967: 13).
Whereas Goffman was primarily concerned with the social and psychological impact of the total institution, Foucault was concerned with representations imbuing time and space and how they worked on the individual (Foucault 1986: 24). Foucault argued that two different types of heterotopia existed, that of crisis and that of the deviant. He himself argued that the boarding school is characterized by one of crisis, because it secludes the individual until the crisis has passed. The boarding school for the “racially” different, however, I think, is a case of the deviant.

On one level, education has functional properties of acquiring skills needed to function in society. On another level, Michel Foucault has painstakingly documented the intricate, and institutionalized, relation between power and knowledge (Cf. Foucault 1977). Foucault’s notion of heterotopia can serve as a useful analytical framework for understanding the missionaries’ and government’s conceptualizations of self and the “Indian” as they were acted upon in the residential school.

**Utopian Visions in a Heterotopian Practice**

While events at the Indian School at Alert Bay were local, the regulations and operation had to conform to the policy of the Department of Indian Affairs which placed increasing emphasis on education as a “civilizing instrument.” The historian James Milloy neatly summarizes the notion:

“In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, as the government moved to implement Nicholas Flood Davin’s recommendation, the officials of the Department of Indian Affairs and their church partners did not stray from the fundamentals of the civilizing logic of the Imperial Indian policy heritage. They did, however, build upon it, developing a full rationale for, and a vision of, education in the service of assimilation. This vision comprised a detailed strategy for
re-socializing Aboriginal children within residential schools.”
(Milloy 1999: 23)

A telling example of the quasi-evolutionist and Christian discourse in which such strategies were enunciated is the following memo from the Anglican Secretary in charge of Indian School Administration, T.B.R. Westgate, to the Minister in charge of the Department of Indian Affairs. In this memo on Indian education, the Anglican Church made the following “suggestions for improving the prevailing system:”

“So far as the Indian himself is concerned, he has already with his own eyes [seen] that many of the Whiteman’s ways are superior to his own. He has seen, for instance, that the Whiteman’s methods and education has given him control over many of the forces of nature, and over many of the circumstances of life... Having seen the benefits and advantages of the Whiteman’s education, they are demanding it for themselves and for their children, and they are demanding it as their right.”

From establishing the unilateral assumptions of own cultural superiority, Westgate expressed the desire to preserve all desirable traits of the indigenous culture, which he listed below. At the same time these statements can be interpreted as notions of self, through the notion of the desirable traits, as well as the aims of the specific politics of identity, which missionization in general and schooling in particular were part of:

“So far as the younger generations of Indians are concerned, there exists even now an earnest desire to understand and incorporate within their own culture, the full and highest meaning of all the forces impinging on them from without. They know the Whiteman can teach them a scientific temper, habits of industry, the discipline of accuracy, and standards of fair dealing and honesty, and the Church Societies are unable to see that such lessons are in any way inconsistent with the realization that nothing
in indigenous culture should be destroyed or condemned, unless it can be proved that it does in fact obstruct the progress of culture…”

“Of the traditional qualities of these people which the Church Societies consider worth preserving, mention may be made of the following: -

- The quality of loyalty to family and friends, and which is capable of expansion into loyalty to a wider circle.
- The deep love of children from which they can be developed a strong desire to help the children of the race to be well born.
- The generosity and hospitality which are outstanding characteristics of the Indian races, and which may be developed as some of the finer elements of social living.
- The traditional quality of courage, and admiration of brave leadership, and which can be used to spur the young Indian on in the face of discouragement, and the hard grind of monotonous routine.
- The ingrafted dignity and serenity of the leaders of the race, and which should be preserved as a help in restoring to the hectic world in which we live the poise and calm of which we have been robbed by our numerous mechanical inventions.”

“In addition to all their finer racial traits, none of which should be lost to the new life, there are certain Indian arts and Indian industries which should also be preserved. As the term “art” generously connotes the whole range of Man’s cultural activities, it is used here to include only those finer elements which have emerged from the higher stages of that culture…”
“The art of wood sculpture and carving, already so highly perfected by the Indians in British Columbia, is another, which, if preserved and wisely directed, is capable of producing astonishing results.” (Westgate to Creary 1938/12/02, General Secretary I.S.A – 1938, 6575-103, series 3-2, box 56)

While the Anglican ideology of discipline was explicit, the emphases on loyalty, care for the family, courage, and dignity were also attributes of the “Indian,” which could successfully be maintained in the transformation into the ideal of Man. Such reflections formed a vivid part of the missionary and government imagination of the natives’ ideal future. While such notions were imposing through their institutional practice, they were also paternalist and modernist in the belief of the infallibility of their means and ends in the policy towards native people.

The paternalism of the Indian Agent as a personification of governance is remarkably explicit in the extract of a letter from Murray Todd to Moses Alfred, a leader of the ‘Namgis at Alert Bay, as he underlines the importance of schooling following the absence of Moses Alfred’s children from the Indian Day School. Todd makes sure to underscore the impeccability of the government’s actions towards natives:

“As you are one of the principal as well as influential members of the Nimpkish Band, you must readily see how difficult you are making it for the school where regular attendance is essential to the progress of the individual child. During past years when the Government (through no fault of their own) found it impossible to provide adequate educational facilities for the children here, you were one of the most critical members of your people. The Department

89 Interestingly, the wood craft of native arts was maintained at the Albert Bay Indian Residential School. For many years two large totem poles adorned the entrance of the school, and famous Kwakiutl artists such as Charlie James and Mungo Martin taught at the school.
has and is doing everything possible to give your children a
good education. A new school has been built and efficiently
employed, and there is no reason why every child of school
age in Alert Bay does not attend school regularly. The
Government by law requires every child to attend school
each day unless he or she is ill, and it is my responsibility
as Indian Superintendent to see that all children attend
regularly. I wish to point out to you that you have no right
whatsoever to dictate to the Government and inform the
Principal that you are going to keep your children out of
school as you see fit. During the month of May your son
Phillip was absent for 9 days, and the teacher reports “No
good reason.” (Indian Agent Todd to Moses Alfred
1949/06/11, RG 10, vol. 6384, file 800-1, part 3)

Government and Missionary emphasis on education as a central
“civilizing” instrument was at the heart of Indian policy, and zealously
monitored by the local Indian Agent as well as the Headquarters through a
quarterly report from each residential school. Especially under
Superintendent General Duncan Campbell Scott, education was a central
feature during his tenure in office (Titley 1982: 75-78). Now, let us turn to
the workings of the Indian Schools at Alert Bay.

The Alert Bay Indian Schools

In most places on the Canadian West Coast, missionization and native
schooling were closely related. Once Reverend Alfred J. Hall established
his mission at Alert Bay, one of his first priorities was to build a day school
(Ford 1941). Initially, the mission’s position among the ‘Namgis was weak.
Rev. Hall, aided by his wife, was involved in teaching, providing medical
aid, preaching, and to some extent enterprise.90 The first school was

90 What is notable is the conspicuous silence on the achievements of Hall in
C.M.S’ own historical account. Its own historian mentions the incremental
congregation (C.M.S 1899, vol iii: 632), but the substance of the conversions
rather small, and Hall managed to attract only a few local children to his school. These were mostly boys as ‘Namgis showed reluctance towards letting their girls attend school. A few children from adjacent communities, such as from Hall’s first mission at Fort Rupert, boarded with the Halls’. Some of these were the Chief Charley Nowell, Stephen, and Jane Cook.

In the early 1890s, the Church Missionary Society (C.M.S.) secured funding from the Department of Indian Affairs (DIA) to build an Industrial Boarding School for boys which they were to operate. After some lobbying, the C.M.S. convinced the DIA that a home for girls was equally important, since the boys would eventually grow up and want to establish new families. Without suitable Christian maidens, the production of Christian values in new families was not feasible.

The Industrial Boarding School was technically a boarding school for boys learning vocational skills suitable for manual labor employment in the burgeoning frontier society. Correspondingly, the boys were meant to be between 14 and 18 years old while living at the school. In reality, boys at all ages attended the Industrial Boarding School. The considerably smaller Girls’ Home followed the same pattern.

Parallel to the establishment of the early residential school at Alert Bay, the Indian Day School continued to attract the local ‘Namgis children and, increasingly, children from other Kwakiutl communities who had moved to Alert Bay with their parents in the pursuit of labor, medical care, and schooling.

As the old Girls’ Home continued to experience difficulties in attracting girls, the Home closed in 1906. A few years later a new building was erected, and the Home recommenced its operations by 1913. In the 1910s and 1920s, the DIA emphasis on education as an assimilationist
instrument gained impetus. Coinciding with stagnating mortality rates of the native population on the Coast, the demand for native education outgrew the capacity of the Industrial Boarding School and the Girls’ Home.

In the mid-1920s, the DIA made plans to build a new, modern, and much larger residential school with a capacity of 200 students. It was to become one of the largest residential schools in Canada. In Anglican Church records the school was subsequently referred to as “St. Michael’s” as proposed by its first principal, Earl Frank Anfield. While the DIA permitted this name, it emphasized that its official name must continue to be “Alert Bay Indian Residential School.” In the early years, enrolment far superseded the school’s capacity, as up to 230 children enrolled at school. However, by the end of the year attendance decreased to just around 200 students (Government of Canada, Quarterly Return. RG 10 vol. # 6426, file # 875-1, part 1-3,5, 875-2, part 1).

Enrolment

In a study of residential school experiences and their impact on aboriginal communities, Roland Chrisjohn maintains that, in one era, up to 50 percent of Canada’s native population attended residential school (Chrisjohn, Young and Maraun 1997: 121). However, for the entire period that the residential school system existed, the natives attending the school were closer to one quarter\(^\text{91}\). However, this may be more on a par with the Kwakiutl communities. A likely estimate for Kwakiutl attending the school throughout the residential school era is between 20 – 33 percent.

Several factors have to do with this. First of all, while serving all Anglican communities from Kwakiutl territory and further north, the Girls’ Home and the Industrial School operated with a limited capacity. Secondly, a number of day schools were in operation in the territory, first representing a significant missionization effort and subsequently government effort to

\(^{91}\) James R. Miller, personal communication.
bring education to even remote communities. At various points in time, day schools were in operation at Alert Bay, Village Island, Guildford Island, Kingcome Inlet, Cape Mudge, and Fort Rupert. At least for the Kwakiutl people living at Alert Bay, Indian Day School was an alternative to residential school. Thus, most ‘Namgis parents opted to keep their children at home and let them attend the Indian Day School rather than placing them in the residential school.

Table 9.1. illustrates the development of the residential school enrolment in 1902-16. In these two decades, schooling gradually became more important in Canadian Indian policy, and the number of students enrolled almost doubled. In the same period, the overall Kwakiutl decreased steadily, while the share of children of the overall population rose from 10 to 16 percent. Nevertheless, the table also shows that there was no way all Kwakiutl children went to residential school. The highest percentage that could possibly enroll was 38 percent of all the Kwakiutl children in the age group 6-15 years old in 1916.

However, several students from non-Kwakiutl communities also attended the schools. The percentage of these students is unknown, as is the average years of attendance of each residential school student92. Nevertheless, the table provides evidence that until 1929 residential school experience was limited to about one third of the Kwakiutl children at the most (DIA Annual Report 1902-1916)93.

92 A few students also remained at the school beyond the age of 15.
93 In 1929, the new residential school accommodating 200 students opened. At the same time the Kwakiutl population reached its all-time low in 1928 with 1,088 survivors remaining. From 1902-1916, the age group 6-15-year-olds also increased its ratio of the total population from 10 - 16 %. This was more due to a decrease in the total population than a substantial increase in absolute numbers. By 1939 the total Kwakiutl population had risen to 1,220 (Hawthorn, Belshaw and Jamieson 1958: 24). Assuming a similar increase in the ratio of the age group from 1916-29, the age group would constitute somewhere between one fourth to one third of the entire population. In absolute numbers between 305 - 403 children. In 1943, 54 Kwakiutl children
Table 9.1. Percentage of Kwakiutl Children Attending Residential School, 1902-1916

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Kwakiutl Population</th>
<th>6-15-year-old male</th>
<th>6-15-year-old female</th>
<th>Total 6-15-year-olds</th>
<th>Age group of total population in %</th>
<th>Residential School Population</th>
<th>Highest potential attendance of Kwakiutl children at Boarding School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1902</td>
<td>1,356</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1903</td>
<td>1,345</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1904</td>
<td>1,317</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905</td>
<td>1,278</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1906</td>
<td>1,257</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1907</td>
<td>1,305</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1908</td>
<td>1,294</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1909</td>
<td>1,263</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>1,207</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1912</td>
<td>1,199</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1913</td>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1914</td>
<td>1,183</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>1,161</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916</td>
<td>1,140</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is likely that enrolment of Kwakiutl children in residential school was significant in the 1930s and 1940s where many Kwakiutl leaders recognized the need for Euro-Canadian education for the younger generation. Another contributing factor may have been the solid reputation the school enjoyed while Earl Frank Anfield was principal at the school from 1927 - 1943. Similarly, the population in residence at St. Michael’s in the late 1960s and 1970s were also predominantly from Kwakiutl communities.

attended St. Michael’s. This would amount to between 13 - 18 % of the above estimate.
From 1894-1974 an estimated 1,800 students attended the residential school at Alert Bay\(^4\). I managed to identify some 40 percent of the total school population\(^5\). Almost half hail from Kwakiutl communities. However, it is more likely that about one third of the students came from Kwakiutl communities\(^6\). In total figures, somewhere between 600-650 students of

\(^{94}\) In 1934, 450 boys and 250 girls had attended the residential schools in Alert Bay (Anglican Church of Canada 1934: St. Michael’s 50th anniversary Newsletter). In 1928, these numbers were 368 boys and 134 girls respectively (Principal E.F. Anfield in Thunderbird Newsletter of Alert Bay Indian Residential School, April 1928). These numbers suggest an average flow of 33 new students per year. If we extrapolate this average flow for the period 1935-62, this adds up to 891 new students. In 1962 the DIA’s new policy of bringing children back to their home community diminished the student population at St. Michael’s. Mostly, students now came from broken homes, were orphans, or came from small isolated communities. My estimate is that the flow diminished to around 20 new students per year. If this number is extrapolated for the period 1963-1974, this adds up to 240 new students. Combined for the three periods we have an estimated number of 1,831 students attending the school.

\(^{95}\) Government policy, due to the political sensitivity of the residential school today, means that students’ individual school records are closed for public access. There are two pieces of federal legislation which have to do with the disclosure of information: (i) the Access to Information Act and (ii) the Privacy Act. The Access to Information Act outlines rules and procedures for the disclosure of information within the custody of the Federal Government of Canada including setting out categories of information that are exempt from disclosure. The Privacy Act outlines standards for the collection, use, and disclosure of personal information pertaining to Canadian citizens by the Federal Government. In other words, these pieces of legislation can effectively shut down a straightforward and thorough research on students visiting the residential school. The Government can, by reference to protecting its citizens, withhold information in such a way that it is an impediment to researching what happened at “St. Michael’s Residential School”.

\(^{96}\) This distribution may not be entirely accurate, since one of the sources are interviews with members of various Kwakiutl groups, and they may principally remember the names of fellow students from the same or adjacent communities. The bias is confirmed by the student files from 1943, the so-called “Quarterly Returns” (Government of Canada, RG 10-3.D. Reel # C-8756 vol. # 6426, file # 875-2, part 1). Here only 28% of the student population was of Kwakiutl descent. However, this distribution may not be representative for the whole period. Indeed, it is likely that the smaller Girls’
around 1,800 students came from Kwakiutl communities\(^\text{97}\). Gender distribution was fairly equal, though slightly more males than females attended the school\(^\text{98}\).

**Operational and Institutional Changes**

Before proceeding to the daily operations of the residential school, we must consider a number of the institutional and operational changes which took place at Alert Bay after the establishment of “St. Michael’s.”

By the end of the 1940s, “St. Michael’s” was in disarray. After experiencing prolonged difficulties in recruiting skilled teachers to the insufficient wages in the residential school, inept management, and

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\(\text{97}\) The exact numbers are 604 - 641 students of Kwakiutl descent (33\% \times 1,831 = 604.23 or 35\% \times 1,831 = 640.85). If the average from the “1943 Quarterly Returns” was the basis for the estimate, 513 Kwakiutl children attended the school (28\% \times 1,831 = 512.68). If the distribution from the database was the basis for the estimate, 806 children came from Kwakiutl communities (44\% \times 1,831 = 805.65). A broader estimate is thus that 500-800 Kwakiutl students attended the residential school over the years. Based on the 600-650-population estimate, around 50\% of all Kwakiutl individuals attending residential school (318 of 600-650) have been identified. I estimate that a survey at Tsalgwadi, Quatsino, and Fort Rupert would improve the identification percentage.

\(\text{98}\) The same sources show that the percentage of boys attending the schools were respectively 53\% and 52\%. The percentage for the whole period may be a bit higher since the Girls’ Home held a smaller student population than the Industrial Boarding School. The Girls’ Home was also closed between 1906 and 1913 (DIA Annual Reports, 1906-1913). The gender distribution of the Kwakiutl student population corresponds to that of the entire student population.
extended periods of unqualified staff and severe disciplinary problems with staff and students alike, “St. Michael’s” was in shambles\(^9\).

In other words the insufficient funding for native education also haunted Alert Bay Indian Residential School. Following a school visit in October 1949, I.S.A Superintendent G.R. Turner wrote:

“I strongly recommend that the M.S.C.C. [Mission Society of the Church of Canada] tell the Dominion Government in no uncertain terms that unless (1) the per capita grant is raised to a figure that will permit payment of prevailing salaries to the staff without operating the school at a loss and (2) the Indian Affairs Branch make the premises comfortable and attractive, the M.S.C.C. will withdraw altogether from St. Michael’s School. At present this school is nothing short of a discredit to the Church of England in Canada.” (Turner 1949/10/22, School Visit Reports of Superintendent 1949, 6575-103, series 2-15 (c), box 23, my insertion)

In his assessment of the staff he was equally blunt, branding staff members from “excellent” to “absolutely useless” and “worse than useless,” (ibid) whereas this witnesses to the competences of the staff at the time. More serious concerns about the well-being of the children may be raised when reading the following assessment:

“Captain Forrester – Nominally, Vice-Principal, appointed by Agent Todd. Very Strong on discipline but unfortunately usually misguided. Apparently dislikes work of any kind and detested by boys and most staff members. Very little

\(^9\) An example is the school visit report from February 1950. I.S.A Superintendent Cook wrote, following a visit to the school: “The greatest single problem still confronting the Administration is the one of adequately staffing its school. It is impossible to hire a sufficient number of competent workers at the salaries we have to offer for the various positions.” (Cook 1950/02/14, Reports of Superintendent 1950, 6575-103, series 2-15 (b), box 21)
use as staff member and gave Principal permission to demote Forrester to position of housemaster at salary of $50 monthly instead of $70. If Forrester not agreeable to this might be wise to let him go.” (Cook 1948/02/15-19, School Visit Reports of Superintendent 1950, 6575-103, series 2-15 (c), box 23)

One is left to wonder what it took before the Church parted company with residential school staff. In 1951, the Department of Indian Affairs took the consequence of these problems and terminated “St. Michael’s” schooling function for the intermediate and senior students at the residential school. Subsequently the residential students had to attend the Indian Day School from grade 2 to grade 8. Kindergarten and grade 1 were still located at “St. Michael’s.”

The change was significant because the “total institution” opened up, as residential school children now attended the Indian Day School along with native children from Alert Bay. “St. Michael’s” functions were now rather as a residence than as a school. Following the revisions of the 1951 Indian Act, the Department of Indian Affairs also shifted its policy and encouraged educational integration, opposing the segregationist strategy which had hitherto been its policy. Thus, from grade 8 and onwards, native children could attend High School along with the Euro-Canadian youth in the community. The student population also changed, as DIA’s new policy from 1962 was to bring schooling to the native communities. From then on, the students were comprised of students from broken homes, i.e. orphans, and students from remote communities where schooling was unavailable either for the age group or altogether.

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100 Contrary to policy, native informants attribute to the entrepreneurship of the Principal E.F. Anfield (1927-1943) that he secured that few, extraordinarily gifted native students pursued a high school education in the community.

101 Two such examples were the Day Schools at Village Island and Gilford Island where the anthropologists Harry Wolcott and Ronald Rohner were teachers in the early 1960s (Rohner & Rohner 1970, Wolcott 1967).
The Anglican Church showed some reluctance to this arrangement that disfavored residential schools, as it was concerned that Christian content in the education would be jeopardized in favor of a secularized education.

A decade later, grade 1 pupils also transferred to the Indian Day School. In 1955, the new Principal, John L. Dalton, terminated the farm which both contributed to the subsistence and the vocational training of the boys. Thoroughly stripped of educational functions, “St. Michael's” was rather a residence than a school. This function remained unaltered until it ultimately closed.

In 1965, the Indian Day School also ceased operating, and both native and non-native children frequented the provincial elementary school as a result of the integrationist policy of the Department of Indian Affairs. In 1969, the Department of Indian Affairs finally pulled the plug on the residential school system by annulling the operation agreement with the churches. Subsequently, it started to phase out the schools. In the last years of its existence, the attendance at “St. Michael's” dropped to below 50% of its original capacity. By December 1974, “St. Michael's” ceased to operate, and the buildings were promptly taken over by ‘Namgis First Nation.

**Residential School Days**

Despite undergoing these operational changes, the daily operation of the school remained strikingly similar throughout its existence. Compared to the Indian Day School, the establishment of the Industrial Boarding School in 1894 significantly enhanced the resources to define and control the educational setting. In the daily life of the early residential school, we catch a glimpse of the technologies of power at work in the institution in order to create docile bodies: the subjectifying practices of names and assessments, the objectifying practices of zealous supervision, of achievements that were objectified in reports, tabular statements, and
meticulous financial records of the schools. The heterotopia of missionaries and government was produced under the rigor of institutionalized control of time and space, of activity and thought.

Heterotopian Space

The spatial dimensions of the residential schools were meticulously structured and expanded throughout their existence. At the Industrial Boarding School, the main building was structured into different compartments: Classroom, workshop, kitchen, dormitory and offices, and each separate space were only accessible at certain hours. Outside the main building one would find the trade instructor’s house, various sheds, and toilets. The Girls’ Home and the Industrial Boarding School was kept separate, thus avoiding interaction between the sexes. The whole area of the boarding school was eventually fenced off from the outside, thus marking a restricted space.

Within the perimeters of the school, land was cleared for pasture, a flower garden vegetable garden and a ground for soccer games and other leisure activities (DIA Annual Report 1908: 417-18). The space of the Industrial School was elaborately demarcated. From the outside world by fence, the outdoor premises were was structured into different sites of activity: the leisurely, the educational sites of the pastoral and agrarian fields, and the aesthetic of the flower garden. Inside the building, space was socially and temporally confined. The offices and teachers’ residential areas were off limits as was the dormitory during the day. Workshops, classrooms and kitchen all had roomed and designated activities.

A similar spatial structuring was at the basis of the blueprint on which “St. Michael’s” was built. The perimeters of the school were fenced, and children soon learned when they were “out of bounds.” The outside was structured by a neatly kept garden in the front and the construction of a farm in the back. Students cleared the fields in the back during the 1930s. Various vegetables were grown, and the school kept cows in a barn in the
back. In the back, the school also had a lawn for soccer and other physical activities. The old Girls’ Home was refurbished into the classroom block.

Inside the physical structure of “St. Michael’s,” space was structured symmetrically in an elaborate attempt at gender division. One half of the school was for the girls, and the other was for the boys. It was two social worlds, separate, yet alike, only interspersing in brief encounters at the dining room, while visiting Church on Sundays, and during the freedom offered to the lucky few who had their relatives visiting on weekends and taking them out of the school.

Another subdivision within the symmetrically divided school was the division based on age. Students were assigned to dormitories based on age. Each wing of the school had three separate dormitories: the Junior, Intermediate, and Senior dorms. Supervision was always close by. The supervisors of each age group were accommodated next to the dorms. Space was ordered by an elaborate regimentation of time and activity. Time and tasks decided the legitimacy of the whereabouts of the students. Dormitories, play room, kitchen, dining hall, boiling room, laundry, and workshop were only accessible to those students who had chores in that certain area. Symbolically as well as practically, the staff could access these spaces with master keys, whereas the students were denied access by locked doors.

Space also designated the division of authority and labor among the staff themselves. As one former female staff member from the 1960s remembers, a girls’ supervisor was seen as encroaching on the “territory,” and authority, of another supervisor when entering “her” dormitory. Effectively, the division of space also indicates two separate social worlds, the adult (staff) and the child (student) world (see also King 1967: 57).

The structuring of space and the regimentation of behavior within this space become clear when looking at the meal. Before meals, students had to assemble in line-ups. Upon entering the dining room, children sat
down at separate tables. At each table sat 12 children from the same dormitory. That is, they were of the same sex and equal age. At the end of the table sat the “table captain” who was a senior student. The table captain was in charge of the table. Meanwhile, the staff had a separate dining room where they ate their meals. The meals were distinct from, and of better quality than, the meals offered to the students. Thus, the differences between staff and students, in turn subdivided into categories of gender and age, were demarcated by differential space and differential meals. A native male, who was supervisor at the school in the 1970s, recollects his refusal of this regimen as he went to dine with the children. The following excerpt is from an interview with him about his work at the school.

**Former supervisor**

“… I felt I was, you know, capable of being a supervisor, but little did I know there was a lot of things that I didn’t like in the school at all.”

**Steffen Bohni**

“What was that, for instance?”

**Former supervisor**

“Well the way they treated the young people and the way they, you know there was supervisors... they had a separate place of eating. Supervisors had a little supervisor’s room where they would eat all this good food. Meanwhile, the kids are outside eating wiener and beans you know that didn’t make sense to me, you know you smell the aroma of pork chops in the air and it wasn’t for the kids. I felt that was another form of torture. ‘Cause I really found that when the kids finished their meal, I ended up eating with the kids. All the time I would eat with them and [the Principal] John Warner didn’t like the idea of me doing that. I told him, I says that I felt you know if I’m going to be respected by the students I think I’ve got to be on par with them so I went and ate with them. My first day of experience at St. Mikes wasn’t a good one. Because, I was already marked by the staff... I wasn’t about to listen to what and adapt to the way they… Everything was so structured, eh. You know it was just that way.”
Breaking the regimentation of the social and spatial division caused uneasiness with the remaining staff in general, and the Principal in particular.

Reordering Space

To anthropologists, it is of course not surprising that space is culturally constituted, and that social power and symbolic meanings are inscribed in the spatial organization. While the structuring of space and time in an institutional setting is hardly outstanding in modernity, the difference in organization for Kwakiutl children constituted a radically different cognitive, emotional, and social world. The restrictions of space entailed different conceptions of the self, the public and the private, the individual and the collective, of gender, of the sacred, and of the profane.

Space was organized according to new standards of the body, which were radically different to Kwakiutl practices and conceptions:

- By sanitation. Defecation on the beach was no longer allowed. That was confined to the privacy of the Water Closet.
- By hygiene. Cleanliness by using water and soap was preached and practiced. The child had to wash himself or herself every morning. Twice a week the children were given a bath. Clothes were changed twice per week. In contrast, in the second part of the 19th century and probably beyond the Kwakiutl used urine to wash clothes.
- By health. When the child entered the school it went through an elaborate thorough process of cutting hair, delousing, cleaning of the whole body with liberal use of soap, water, and chemicals. Some students recollect the daily line-up for a dose of cod liver oil. Health checks with weighing, measuring, and other physical assessment. In the 1930s, a TB preventorium was built to isolate these cases.
• By sexuality. The body was defined as the center of lust in medico-religious terms. Thus, a daily spatial separation from the temptations of the other sex was zealously enforced.

• By diet. The composition of the meals changed, and these were eaten at tables, on plates with cutlery\textsuperscript{102}.

• By appearance. Children were made to wear school issued uniforms. A special uniform was used for Sundays when the whole school marched to the Christ Church to attend service.

• By physical education. The body was trained by practicing British games such as soccer rather than games with instructional value for traditional competences.

The body was thus the center of the religious and moral inculcation of the missionaries in a space which was functional, and yet thoroughly political. It was imbued with “civilizing” intent of the education process which carefully subjected native children to its regimen.

The “civilizing” benefits of the boarding school system as opposed to the day school system were highlighted, as Indian Agent William Halliday wrote:

“The work of the industrial and boarding school is more far-reaching than the day school, as the pupils are entirely away from the home influence of the parents during the greater part of the year, but the Indians themselves have not yet fully realized the opportunities which are given them in the matter of education.” (Halliday in DIA Annual Report 1913: 400)

\textsuperscript{102} In the early years of the school this policy was not always the case. Former staff member Dorothea Scarfe Croquet recollects that E.F. Anfield made sure that the children were served indigenous foods. Several former students, who attended the school at the time, have verified this.
Arguably, the asymmetries of power relations function at their most effective when the workings are disguised as productive and meaningful.

**Social Space**

As mentioned, space was structured according to at least three principles: adult:child, age, and gender. This regimentation was constraining pupils from social interactions with individuals from other categories, such as younger siblings or siblings from the other sex. The dormitories held no room for privacy. Each student was assigned a bed, and there was no opportunity to move around or decorating any space according to individual wishes.

Furthermore, personal space and belonging was also defined in terms of a Christian name, not always applied in the native context the child came from. Each student was assigned a number that marked all the individual’s belongings in the school, ranging from the locker to uniforms, shoes, linen, and towels.

The spatial set-up provided only limited opportunity for communication beyond its confines. An example of the gradual breakdown of social and emotional ties, which the Church ironically had defined as Indigenous qualities, is the following excerpt from a Kwakiutl male. He attended the residential school in the second part of the 1950s and early 1960s. While reflecting on the impact of the residential school, he made the following statement:

“There was another incident too, as the years wore on. My brother was in one dormitory, and I was in another, and then a couple of years later, my younger brothers came into the big school [St. Michael’s]. They were junior boys, I was an intermediate, and [name deleted] was a senior boy. We were divided into three dorms. You’d think that because your brothers were in the big school, you could establish a relationship with them. I now know it wasn’t structured for
that. There was a separation of the junior boys from the intermediate boys from the senior boys. And so socially, you couldn’t always interact, and you couldn’t establish family ties. It was a very destructive situation, to discourage family relationship building like that.”

At the residential school, the structuring of space, as a technology of power, concurred with the structuring of time and what was done within the very space of the residential school. Thus, space structured social interactions and the inherent possibilities of learning within this structural set-up.

**Heterotopian Time**

Indian bodies were subjects of temporal control. School life was defined by the measuring of time, bracketed into separate activities by the sound of the bell or the ticking of the clock. It was an early education of the impeccable micro-penalty of modern institutions of the school, the factory, or the church (Harkin 1997a: 108, 122). The idle body was considered an undisciplined body, the active bodies were considered moral bodies.

Thus, days at residential school held little opportunity for individual or collective choice. Most of the days were scheduled at the Alert Bay Indian Residential School. A look at the daily schedule in 1950 suggests the activities of the day. While content of the separate activities changed over the years, the schedule remained strikingly consistent. The daily schedule was as follows\(^\text{103}\):

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Table 9.2. Daily Schedule at Saint Michael’s Residential School, 1950

- Rising Bell 6:30 a.m.
- Prayer
- Cod liver oil
- Breakfast 7:00 a.m.
- Make beds, cleaning of dormitories and playrooms 7:30 – 8:30 a.m.
- Prepare for school 8:30 a.m.
- Leave for classrooms 8:45 a.m.
- School 9:00 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.
- Prayer
- Dinner 12 noon
- Play 12:30 – 1:00 p.m.
- Leave for classrooms 1:00 p.m.
- School – Pupils Primary and Grade 1 1:15 – 3:00 p.m.
- School – other Grades 1:15 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
- Biscuit time, 4:00
- Organized Sports 4:00 – 5:15 p.m.
- Prayer
- Supper 5:30 p.m.
- Lower School Prayers 6:30 p.m.
- Lower School to bed 7:00 p.m.
- Upper and Middle School prayers 7:00 p.m.
- Evening activities 7:30 – 8:45 p.m.

The above schedule is not an ad verbatim, since I have added certain events marking time as recollected by students who went to the school at the time. One significant change from earlier years seems to be the emphasis on, what euphemistically can be termed, manual or vocational training. The excerpt below suggests the days prior to the above schedule. The person interviewed is a Kwak’wala speaking male who attended residential school in the second part of the 1930s.

Former student, male  “Only big thing, I ever... What’s you call it, when I was in there, was. I was always hungry. Never got enough to eat.”
“What did they feed you?”

“Well, lots of times, they’d feed you prunes. Next meal would be big stacks of bread with fat dripping poured all over it.”

“No fish?”

“Towards the end. We started canning our own fish. The Nimpkish people let us go into the river and can our own.”

“Was that…when you were at St. Mikes, did they have that whole farming system in the back there?”

“We were the ones that built it! Up to right where the Big House is. We cleared it all by hands. We went to school half the day and worked on the farms the other half.”

“So you were being, in the minds of the teachers, you were being groomed to become a farmer?!”

“Well, that was it, yeah.”

“So you were clearing that whole farming area in the back there as they wanted you to become a farmer?”

“Well, I guess, what they wanted us to do, because we all cleared it by hand…he he he. We had a little, I guess, it was a D3 Cab, a small little one. Then we used to pile it all up into a pile and burn it. And the next year when it was all dried out we’d take it all out and re-burn it. I didn’t mind that part of clearing it. As I was saying I was always hungry and we used to find spuds and go and cook it in the fire. And when the day was finished at 4 o’clock and then we took turns. One month we’d go to school in the morning, work on the farm in the afternoon. Next month it was the opposite way, where you switch.”

“So, it was farming and school. What were the different things they were teaching when you were in school?”

“They taught us manual training. They had a manual training shop, how to use a square, that kind of thing. You
know we build a lot of buildings in that school. A lot of play houses. That part of it I liked.”

A similar schedule can be discerned from the Industrial Boarding School where daily activities consisted of:

- Classroom work 4 hours a day. The curriculum consisted of writing, reading, spelling, composition, history, drawing, dictation, grammar, geography, hygiene, music, and bible history (DIA Annual Report 1903: 424).
- Vocational training 3 hours a day. This consisted of laundering, gardening, carpentering for boys, sowing and housekeeping for girls, and miscellaneous chores.
- Physical education up to 3 hours a day. This was mainly soccer, cricket, and baseball.
- Church Service on Sunday mornings and Sunday school in the afternoon (DIA Annual Report 1907: 409).

This confirms that, for the entire existence of the residential school, daily life in school was meticulously structured around academic training, vocational training, chores, and structured leisure. All activities were carried out under the supervision of the teachers and performed collectively. Individual activities were limited to a minimum.

From early on, the concept of the clock was also introduced. The clock was used to structure the day rather than the duration of the activity itself. A bell ringing marked the end of one activity and the commencement of another.

**The Control of Learning**

The educationally imposed “civilizing” of native children meant a spatial isolation and temporal separation from their parents. The government and missionaries did not leave it at that. They sought a complete overturning of the ontology of the children. At the heart of this strategy was language
(RCAP 1996, vol. 1, chapter 10, pp 7). By eradicating language, government and missionaries speculated, native customs and beliefs could no longer be perpetuated.

From the outset it was a priority to teach the pupils English. It is uncertain exactly when it came into effect, but Kwak'wala was prohibited in the boarding school, and so was the use of native names. The teaching of formal skills was combined with religious instruction. Moral instruction, cleanliness, and health were major dimensions of everyday life in the early years at the Alert Bay schools. As stated in several annual reports:

"All pupils have been carefully instructed in moral and religious truth. The Lords Prayer, Ten Commandments, and life of Christ have been taught in the classroom..." (DIA Annual Report 1898: 340)

Furthermore, children were interpellated first in Kwak'wala and subsequently in English by their Anglo-Saxon names which the missionaries insisted on using. A Kwakiutl male, who attended school in the 1940s, recollects his first day at “St. Michael’s” in the following manner:

Steffen Bohni

“I was wondering, can you still remember the first day you went there?”

Former student, male

“Oh yeah absolutely.”

Steffen Bohni

“Can you describe it?”

104 An estimate is somewhere between 1910 and 1920 (DIA Annual Report 1911: 382, Wolcott 1967: 70). However, the intention from the very outset was to teach English and minimize the significance of Kwak’wala. By 1925, morning service was still held in Kwak’wala. It was in the 1940s that English became the dominant language in public discourse.

105 Wilson Duff outlined the general tenets of name change (Duff 1964: 103-104). However, he does not discuss the wider symbolic and personal implication of name changes.
Former student, male  “The first day I went there we were all lined up in the hallway there in the entrance of the building and a staff member came over and had a clip board in his hand and said "when you hear your name called you say: “Here, Sir.” So he came to my cousin, [name deleted], who was standing alongside of me, the staff member said “[name deleted]” and he didn’t answer, he just stood there, so the staff member hollered again “[name deleted]” he still didn’t answer, so he came over and he obviously knew who [name deleted] was but he hit him over the head with that clip board and told him “when you hear your name called you say: “Here, Sir.” I piped up and said: “Well his name’s not X his name’s Y.” I never knew his name was [name deleted]. All I knew him by was his Indian name. Or what we called him, you know like [name deleted] was like a nickname in Indian. It wasn’t his real name.”

Steffen Bohni  “Were you able to speak English at that time?”

Former student, male  “Very little, I spoke very little English, you know, it took… Well, where were you going to learn English? At home? You know, like my parents never went to school, my father and mother both of them never went to school and all they spoke was Indian. That’s why I was able to salvage my Indian, was because when I got out, like I had just about lost my ability to speak Indian but then I relearned it from my mom and dad, you know because, as I say, that’s all they spoke was Indian.”

Daily life in the boarding school was carefully structured, not only in terms of the activities of the day, the control of language in which people interacted, and the names with which they interpellated each other. As a total institution, the school also constituted a community of practice in which situated learning took place for 10-11 months per year for the students.
Controlling time and space within the heterotopia of the boarding school was essential as it enabled missionaries to teach, preach, and supervise the children. They defined the setting and to some extent the situated activities from which the children learned. Foucault, again, has argued that one of the properties of power is its capability of defining. Stephen Ball, on elaborating on Foucault's concept of discourse in education, wrote that:

“The possibilities for meaning and for definition, are preempted through the social and institutional position held by those who use them. Meanings thus arise not from language but from institutional practices, from power relations. Words and concepts change their meaning and their effects as they are deployed within different discourses.” (Ball 1990: 2)

Thus, making resistance towards these representations and institutional practices is in essence re-active. At and outside the Boarding School different forms of resistance of course did occur. Two outstanding Kwakiutl chiefs, Charley Nowell and Jimmy Sewid, both spoke of the distrust and resistance towards mission schooling through not enrolling children and lacking attendance of children (Ford 1941: 90-93, Spradley 1969: 27). There are also examples of potlatches where natives make fun of the missionaries' obsession with cleanliness (Boas 1966: 180).

Within the school setting, speaking Kwak'wala, running away, disobedience as well as learning between peers in unsupervised moments or in spite of teachers also occurred. These actions suggest the interdependent and negotiated nature of the learning process. A Kwakiutl male attending St. Michael’s in the 1940s recollects an act of resistance toward the subjugation, which also reveals some of the social dynamics among the students themselves:

Former student, male “… Every chance we got we spoke Kwak'wala to
“So that would be like an act of rebellion in itself?”

“Yeah, yeah in itself and there was a lot of cruelty going on, I remember one time we were going up to work, to pick rocks in the field I was flicking little pebbles up in the air and one of them hit the farmer on the top of his boot, he turned around and grabbed me by the hair “throwing rocks at me...!” punched me about three or four times in the face, knocked me right out, the only time in my life I ever had two black eyes.”

“Holy, what was his name, do you remember?”

“Wiseman!”

“Wiseman?”

“Yeah.”

“Mr. Wiseman.”

“I waited four years, but I got him.”

“So you squared with him?”

“Oh hey did I ever, by this time I was going to high school and I was doing homework in one of the empty classrooms there and it was my duty to go downstairs to check what the kids had done, like I was in charge of the clean-up in the evening so every night it had to be cleaned up. I went down there and I was just going to feel around for a light switch when I heard his smoker's cough coming down the stairs, “well you rotten bugger I got you now!” He was feeling around for the light switch when I hit him, I punched him four times before he fell on the floor.”

“So you basically just sucker punched him, like in the dark?”
Former student, male  “Yeah, I did the same thing to him what he did to me, so I ran upstairs and crawled into bed.”

Steffen Bohni  “And was there a big uproar about this?”

Former student, male  “Oh yeah.”

Steffen Bohni  “They must have been trying to find the culprit for that.”

Former student, male  “Oh, did they ever try to find out who it was.”

Steffen Bohni  “And you’d just act all innocent?”

Former student, male  “Oh yeah, I told them “No, I came upstairs long time ago” I says, “I don’t know who was down there.”

Steffen Bohni  “People must have known who it was?”

Former student, male  “No!”

Steffen Bohni  “No?”

Former student, male  “Oh, the kids did!”

Steffen Bohni  “Yeah, yeah.”

Former student, male  “Yeah, the kids did, the kids knew who it was, but they weren’t going to squeal on me.”

Steffen Bohni  “No they probably, I mean, I guess there to some extent was a bond between the students against the teachers.”

Former student, male  “Oh yeah, especially with somebody like that, everybody thought it was hilarious, big farmer had two big black eyes.”

A similar act was dryly noted in a school visit report from December 1954 following another altercation between staff and student.
“Mr. Phillips – Experienced a cracked jaw bone when a H.S. [High School] boy Arthur Lagis hit him on the jaw. Has been hospitalized and W.C.B. applied for (don’t know if his claim will be accepted. Principal feels that Phillips’ a victim of the Lien’s dirty work [Another staff member, who was “certainly responsible for the trouble between Phillips and the Senior Boys”]. His face is now bandaged and will be so for another 6 weeks. He’ll definitely have to be transferred at the conclusion of his treatment. Principal has had to warn him not to try and date one of the High School girls.”

These two examples suggest very corporeal acts of resistance, but it must be remembered that basic cultural practices, such as speaking in one’s vernacular, may not constitute an act of resistance in the understanding of the speaker. As Nils Bubandt emphatically puts it:

“My point is that the field of resistance is much larger from the perspective of the management… resistance is to a large extent imagined. Imagining resistance everywhere, even where no intention of resistance exists, is necessary to the utopian, modern project… for it allows the constant refinement of techniques of surveillance and regimentation. Resistance is, in other words, as much a conceptual tool of hegemony as it is a subaltern tool of emancipation.”

(Bubandt 1998: 52)

Thus, rather than celebrating any act contrary to hegemonic policy as an act of resistance, it must not be forgotten that such actions may have had pragmatic reasons in a context where the allocation of symbolic and material resources favored the management of the school.

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106 One is left to wonder what activities a euphemism such as “Principal has had to warn him not to try and date one of the High School girls” covers.
One way of regarding the coexistence of power and knowledge is to look at the central importance of the alternative costs, to speak in an economic metaphor, of separating the children from their families and restricting them to, if anything, limited participation in the traditional educational system, where games, participatory training, play potlatches, imitations, and parents passing on the oral tradition of their numayms all formed a comprehensive base of knowledge and skills for the social and cultural learning of the child (Ford 1941: 65-87, Miller 1996: 15-38).\textsuperscript{107}

Considering it this way, the residential school is not only about what was done and what native children did learn, it is also about what they did not learn because of the separation in space from the learning experiences of their native communities\textsuperscript{108}. By understanding the comprehensiveness of the residential school, as an institutionalization of government and missionary politics, we catch a glimpse of the relations of power at work in education by asserting institutionalized control of the social space in situated learning. The comprehensive efforts of government and missionary agents to alter Kwakiutl self-conceptions contribute to explaining some of the discontinuities in Kwakiutl culture.

\textbf{Conclusion}

In this chapter I have shown how missionaries and government established a heterotopian site, contingent in space and continuous in

\textsuperscript{107} Throughout its existence, average attendance at the Industrial Boarding School and the Girls’ Home only dropped below 75% twice. Average attendance from 1894-1916 was 85%. This was for 11 months a year. In the same period enrolment increased from 23 to 69 students. In comparison, average attendance at the Day Schools in Kwakiutl territory from 1884-1916 was 40%. School was reportedly only 3-4 months a year (DIA Annual Reports 1884-1916, Spradley 1969: 125-26).

\textsuperscript{108} Vacations, absences, and other interludes from school spent with parents or family exerted considerable influence upon the pupils, as did unsupervised interaction between the pupils themselves. However, the bulk of their time and learning was still in school directed by teachers.
time, concordant with their conception of native life and future. It was symbolic violence, as Pierre Bourdieu has aptly put it (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992: 167-173), which became inscribed in their classificatory schemes and embodied by persons. The situated practice of learning was thoroughly dominated by the representations and practices of the missionaries throughout the children’s school age. Yet power is not only repressive, as Foucault has pointed out, it is also productive, it did produce tangibles: understanding English, reading, writing, arithmetic, and some vocational skills. Nonetheless, power imposed itself on space and time and resources of native learning, disintegrating the continuity in the native educational complex.

In this chapter I concentrated on the workings of the school on the student bodies. In the following chapter I will analyze how schooling had an impact on personhood, ontology, and other institutional practices at Alert Bay when students resituated in their communities.
Chapter 10. Colonial Entrenchment: Schooling and Potlatch

Having examined the workings of the Alert Bay Indian Schools, one must still consider the impact of schooling within a wider framework of colonial entrenchment as suggested by Mary Ellen Kelm (1998: xviii) and Michael Harkin (1997: 79) respectively. The politics embedded in Indian education was a pillar in the conjunction between DIA and missionary agendas, and an institutional foundation for their collaboration.

In this chapter I examine the relations between missionaries, Indian Agents, and the predominantly ‘Namgis Kwakiutl at Alert Bay in the period 1880-1951109. These relations found many guises: Judicial, economic, symbolic, educational, and political. Exemplifying these relations was the struggle over the potlatch. It has been suggested that the effects of the anti-potlatch law have been exaggerated, and that the decline of the potlatch in the period after 1922 was due to other processes as well (Cole and Chaikin 1990: 174-78, Knight 1978: 268-69). I argue that the most important, yet inconspicuous, symbolic struggle of cosmologies, power and politics was confined to the educational system organized by the missionaries and by large funded by the DIA. As I pointed out in the previous chapters, these social institutions were central in shaping contested social identities. In the potlatch a particular notion of the person was affirmed and validated, while schooling was central in the attempt to overthrow the existing notions of the person. Thus, the impact of schooling was exemplified in the struggles of the potlatch.

Therefore, the narrative concentrates on these two institutions as they are central to the ambiguous colonial relations at Alert Bay. Whereas the latter

109 Throughout the era individuals belonging to other Kwakiutl social groups also moved to Alert Bay.
has been dealt with at length, it has not been placed in the context of Alert Bay, where the impact of schooling on ontology and notions of the person has been examined. The former deserves more attention within this context and will be dealt with at length since the actors, continuities, and transformations inextricably relate the two institutions.

As I proposed in chapter 2, by examining the development of and contestations within social institutions such as the potlatch and schooling by social agents, I can discern how identities are subject to political struggles, and ultimately how categories of the person are produced, represented, learned, and enacted in and around these institutions. Therefore, I argue that Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger’s concept of “situated learning in a community of practice” and George Herbert Mead’s concept of the “social self” are helpful theoretical concepts to understand the relations between a changing social order, self-awareness, and ultimately personhood. By employing the concepts in the analysis we arrive at a better understanding of the developments and ambiguous practices throughout the era.

Initially, I outline the developments at Alert Bay within a macro-structural context, as structural conditions changed significantly throughout the period examined. Following this contextual description, I elaborate on the missionary and government encroachment upon the Kwakiutl through the application of institutionalized measures and practices such as in the Church, the medical clinic, the school, and the work place. At the heart of this colonial struggle were aboriginal bodies. I assert that schooling was the most effective instrument, and its impact gradually became evident in the struggle around the potlatch. Following these analyses I outline the kinds of impact that the colonial encroachment had on Kwakiutl personhood. In the last section of the chapter I apply Mead’s concept of the social self to comprehend these developments in conceptual terms.
Context of the Historical Figuration

The period between 1880 and 1951 was not only a period of social and cultural changes for the Kwakiutl. It was a period with drastic transformations of all Western societies where liberal democracies became the prevailing political system complementing an expanding capitalist economy. Two world wars and a drastic worldwide economic recession caused serious hesitations on the part of many intellectuals about the progress of Civilization. British Columbia changed from being “the West beyond the West,” the frontier society, to be well incorporated into the political and economic structure of the relatively new nation Canada. A part of its nation building was the expansion of the railway across the Canadian Rockies. Following a seemingly endless immigration, Vancouver emerged as the metropolis of the region expanding around the end station of the Canadian Pacific Railway. It remains the urban center of the Province. Leisure class, middle class, and working class became established as social demarcation lines, and gradually the notion of the welfare state was elaborated while widening its policies and spheres of interests. Throughout the era the Canadian state expanded its governance, as has been the case throughout modernity.

Mission and Governance at Alert Bay

As mentioned in chapter 4 the outbreak of the 1862-63 smallpox epidemic was a detrimental blow to the demography and health of the indigenous people of the Northwest Coast. In Kwakiutl territory it is estimated that almost 69% of the population were swept away (Boyd 1990: 144)\textsuperscript{110}. This was but one of a series of disasters, which led to a near extinction of aboriginal peoples in the Province in the wake of colonization. Recent estimates suggest that the pre-contact Aboriginal population of the Province numbered as high as 188,344 at contact, and in 1949 this figure

\textsuperscript{110} In absolute numbers the decline was from a total of 7,650 to 2,370 individuals.
had declined to a mere 25,515 (Kelm 1998: 5-6)\textsuperscript{111}. In the same period the non-native population in the Province rose from a handful to about 774 in 1855. In 1891 they numbered 98,173. Ten year later it had risen to 178,657 (Boyd 1990: 136, Fisher 1994: 202). By 1951 the total population of B.C. had risen to a staggering 1,165,210 (Finlay and Sprague 1989: 474).

While this pandemic was outside the forces of one single agent, the introduction of diseases was part and parcel of the colonial encounter and, as Michael Harkin has convincingly demonstrated (Harkin 1997a: 77-99), interpreted as a force brought upon the Indigenous population by the agents of colonization\textsuperscript{112}. The drastic Kwakiutl demographic decline in the wake of the 1862-63 epidemic caused significant societal disorganization and discontinuities in the reproduction of knowledge and practices.

The arrival at Alert Bay of Anglican missionaries and a government appointed Indian Agent in 1880-81 signaled drastic changes to Kwakiutl life. Kwakiutl territory was never overwhelmed with new settlers, as was the case with the Lower Mainland and the Victoria area on Vancouver Island. From the 1870s, the advance guard of Frontier Society gradually established some smaller settlements. The new settlers partook in the wage economy in the same way as the Kwakiutl by fishing and working at the canneries or at the sawmills in the area. However, their influence on the daily life of the Kwakiutl was negligible. As opposed to the DIA and the missionaries, the interactions with the Kwakiutl were not directed by an agenda of social and cultural change.

Although the Indian Agent was engaged in the administrative work settling mainly economic disputes, it was a recurrent pattern of the Indian Agents of the Kwawkewlth Agency that they were eager to counteract potlatching

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
  \item 111 Earlier estimates are somewhat more conservative. It remains without a doubt that population decline was drastic and unprecedented.
  \item 112 Kwakiutl oral history has it that this was literally so insofar as blankets from deceased natives carrying smallpox were resold to natives.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
and what they perceived as detrimental marriage customs (DIA Potlatch files RG 10, 1913-47, Cole and Chaikin 1990: 63).

Due to the influx of monetary wealth and internal divisions, the potlatch expanded in scale between 1870-1920 (Cf. Codere 1966, Halliday to Scott 1915/12/27, DIA RG 10 Potlatch Files, Mauzé 1986). In the same period, DIA policies shifted from a patient policy of “long-term moral suasion” as practiced by Superintendent General Arthur V. Vowell in the decades at the turn of the century towards more aggressive, assimilationist policies set in motion by the Chief Superintendent General Duncan C. Scott. Under these policy changes, the emphasis on residential school education began, and the hapless “potlatch” section of the Indian Act was also revised whereby it became an effective legal means to prosecute indigenous people practicing native ceremonials. While schooling was aimed at long-term changes the legal suppression of the potlatch also addressed immediate measures.

The Alert Bay Mission

In the wake of the first Euro-Canadian settlement in Kwakiutl territory at Fort Rupert, a Catholic Mission sought to gain foothold amongst the Fort Rupert Kwakiutl. Uncharacteristically unsuccessful, the mission folded in the mid-1870s, and it was soon afterwards succeed by an Anglican Mission established by the young Rev. Alfred James Hall who arrived after a brief tenure at Metlakathla (Gough 1982). However, Hall’s missionization proved equally unsuccessful, and after two years Hall was convinced by two entrepreneurs, Spencer and Huson, that his mission would find more fertile ground among the ‘Namgis Kwakiutl rather than at Fort Rupert. By the end of 1880, Hall relocated his mission to Alert Bay.

While Spencer and Huson convinced the ‘Namgis living across the Strait at the Mouth of the Nimpkish River to work at their cannery, Hall was ensured at least a seasonal audience for his missionary work. The location at ‘Yalis (Alert Bay) gradually became permanent for the ‘Namgis Kwakiutl. Hall, supported by his wife, engaged in his new work with a
zealous effort. Combining propagation of the Gospel, education, medical aid, and business entrepreneurship, Hall brought the small mission to life.

The establishment of the school was a means of propagating the Gospel as well as building a potential congregation for the mission. Hall brought with him from Fort Rupert a few students, and they roomed at the school which became a small-scale boarding school. This institution became the first attempt to instill "progress" and "civilization" in the Kwakiutl children. Charley Nowell, at the time an adolescent of the Kwixa at Fort Rupert, and grandson of Tlakodlas, the chief of the ‘Namgis, was one of the few pupils who followed Hall from Fort Rupert. He was somewhat randomly baptized and given an anglicized name while enlisted at the school at Alert Bay. At one point, Charley cursed Mr. Hall, and in return he was spanked. As he refused to succumb with tears, he was locked up in a room. He managed to escape through a window and ran home to his grandfather, Tlakodlas, with Mr. Hall in pursuit. His grandfather refused to let Charley return to school despite the pressure of the Indian Agent. He returned to school only when Hall apologized and promised not to punish him without due warning. Despite Hall’s complaints in the DIA annual reports of the irregular school attendance, this was never voiced towards the pupils, and Charley recalled he went to school for about four months a year (Ford 1941: 90-100).

The two decades before the turn of the century were years of consolidation and building for the mission’s future. In this period the mission’s position was marginal. Hall managed to gather a small congregation of former pupils such as Stephen Cook, George Luther, William Brotchie, and Carey Kamano. However, the mission did not meet much sympathy to ward any of the measures they sought to introduce such as combating arranged marriages or the potlatch institution. In his 1887 Annual Letter, Hall sheds light upon the marginal position of the mission and its followers:
“The greatest outward hindrance to the Gospel is the minority of women. Three young men during the past year determined to marry; for one couple the banns were published, but the people protested and prevented the marriage. It has become a recognized fact that those who embrace Christianity must be content to live without a wife.” (Hall 1887/03/09 in Extracts for the Annual Letters of the Missionaries; C.M.S. 1886-87: 298)

Some years later, Hall’s scarce encouragements were duly noted in the C.M.S. Headquarters who found some reconciliation in the growing congregation of the church:

“Hall continued his patient labors among the Kwakuitl Indians...the first two converts being baptized in 1883. In 1884 there was a congregation of forty, and in 1890 of seventy; a slower work than at some of the other stations, but not less sound.” (C.M.S. 1899, vol iii: 632)

What is more notable is the conspicuous silence on Hall’s work in C.M.S.’s own historical account which did not exactly minimize the contribution and success of its missionaries (Cf. C.M.S. 1899, vol. ii: 608-22, vol. iii: 628-40, vol. iv (1916): 383-88). The Christian zeal of the congregation remains rather doubtful. At the time, there was no indication of any less potlatching “which absorbed the whole of their time and energies during the last ten months...” (DIA Annual Report 1890: 75)

There was still no indication of anybody renouncing the potlatch at the time, despite the disapproval of the Mission and Indian Agent alike. Yet all 172 members of the ‘Namgis Kwakiutl were listed as Protestants in the DIA Annual Report of the same year (DIA Annual Report 1890: 212). This possibly suggests a high degree of convenient statistical ascription to Christianity for Kwakiutl people and missionary alike, or maybe a degree of syncretism on the part of the Kwakiutl. A decade later the Indian Agent at the time, Pidcock, noted wryly:
“Nearly all the Indians who profess Christianity belong to the Anglican Church, but the majority are still pagans, and very little real interest is taken in religious matters.” (DIA Annual Report 1900: 276)

Nonetheless, neither the significance of the few arduous converts, nor the careful religious instruction and learning which went on in the newly-established Industrial Boarding School and Girls’ Home must be underestimated. The same year A.J. Hall wrote:

“Your missionaries do feel at times discouraged; but their faith is always superior, and rises above the discouragements… These are few of our encouragements: (1) At least three-parts of the children who have passed through our boarding schools are friendly and helpful to the Mission. (2) We have an increasing number of young people who can read the native Gospels and Prayer-book. (3) The Sunday congregations and Sunday-school are well attended; on Christmas Day every seat in the church was full. (4) Many of our Christians are willing to suffer for their loyalty to the Mission.” (Hall 1900/12/28 in Extracts for the Annual Letters of the Missionaries; C.M.S. 1901-02: 901)

This was more a promise for the future than the basis for drastic change. The position of the mission and the symbolic importance of Christianity were limited. The missionaries had to pursue a policy of suasion and not estrange the majority of the community, as converts balanced a fine line of social marginalization. The mission was not in a position to convey its message assertively within the majority of the community.

**Colonial Bodies**

Michel Foucault has documented the exercise of power in the domain of the body through various technologies. In its most intricate workings, even the most ordinary daily practices became subjected to its rigor. This bodily
regimentation is augmented in an institutional setting. The discursive pillars of Christian morality, biomedicine, and capitalist spirit were established once “St. George’s Hospital” was built in 1908. By then, the institutional foundation of the church, the school, and the clinic were in place and the workings on Kwakiutl bodies gradually imposed through the practices within these physical structures.

From birth to death, the body was the center of symbolic contention. Both C.M.S. missionaries A.J. Hall and A.W. Corker had some medical training, and especially the latter was said to be a gifted medical worker. In the context of the disastrous smallpox epidemics and the subsequent minor epidemics which saw the entire Kwakiutl population reduced abysmally, their medical work combined with their ecclesiastical work must have been perceived as a symbolic and spiritual force to be reckoned with by the natives.

A central notion of the missionary work was the idea of cleansing the saved from the impurities and filth associated with native beliefs and customs. Thus the regimentation and confinement of the clinic, the church, and the school represented institutional means for the inner and outer transformation of bodies. The infant body was from the outset the medium for missionary and government attention, and the medical practice concerning the infant child was central to the missionaries as was its health at birth.

While the child was growing up, the Mission sought to spiritually “nourish” it by providing it with a proper diet of Morality, Virtue, and Faith through Church attendance and schooling. Europeanized clothing as the body’s external signifier became indexical of civilization and a symbolic marker of the quest for grace. The body became an external sign of the inward state of salvation of the individual.

To prevent the converts from lapsing back into heathen customs, the DIA and Church set aside land for former students of the Industrial Boarding
School who wished to break away from the potlatch system (Todd to Secretary DIA 1938/03/29, RG 10, Vol. 6429, file 875-9, part 3). The reserve was the ultimate symbol of the missionaries' intention of establishing a Christian heterotopia in the land of the heathen.

When individuals were passing through life stages, the Church was adamant about only letting "true" followers of the Gospel be baptized, confirmed, and married. The daughter of A.W. Corker recollects that her father was very strict with these rites of passage. Similarly, the missionaries acted feverishly against the native ceremonials in general, and the participation of their recent converts in particular. This was considered a lapse back and a hindrance to the progress else made. Native marriage customs were also seen as illegitimate, as an inhuman trade in women and closely connected with very "loose" sexual behavior113.

As the final stage of life, burial customs were also contested. Traditional Kwakiutl burials, with bentwood boxes placed in trees, were virulently opposed to the Church, and both burial records and the recollections of A.W. Corker's daughter confirm that these practices still took place early in the 20th century. From cradle to death the body was an objective field of struggle – for the individual as well as bodies to be buried and the child body to be educated or the female body to be married, (see also Harkin 1997a: 88-91).

The technologies of power working on the domain of the body cannot be separated from other structural developments in frontier society, and therefore its impact may rather be judged on its long-term effects on corporeal, cognitive, emotional, and social practices. One sign of the patient labors of the missionaries within these institutional practices was

113 In return, the children of the native Christian couples were considered illegitimate by the Kwakiutl and thus socially marginalized in various native contexts (Cole & Chaikin 1990: 178).
A.J. Hall’s recognition of growing changes after more than 20 years’ propagation of the Gospel:

“The past year has seen a revival in the work among the women, principally through the energies of two native women… Ten years ago very few women were seen in our congregation; now the majority are women, who attend both Church and Sunday-School regularly.” (Hall 1902/12/29 in Extracts for the Annual Letters of the Missionaries; C.M.S. 1902: 764)

The following year, it seems that the missionaries and their native followers managed to improve the mission’s position among the women, as well as some men. From the earlier excerpt, we learned that most natives with a positive attitude towards the church were former students of the Indian Schools, and it is likely that the new group of female converts were also former students of the Girls’ Home. Hall, meanwhile, was exasperated with the progress:

“The women pray with and for their children. One woman said recently, “Every day I name my three children to God in prayer,” but I fear the men seldom conduct prayer… The past month I have heard two fresh voices pray at our weekly prayer-meeting, voices of women who had learnt to pray at the classes for women and then dared to make their wants known in public. One prayer consisted of a few broken sentences, but they came from the heart of the truest convert in the village.” (Hall 1904/01/11 in Extracts for the Annual Letters of the Missionaries; C.M.S. 1903: 760)

Thus, the majority of the converts were former students of the Mission’s schools and/or children of former students. The belief in the Christian God and the inculcation of new forms of knowledge during school days left a lasting imprint on several former students, and they shared the attitudes of the missionaries towards some native institutions such as arranged
marriages and the potlatch. The missionary agenda not only concentrated on corporeal reform, its aim was to redefine the cosmology, the nature of the universe, and its connectedness to the human.

**Converted Souls**

Conception of the body and the soul was but one element of this ontogenesis. The body and the “Soul,” ironically a Christian imposed term per se, became objects of struggle in a cosmological framework of negotiating and defining categories of the body, the self, other, and the corporeal practices of the individual. As opposed to the Indigenous notion of the soul as a collective phenomenon constituting the self as an incarnation of a deceased member of the numaym, the Christian soul was individual. It was constituted by an inward relationship with God, where the moral actions of the individual were the basis for the soul’s destiny in Afterlife.

At the heart of these politics of identity, because this was precisely what was at stake, missionaries sought to impose a Christian notion of soul. Contrary to the followers of the Gospel, natives were considered in a state of paganism. A state, which at times was considered a heathen sin, and at other times was attributed to the childlike innocence of the “Indian” who had not yet become a Man. Recognizing one’s soul was seeing God and understanding the soul as the temple of virtue thus paving the way to a better life. Missionaries sought to instill the discipline of belief and hard labor as a path to salvation. The internalization of discipline was the most effective subjectivization of power on the individual. The soul became the prison of the body in Foucault’s phrase. Bodily abstinence, purity, and control became markers of one’s salvation.

It was a radical ontological conversion in which schooling, arguably, was the most effective means. Nothing less than the conceptions of self, other, the universe, time, space, and causation were at stake in the conversion. Several factors suggest the partial success of the missionary and Government policy.
It was among the young natives that the Mission gained a stronghold. By 1904, practically all natives under 35 regularly attended Church services (Hall 1904/12/29 in Extracts for the Annual Letters of the Missionaries; C.M.S. 1904: 278). A significant proportion had been subjected to the rigors of schooling, where the content and practices of such conversion were rigorously controlled and taught. In a letter from the missionary and Principal of the Industrial Boarding School, A.W. Corker, the Church’s emphasis on education as a tool for conversion was confirmed:

“That these schools are the only aggressive work going on among these Kwaguilt Indians. We still have our Sunday morning service in the vernacular.” (Corker to C.M.S. Sec. C. Bardsley 1913/09/01 Alert Bay Mission to C.M.S. Headquarters)

**Syncretization**

The school as a social institution is characterized not only as an educational setting, but also in its pervasive continuity in time and contingency in space. As shown in the previous chapter, institutionalized education was an essential part of the Colonial entrenchment of the Kwakiutl insofar that:

“These natives, although not positively objecting to religious teaching, are slow in quitting their ancient customs and belief, and it is only by the education of the rising generation that the expectations of the department and the missionaries can be substantially realized.” (DIA Annual Report 1896: 70)

I noted above that education was only deemed to be effectual if native language was repressed. Anglicized names were used and most aspects of the children’s daily lives were supervised, and the benefits of Christianity and Civilization were propagated at the expense of native culture in nearly all its aspects (DIA Annual Report 1900: 423).
Whereas forms and content of the teachings and content of Western civilization may have varied over time, it remained a consistent feature that children were separated from their homes, eventually 10-11 months a year, and confined to the rigorous regimen of the Industrial School, Girls’ Home, or later St. Michael’s Residential School, where all pupils were “carefully instructed in moral and religious truth.” (DIA Annual Reports 1898: 340)

An insight of the content of such euphemisms is to be found in a letter from a Kwakiutl person informing the Indian Agent, Halliday, that a potlatch was being held at Cape Mudge, and that some of the younger men resisted the continuation of the “old ways.” He further wrote:

“Now you know us young men of Cape Mudge don’t want this old potlatch thing started up again.... In a case like this I am glad to say I’ve carried out what Mr. Corker [the longtime principal of the Industrial Boarding School] taught me when I was in school at Alert Bay. I’ve never tasted any kind of whisky no gamble at any time, and I’m try to be honest with every body.... now I trust you will keep this secret.” (Letter to Halliday 1928/5/4, DIA RG 10 Potlatch Files)

The reference to the teachings of Corker not only hints at the content of the “moral and religious truth,” it also suggests the discourse through which anti-potlatchers communicated their messages, and finally it suggests a strategic and emotional aspect. Young men participating in the potlatch committed a great deal of their income to this economic cycle. They would thus reproduce the symbolic foundation of the chief’s traditional power, and finally the psychological tension in informing on one of its members. This could upon detection practically make the individual a social outcast (Cook to Scott 1919/2/1, DIA RG 10 Potlatch Files).
It is no coincidence that the above letter was written by a former student of the Industrial School. Indeed, most of the nucleus of Christian converts were former students of the mission schools at Alert Bay. Two, George Luther and William Brotchie, acted as clerical workers, translators, and teachers for the Anglican Mission Schools and Churches for most of their lives. Similarly, Stephen and Jane Cook were both brought up by Mr. And Mrs. Hall before they eventually married. Joe and Mary Harris were early students at the Mission School at Alert Bay. Their marriages were no coincidence either, as the C.M.S. encouraged marriage between individuals who had converted.

The divide between Christians and non-Christians is corroborated by the nominal increase in Christian baptisms, confirmations, marriages, and burials in the period 1880-1936 where reliable records exist (Anglican Church Records, Alert Bay Mission, 1880-1951). As mentioned, Christian rituals were subject to control by the missionaries who insisted on Christian belief for these rituals to be undertaken. Diagram 10.2 summarizes the increasing frequencies of these rituals despite the population decrease in the same period. In the period, Kwakiutl population dropped from c. 2,500 in 1880 to 1,597 in the year 1895. A decade later, the population numbered 1,257. By 1916, the population decreased to 1,140 before hitting an all-time low in 1929 with 1,088. By 1939, the population had risen to 1,220 (DIA annual reports 1884-1916, Hawthorn, Belshaw and Jamieson 1958: 24) (Diagram 10.1).
The increase in Christian ceremonials can partially be explained by the increase in formal adherence to Christianity and the Anglicization of names. Christian burials increased around 1918, and it seems to have become a common practice with a Christian registered funeral from then on, which did not necessarily exclude a subsequent memorial potlatch. The diagram indicates that especially Christian baptisms and marriages increased by the turn of the century and seem to have become the common practice around 1920.

Native marriages increased from the 1920s\textsuperscript{114}. It also became common practice to marry in the church in the late 1920s\textsuperscript{115}. Charley Nowell

\footnote{114}{Cole and Chaikin note that there were only five Christian marriages up till 1919. They do not reveal their source (1990: 132). This is outright wrong. Including “half-breeds,” who were not classified native by the Government (such as the Hunts), I count 31 marriages from 1880-1919. Including only classified “Indians,” there were 21 marriages in the period (Anglican Church, Alert Bay Mission, 1880-1919).}

\footnote{115}{In 1933, a large number of older couples who had been together for several years through arranged marriages or otherwise, married in a Christian ceremony. Among them were several influential ‘Namgis couples.}
recalled of the marriage of his youngest daughter in the same period: “Agnes was married in church — not in the Indian way. She married Herbert Cook," and he noted not completely without disapproval, “Herbert Cook didn’t pay me anything; it was all done the white man’s way." (Ford 1941: 228) In sum, Christian practices became increasingly common nominally and in ratio.

The emergence of Christian practices at Alert Bay coincided with the divisions in attitudes towards potlatching, and traditional customs seem to have been enunciated as these generations of young men and women gradually reached adulthood and were expected to “make their name good” through potlatching around 1915 - 1935. Throughout this period, schooling had become an increasingly common experience for most children, and the Anglican Church had consolidated its presence in the community. The consolidation of Christianity in segments of the community also placed the potlatch at the center of a power struggle between Christian non-potlatchers and potlatchers.
Contesting the Potlatch

The increasing attendance of the church services and number of natives professing to Christianity coincided with several other factors in the first decade of the 20th century. Gradually, school attendance rose, and more than two thirds of all Kwakiutl children attended Indian Day Schools or the Boarding School. Arguably, Indian education in school remained rudimentary at best, but it signifies changes in natives’ attitudes towards schooling (Cf. DIA Annual Report 1911: 382, compare part ii: 11). Even so, the Indian Agent William Halliday wrote:

“The Indians in this agency have not taken kindly to education. They are so wrapped up in their old potlatch and its ramifications. There is an absolute indifference displayed by the older men towards the education of the boys, but almost an antipathy towards the education of the girls.” (DIA Annual Report 1911: 384)

“The buildings themselves are of two distinct kinds. There are some modern houses comfortably furnished, and the usual type of house with the dressed lumber front and huge timber frame covered with split cedar boards...The people like their dwellings are of two distinct types. Many of the younger people who received a fair education would like to break away from this [potlatch] system, but its influence is very strong. On the whole they may be said to progressive and industrious.” (DIA Annual Report 1911: 217)

Halliday’s observations suggest different developments; some of the younger generation, exposed to schooling, took residence in Western atomistic family houses as emphasized by the church. Some of the younger expressed private doubts about the legitimacy of the potlatch. Others were more public, as the institution was contested by the younger generations who had received schooling and publicly asserted their Christian belief.
As arranged marriages, the investment system, and the ceremonials were practices that were considered illicit, immoral, and wasteful by the missionaries, it is probable that the younger generation exposed to the rigor of Christianity questioned these institutions that were, in addition, outlawed by the Canadian government.

This hesitation and the outright non-participation in native ceremonials and the investment system suggest contestation within the community of “the old ways.” The potlatch institution was emblematic of these practices as a focal point for Christian and government action, and as an institutional site for the reproduction of the Kwakiutl social order. The potlatch increasingly became a contested institution within the community. One the one hand, it became a symbol of resistance towards colonial entrenchment, and on the other hand, it became an institution continuously redefined in the appropriation to rapidly changing social, political, and symbolic conditions.

By the end of the 1910s, the first letters appeared where the Indian Agent and natives mention a decidedly split between “potlatchers” and “non-potlatchers” or “reactionaries” and “progressives” (Cook to Scott 1919/2/1, Halliday to Scott 1918/12/27 RG 10 Potlatch Files). To illustrate the internal divisions further, at the same time delegations of Kwakiutl Chiefs sought to circumvent the anti-potlatch law by lobbying the government. The government in turn made the law legally effective, whereby individuals could be prosecuted for participating in the ceremonials.

On the issue of supporting the potlatch institution, the community increasingly divided. It seems that the divide rather followed age and schooling than rank within the hereditary system, since i.e. Joe Harris and Jane Cook were of high rank. In the 1930s, Jimmy Sewid estimated that about 20% of the community would not participate in potlatching (Spradley 1969: 109). It is likely that the generation of children born in the 1890s to 1910s were divided in their practices on the basis of prior school attendance, participation in Christian ceremonials and potlatch atten-
dance, and that there was a general development towards incorporating Christian forms, though not necessarily substance, into an increasingly diversified cultural complex (Cf. Ford 1941: 218-224).

As converts commenced renouncing potlatches, marrying in churches, and attending church, the influence and power of the missionaries gradually rose. In the late 1930s, arranged marriages decreased and the institution more or less vanished altogether by the 1940s. The coincidence between the maturation of the first generations exposed to systematic and regular school attendance, and the commenced division of the community along lines of religion was not incidental. It was a result of a rigorous use of the time and space of education to form certain ways of thinking, feeling, and behaving which would leave a lasting impression, although it was not necessarily all-pervasive.

It was in this context that an infamous potlatch at Village Island took place in December 1921. The potlatch was said to be the largest in terms of property given away, and subsequently police arrested the participants (Sewid-Smith 1979). After the arrest of the participants, a number of them signed a form promising to cease potlatching and turn in their paraphernalia to the Indian Agent. Those who refused were jailed for up to six months.

It has been widely documented how the Kwakiutl developed counter-strategies to continue potlatching, ranging from privately held, or disjointed, to “disguised,” or remotely held potlatches. There was no shortage in ingenuity in perpetuating the potlatch. The institution remained “underground” until the late 1920s when enforcement grew laxer, and gradually potlatches became public ceremonies again, although not at Alert Bay (Cole & Chaikin 1990: 125). Several informants recollect their parents and grandparents leaving, or sometimes going themselves, for the potlatches at remote settlements of Gilford, Kingcome, Fort Rupert, Turnour Island, and Village Island in the 1920s and 1930s.
Throughout the ban, Kwakiutl chiefs attempted to subvert the potlatch law using a variety of different approaches ranging from petitions, lobbyism, legal arguments, demands for impartial inquiry into their customs, and aid from sympathetic Whites. None of these strategies proved successful. Their last attempt, through joining the Allied Tribes and subsequently the Native Brotherhood which was initially dominated by Christian natives with no interest in reviving the potlatch, also proved unsuccessful. For the further existence of the potlatch there was no other alternative than breaking, or circumventing, the law for the Kwakiutl\textsuperscript{116}.

It is remarkable, however, that no one, not even Christian natives, were willing to testify against potlatchers after the traumatic experience of the Village Island potlatch trial. Despite the symbolic divisions within the community, effectively putting somebody in jail was a whole different matter. After the conviction in 1922 there were only given lenient suspended sentences. Yet, is it likely that the ongoing process towards a decline of the potlatch was a combination of law enforcement and economic integration in the wider Euro-Canadian economy, and thereby they were hit hard by the 1930s depression, and the ongoing symbolic struggle between missionaries, Christian converts, and the potlatchers. Despite the laxer law enforcement of the law, one female informant growing up in the 1940s still recollects the staunch Anglican lesson: “You can only serve one Master.” Symbolic juxtapositions still remained between aboriginal and Christian religious beliefs and practices.

For those doubting the legitimacy of the potlatch, the prospect of prosecution may have served as a powerful excuse to renounce potlatching. Oral history witnesses that potlatches were continuously held in other

\textsuperscript{116} Tina Loo argues that this process, using a Foucaultian approach, was empowering for the Kwakwak'wa'kw (1992: 163-65). The argument seems untenable insofar as strategic actions counterbalancing the repressive conditions of the law certainly were exploring the conditions of possibility at hand, but viewing the process as “empowering” seems to collapse Foucault’s fine distinction of the asymmetries of relational power.
Kwakiutl settlements than Alert Bay. This suggests that the risk of prosecution, although a powerful deterrent, was not the only motivation for people to renounce potlaching. Some high ranked Kwakiutl renounced potlatching altogether in the 1930s, including the chiefs Moses Alfred, Jimmy Sewid, Jimmy Smith, Bill Scow, and Billy Assu. All these individuals were, not incidentally, former students in the Indian School, and several became active in Church work. Certainly, Christian belief, the value of hard work and participation in the monetary economy were alternatives that were groomed in the school and available for the converts.

Intermittently, in the 1930s the Anglican Church’s attitude became increasingly ambiguous as the new Reverend Prosser, as opposed to his predecessors, did not vigilantly oppose the potlatching and customary dancing. An ambiguity which prompted the Anglican Church to state its position that the “Church should urge upon the Indian converts to renounce the “potlatch”. (DIA RG 10 potlatch files, Anglican Church Hearing 1933)

It was also in this period, from the 1930s to 1950, that English gradually became the dominant language at Alert Bay, as almost all children went to residential school or spent increasing time at the Indian Day Schools. The use of Kwak’wala was prohibited, and the pupils were kept busy with course work, recreational activities, and miscellaneous work throughout the day (Cf. Wolcott 1967: 68-74).

During the period, native parents looked favorably upon education, and the majority of former residential school students who attended the school under E.F. Anfield’s tenure recollect their school days fondly.

Whereas the 1930s were marked by the worldwide economic recession, the war years in the 1940s marked a new economic prosperity for the Kwakiutl as the government interned Japanese fishermen, and natives subsequently gained a renewed stronghold in the industry. Demands and prices rose in the wartime, and renewed prosperity entered the communi-
ty. However, the 1940s were not marked by a drastic resurgence of the potlatch, although its persistence some years before had provoked the Indian Agent, Murray Todd, to draft a proposal of drastic measures to prevent potlatching from taking place. The draft, however, was never passed on, as it violated the civic rights of the natives (Todd to Perry, DIA RG 10 Monthly Report, December 1934, Todd to Perry 1935/1/5 DIA RG 10 Potlatch Files, MacKenzie to Todd 1936/2/12 DIA RG 10 Potlatch Files).

Throughout the interwar period, a process syncretization amalgamated aspects of Christianity, native customs, and the traditional social network of the community. Within these processes, meanings and actions followed different paths, with some renouncing potlatching altogether, and others syncretizing Christian forms with traditional participation in potlatching, insisting on the importance of the etiquette of the winter ceremonies and continuously emphasizing the importance of ancestral prerogatives. It is likely that the latter development was more prevalent in remoter areas of the territory such as Kingcome Inlet where potlatching was still pervasive (Smith to Todd 1947/10/9 DIA RG 10 Potlatch Files)\textsuperscript{117}.

Indeed, Nobles who had held potlatches had personal, political, symbolic, and economic interests in perpetuating the potlatch. Many held deeply felt obligations to maintain the privileges of their people as this was a central feature of their self-conception. Similarly, the maintenance of the institution was the source of their political and symbolic status, which would be undermined by the disappearance of the system. Economically, many had invested heavily in the investing system, and by renouncing potlatching held great risks that their loans would not be recouped.

The conflict that gradually arose c. 1915 - 1925 between potlatchers and non-potlatchers remained important, but the substance of, and alignments

\textsuperscript{117} During the 1930s at least one child from Kingcome was hidden from the Indian Agent so as to educate him in the native history and ceremonial practice rather than being forced to residential school.
with, these positions changed. Gradually, the community as a whole incorporated Christian ceremonies and practices in their daily lives. Yet, the potlatch remained a symbolic, economic, and political field of struggle not only between missionaries, Indian Agents, and natives, but also within the native community.

In 1951, the potlatch ban, the infamous “Section 140,” was finally omitted from the revised Indian Act, and not many years after, potlatching and winter ceremonial dancing appeared, thus in revised forms, as a major dimension of Kwakiutl cultural identity (Cf. Spradley & McCurdy 1975: 579-96).

1880-1951 marked a period of drastic changes in Kwakiutl life. Economically, they were integrated into, though on the fringes of, British Columbian economy. Christianity gained symbolic importance although in a variety of ways. Schooling became a normalized institutional feature, and it seems that former students became the first converts that labored for the Church to convert the remainder of the community. Some native customs and language were marginalized into the domains of privacy under the deterrent of ideological and judicial persecution. The traditional basis of chiefly political power was compromised, and an internal fracturing of the communities on the issue of potlatching had become apparent. Yet beyond the forms of acculturation, the political and symbolic importance of traditional names and privileges still persisted, and they resurfaced as a feature of public social and ceremonial life at Alert Bay again in the postwar years.

Within roughly seventy years of symbolic and political struggles, relations of power gradually shifted. The symbolic complex and practices of Christianity gained wide acknowledgment and was perpetuated by the Kwakiutl themselves. Christianity’s perpetuation by the natives reached its prime of influence in the interwar years. However, the perpetuation of ancestral prerogatives and the preoccupation with rank coexisted with the apparent Christianization of the Kwakiutl. Different social actors immersed
the coexistence of different symbolic worlds into their daily lives in various ways. In analytical terms, the processes of immersion were forms of syncretization between different symbolic worlds in social practices that embodied differing motivations within the structural constraints of the figuration.

The Impact on Personhood

Following the theoretical concept of the “total social person,” I investigate the impact on Kwakiutl personhood through different elements on which the massive changes in the historical period studied had an impact. Thus, if personhood is tied to the social order, and the social order undergoes changes, it is reasonable to assume that personhood also undergoes changes. However, as changes do not happen overnight, practices may remain meaningful while they are produced to appropriate new constraints and opportunities.

Social Impact

It would be wrong to assess the process of change as a subjectivization of the Kwakiutl person, and that the conception of personhood became equal to that of the Western subject. It is thus important to maintain the distinction between the technologies of knowledge, their practice, and the conceptions of personhood that they worked upon. The missing link in the equation is the meanings produced within the sustained practices of social life. As examined above, traditional cultural aspects of social life persisted throughout the period. The coexistence of these different patterns as conceptualized in personhood must be examined.

Processes of individualizations were already developing through the economic opportunities created by trade and subsequently through wage labor. In other words, in the late 19th century the political economy of Kwakiutl society was changing drastically as individual members gained
alternative access to economic means without the political and social control of the numaym.

In the years of the fur trade, new economic wealth stimulated Kwakiutl communities, but it also set other social and cultural dynamics in motion. Subsistence patterns changed, trade was intensified, and commoners gained access to a source of wealth that was not controlled by the nobility. This economic aspect was further enhanced by the introduction of wage labor in the emerging fishing industry.

Vernon Kobrinsky argued that the influx of wealth decreased the power of chiefs, and they increasingly had to rely on the commoners within their numaym to support their potlatching ventures, who in return would try to obtain titles which at the time were left vacant as the population drastically declined (Kobrinsky 1975: 36-38). Kobrinsky, however, ignored another process set in motion under the changed conditions of the fur trade. That is, individuals could acquire wealth without the cooperation of the numaym, and thus an important element of social control was lost. These individual economic ventures, and the entrepreneur’s right to the wealth hence amassed, triggered social changes and individualized economic activity and rationale, although not an ideology of individualism.

Another contributing element to the process of individualization was the uncertainty of succession of ancestral titles as the population drastically decimated. A contingent process of passing on titles was significantly derailed, as bearers and potential successors of ancestral titles passed away without an appointed legitimate heir. In response, sets of strategies were developed to appropriate the scarcity of inheritors. Subsequently, it became more frequent that women were given names, some held more than one name, and in other instances commoners were given names. The latter was arguably, as Kobrinsky pointed out, a result of the acquired wealth and economic power of some commoners who would invest this wealth in potlatching and make claims for ancestral prerogatives. As recalled, the potlatch was a total social phenomenon encompassing
politics, economics, religion, and social life (Mauss 1990: 38-39). It is reasonable to assume that the change in one mode of producing the potlatch also affected the others.

Therefore, it is likely that enterprising social agents gradually applied the rationale of individualized economic practices in the realm of the potlatch. As Joseph Masco noted in a Bourdieuan phraseology: whereas nobles for centuries turned symbolic capital into economic capital through the willing help of the commoners of the numaym, the reverse was true of the nouveau riche commoners who sought to translate economic capital into symbolic capital (Masco 1995: 70).

Following this economic rationale, titles became objects to be acquired, rather than socio-symbolic entities of social responsibilities. These had to be distributed or acquired with far greater ingenuity than previously when rules of primogeniture were rather more stable. Marie Mauzé has aptly pointed out that the potlatch institution not only changed in form and quantity of wealth distributed. Its quality also changed from a ritual of affirmation and validation of rank to becoming a means of acquisition and validation in the decades around the turn of the century (Mauzé 1986: 23-25).

Individuals were now able to labor for themselves without the cooperation and social constraints of the numaym, and correspondingly the individual could, under specific conditions of possibility of the historical formation, invest his wealth and claim a certain rank. This individualized rationale was a phenomenon of the contact period. It was one of the processes through which the Kwakiutl communities appropriated to new conditions.

It was in this context of cultural change and social reformation that missionary activity commenced in Kwakiutl territory. A process of individualized social practices, that is an increasing dissociation between individual achievement and social ascription, had already been initiated by changes in the economic and demographic conditions of the fur trade. As
examined above, the initial results of the mission were scarce, and potlatching increased dramatically during the period. However, as the control of time, space, interaction, and knowledge of the children increased in the second decade of the 20th century, the techniques of power and technologies of knowledge created new sets of social attitudes and a pervasive symbolic basis for individualism.

Correspondingly, for many commoners who did not succeed in attaining titles through potlatching, because of the strategies of exclusion implemented by the chiefs to keep the titles in the ranks of the nobility, the symbolic world of Christianity may have offered powerful alternative symbolic basis for their actions. For some nobles, the social disarray of rivalry and enormous changes in the institution may have been a pretext to explore another powerful spirituality offered by the church. Certainly, the native individuals at the forefront of propagating Christianity were nobles, not commoners.

It was not only the individual practices that were affected by the tide of changes. The composition of social units also changed. Until the 20th century the Kwakiutl lived in communal Big Houses, where several families from the same numaym resided.

The communal living was targeted by the Church as one of the places of “improvement” from the perceived filthy, smoky, and utterly unhealthy houses to the small cottages designed for nuclear families. The first families to move into the nuclear family cottages were the Christian converts. The church encouraged other young couples to build modern nuclear family houses. Although these houses initially served merely as overnight residences, the atomization of the extended families into smaller nuclear units slowly spread throughout the 1920s and 1930s. However, the tightly knit relations between the extended family members were perpetuated. Social and symbolic space was now demarcated by new Europeanized structures that drew new boundaries between the public and the private, the collective and the individual.
Arguably, the relative economic and social autonomy of the nuclear family was also instrumental in the breakdown of arranged marriages, insofar as a modern cottage and the prospect of a nuclear family offered a physical as well as social space for the younger generation.

The following excerpt is from interviews with a Kwakiutl female who grew up in the 1930s and 1940s:

Steffen Bohni  “When do you think people started moving out of the big houses and started (getting) themselves modern houses?”

Kwakiutl female  “Probably, after, maybe after people were sent to jail, probably.”

Steffen Bohni  “Around 1920?”

Kwakiutl female  “Maybe in the 1930s, yeah, because there was only houses in the front, (in) Alert Bay, you know around the cove, there was two houses in the back, here, that was all there was, when I was growing up.”

Steffen Bohni  “Were there still big houses around when you where growing up?”

Kwakiutl female  “There was just the posts. You know, there, you know, where Albert Hunt lives. Big posts where there used to be Big Houses. So I hadn’t seen a Big House until they built the one up the hill here [the Modern Big House erected in 1963].”

Steffen Bohni  “So, that was in the 1940s (when you grew up)?”

Kwakiutl female  “Yeah, that (?) no longer was in the Big House there.”

Steffen Bohni  “So what about on the street when you were a kid. Did all the kids talk Kwak’wala to each other… or speak Kwak’wala?”

Kwakiutl female  “Yes, Kwak’wala was all that we spoke at home or at play. I never ever called anybody John or Mary or whatever.
Everybody was called by their Indian name, that’s what I remember.”

Steffen Bohni  

“Oh yeah, when did that change?”

Kwakiutl female  

“Oh, during the war years, you know when they interned the Japanese, they took the native women down to work in the canneries, that’s why my mother went and we went with them. And when we came back, [things] were different.”

Steffen Bohni  

“So all of a sudden people started speaking English?”

Kwakiutl female  

“Well not all of a sudden. We still spoke Kwak’wala at home, but English had become the dominant language. I guess those people who went to residential school it was only those of us who were not there who were speaking our language. My sister, even though she speaks our language, doesn’t speak it as well as I do. She was in residential school. She understands it, but she doesn’t speak it as well as I do.”

Steffen Bohni  

“That’s interesting.... So it was in those years just around the wartime, the kind of, should I say the first generation of residential school had grown up and started speaking English and using their English first names.”

Kwakiutl female  

“Well, mostly, I supposed using it, eh, well we too, when we started school too. Because, I hadn’t thought about that, even my proper name. My name when I was a little girl was Kugwisuluga… There were three or four generations of people that went to residential school so it took those years to almost erase Kwak’wala”

Cognitive Impact

As the dialogue progresses between the woman and myself, she comes to the realization of significant changes in the interaction between people in Alert Bay: individuals referred to each other by Anglicized names, and the language they communicated in was English.
In school, pupils were interpellated in English by their Anglicized names in the course of these interactions\textsuperscript{118}. In Kwakiutl culture names were transient as was the title marking the rank of its bearer, whereas European names were permanent. In this name system, surnames would change by marriage for women, whereas they would remain unaltered for men. First names would remain unaltered for both sexes. The name was thus dissociated from marking stages in the social career of the person. The name was a personalized, intransient attribute given to the individual ordained by God. These names were used in school. Despite initial confusion in the Anglo-Saxon naming of natives, this system of names was soon legally adopted.

Christian names became common usage among the Kwakiutl sometime in the 1930s and 1940s. At the same time, English gradually gained pre-eminence in the public discourse of the younger generations. Native names remained, but they were increasingly confined to private space, and ceremonial names were restricted to the symbolic space of ceremonials. Dissociation between the individual, Anglicized name and the Kwakiutl everyday name and title became pre-eminent. The social space of the ceremonials was a restricted arena, and the system of rank and title names increasingly became restricted to this realm as its symbolic and social importance in everyday life diminished. This development was significant in several respects. Semantically, the title acted as a symbolic and social signifier of the self. Symbolically, the change marked a dissociation between the intransient, individual identity and the transient, social identity. By using an intransient name, the individual was interpellated as an entity in and for itself, as a subject (Cf. Althusser 1983: 50-55). Insofar as the recognition of titles was diminishing, important

\textsuperscript{118} Anglicized names seem initially to have been a convenience of bureaucrats and had little use among the natives themselves. Thus in early accounts, names like "Jumbo" and "Nimpkish Tom" appear. Gradually, a further Anglicization appears as natives took Anglicized names that incorporated aspects of their native names of inheritance. Another common feature was to be given a name of some Anglo-Saxon mentor.
knowledge of numaym history, social and spatial belonging, and relation to the universe was lost.

**Physical Impact**

Despite emphases of Kwakiutl survivors on reproducing the population through numerous children, mortality remained high. Like Aboriginal health in general, Kwakiutl health was severely affected by the colonization. Along with colonization came biomedicine and carceral institutions such as the medical clinic, preventoriums, and the school which all “cared” for natives indirectly or directly.

Missionaries and later Department of Indian Affairs appointed medical officers displaced traditional healing\(^{119}\) within a wider framework of corporeal reform which also included significant changes in the diet, such as the introduction of canned foods and imported goods such as sugar, fruits, potatoes, and flour.

Another significant change was the introduction of physical education which was also pursued as leisure activity. Soccer, introduced by the missionaries, soon became appropriated to local meanings, and tribal rivalries found new expressions on the soccer field.

It seems that the Western medicine gradually gained pre-eminence in the 1930s, and Hughina Harold a former school teacher and trained nurse, recollected that she in vain attempted to treat one of the few remaining paxalas, “Cheeky Joe” of the Da’naxda’xw Kwakiutl (Harold 1996: 169-170). It is likely that the intermittent period was partially one of coexistence of traditional healing practices and Western medicine as inscribed in the larger field of bodily practices contested in the colonial struggle in Kwakiutl territory.

\(^{119}\) Centering on the tragic death of a young native girl, the story of “Indian Health” in Alert Bay has been documented by Dara Culhane (1987).
Emotional Impact

It was not only the cosmology that became subject to missionary scrutiny. So did the cognitive and emotional elements involved in the production of cultural practices. Over the course of colonial entrenchment, significant changes took place. No longer were public displays of dismembered enemies attached to bodies or to poles neither tolerated by the colonial authorities nor practiced by the Kwakiutl. Head-hunting as a practice of bereavement also ceased in the mid-19th century as such practices were defined as “atrocities” and “murder” by the newly imposed legal system of the colonial authorities. Slavery also vanished as political autonomy disappeared in the second part of the same century. Enslavery vanished, and with that the ritualized slave killings in the winter ceremonies also ceased.

Numerous examples suggest that the embodied emotional structure of the Kwakiutl altered significantly over the first half century of increased contact with the Euro-Canadian. The establishment of the missionary station at Alert Bay echoed these tendencies. As mentioned, new concepts of the individual, the collective, the private, the collective, cleanliness, filth, purity, and sin became part of the Kwakiutl symbolic realm.

The missionaries, within the context of breakdown of the social cohesiveness of the rank system, introduced new emotional concepts such as shame and purity. Albeit different from Kwakiutl emotive concepts, they were not radically opposed to the shame associated personal indiscretions, or the elaborate ritual practices of cleansing and strengthening the body as a container for the “soul.”

Concepts and practices in Christianity were within a logical grasp of Kwakiutl cosmology. It is not unlikely that such notions along with insistence on the “love of next of kin,” “humility,” and other tenets proved appealingly inclusive for some Kwakiutl. Along the way, emotional structures and practices gradually transformed. Thus, the notion of the
Christian “Soul” may not have been cognitively and physically too far removed from the corporeal practices hitherto used by the Kwakiutl.

**Social Selves and Changing Personhood**

Whilst the above examination intimated significant developments in Kwakiutl social organization, cultural practices, and personhood, I have not introduced a theoretical framework which may help to arrive at an understanding of these developments.

I argue that the concept of social selves by George Herbert Mead introduced in chapter two will be useful (Mead 1967) along with Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger’s concept of situated learning in a community of practice (Lave and Wenger 1991).

Throughout this chapter, I have stressed that personhood is constructed in a social and historical practice in an interlude between power and knowledge. Personhood finds its expression in not only how people conceive of themselves and others, but also in social action. Hence, categories of personhood are continuously produced and reproduced in actions towards and meanings derived from the social world.

At the core of Mead’s elaborations were the irreducible dialectics between the social and the individual, which is manifest in cognition between the enduring dialectic between the “Me” and the “I.” This dialectic is fundamentally learned through symbolic and social interactions. In this case, his argument opens up to two significant theoretical concepts: (i) Social relations are embedded in social action upon the material and social world through rules and regularities embedded in knowledge and power. The introduction of a concept of power does not violate the premises of Mead’s theory. (ii) Learning is fundamentally social, and it is the product of social interaction that is a form of social practice. The use of
a concept of situated learning does not violate the premises of Mead’s theory.

Following Elias, relations of power are structuring for social relations, and eventually mental and emotional structures. This sheds light upon the social formation of certain attitudes and practices, and the cognitive and emotional dialectics between the I and the Me. In other words, the concepts can be applied to understand the process of learning and thinking new categories of the person as inherent in one’s self-awareness.

Missionary and Government policies aimed at a circumvention of the cognitive map through which the world was understood. That is bringing about a fundamental change in cultural forms of behavior, cultural knowledge, and the social processes of their internalization so that it formed a part of the person’s motivational system, emotionally and cognitively (Spradley 1972). It was an attempted ontogenesis. I showed above that the practices to obtain this goal were numerous, and the symbolic order of Christianity was communicated as exclusive and antagonistic to native belief and practices under the idiom “You can only serve one Master.” However, Christian and native cosmologies may not be logically compatible, but that does not prevent human practices from incorporating ideational elements and actions. While the missionaries communicated a sharp opposition between the two religions, human practice does not. It would also be a mistake to oppose these cosmologies as binary opposites. Indeed, several practices resembled each other and probably accommodated a cosmological appropriation by some Kwakiutl individuals where both native and Christian symbols were appropriated120.

One way to conceive of these developments analytically is to regard the native child’s practice in school as constituting situated learning in a

120 Indeed, the graveyards at Alert Bay signify this appropriation. In recent years, a wooden cross, the quintessential Christian symbol, adorned with wooden plaques or masks symbolizing the lineage crest of the deceased, marks several graves.
community of practice, where a set of regularized social behavior was learned. In other words, the child apprehended a certain Me, which is always dialectically reflected in the I. Thus, the forms of behavior, knowledge, and skills formed a new set of attitudes of the child that was reflected in its social and bodily practice, in its emotions and cognition. However, children also engaged in other social encounters, other communities of practice; towards other children, towards elders, parents, and other relatives. In each setting, the set of attitudes, the forms of behavior, and the responses they elicited were different.

These different social identities actively learned in different communities of practice were complementary in terms of a contingency in space and continuity in time. Using a functional phraseology, there existed a functional equivalence between the apprehended social identities. In Meadian terms, the different Me’s acquired through one’s social career were contiguous and complementary.

The social and symbolic order communicated by the missionaries insisted on being exclusive. The ultimate way to assure this was through establishing hegemony of learning. The monopolization of the setting of learning and controlling the community of practice in a total institution accentuated this policy and grimly highlights the politics involved in learning. Missionaries’ institutionalized education was deliberately antagonized to other symbolic orders, that is, the forms of behavior, knowledge, and motivations inscribed in other Me’s. In its exclusiveness it did not offer any mediation between the different symbolic orders or social practices.

This process of antagonized symbolic orders, in the form they were communicated, which were manifested and experienced emotionally and mentally could question the legitimacy of the values and practices which the social actor engaged in. There was an incongruity between the categories through which the individual conceptualized its Me’s. Different notions of sin, shame, true, false, right, wrong, good or bad from one
symbolic order and one set of social practices were juxtaposed to the set of social practices that the person engaged in elsewhere. From the interview excerpt above, the extent of the juxtaposition becomes clear. Language, names, settings, rules, and symbols were different.

The individual acquired competency in two different forms of knowledge and behaviors and motivational systems. The missionaries communicated these learned behaviors as mutually exclusive, as if the one competency should be given up for the betterment of the other. This was not merely a symbolic or cognitive juxtaposition, it was also an emotional juxtaposition between ways of perceiving oneself. Native students experienced that the world they were prepared for in school corresponded little to the world outside. Prejudice and structural racism offered anything but incorporation into Canadian society on equal footing with the dominant Euro-Canadians. Formal skills and competences were inadequate and made it even harder to find employment. It is likely that a sense of belonging to a numaym also compelled many former residential school pupils to resituate themselves in their native communities after school age. In any case, native students had few options but rejoining their native communities as social oddities, incompetent in language, forms of behavior, and skills expected of an adolescent man or woman, or joining the growing native urban proletariat in the cities of Vancouver and Victoria. In one community of practice, one’s actions were culturally competent, in another they were perceived as shameful, unintelligent, or even debasing. Notably, these communities of practice differed substantially. In Alert Bay, suppression of the potlatch by police, Indian Agent, informers, and missionaries was evident. And participation in wage labor was close by. These constraints were not present in the remoter settlements removed from immediate government control such as Kingcome, Gilford, and Village Island. Here, the native community was less divided on the issue of potlatching, and individuals resituating in the community after school had little other options than to learn or leave. This argument is backed by the fact that several younger people left these communities to pursue wage labor, better medical care, and schooling at Alert Bay or elsewhere.
Appropriation

In order to develop a tenable relation between these sets of learned practices which actually comprised different notions of the person, the individual distanced itself, I, from its antagonized Me’s in order to develop a meaningful mediation, or congruence, between the symbolic, physical, emotional, and social orders constituting the different Me’s. These mediations are reflected in the actual events at Alert Bay. Individuals subjected to this politically antagonized regimen of learning conceived different mediating strategies which sought to bridge, or cope with, the incongruity between the different Me’s. It is important to emphasize that this was as much experienced as an individual as a social contradiction. Above I investigated how these strategic actions would gradually change relations of power between the different symbolic orders, and therefore also the conceptions and practices through which the person experienced him or herself. Three mediating strategies emerged:

Christianization. The adherents followed the new vested symbolic order, and they renounced participation in ceremonial events or other native customs. The emotive and cognitive importance of Christian value systems became pervasive, and its symbolic order became dominant. The relation between I and Me would be conceived through these categories. Such a strategy would initially be rare, as “non-potlatchers” risked to become social outcasts and were treated as “non-Indians.” Nonetheless, this strategy gained increasing legitimacy as Christianity established itself as a part of the symbolic world (Cook to Scott 1919/2/1, DIA Potlatch Files).

Syncretization. This strategy was incorporative, and individuals sought to appropriate elements from the different symbolic orders into a meaningful complex. As several informants emphasize, some of the elders who did much to preserve traditional knowledge and practices were also very Christian and active in Christian auxiliary organizations. One illustrative example of this appropriation is the disappearance of some of the most
“objectionable” features of the potlatch, such as the Hamat’sa biting spectators in the winter ceremonies. Another example was attendance at church services, which did not preclude participation in native ceremonies. Arguably, various syncretizing strategies became predominant at Alert Bay. Elements of both symbolic orders were combined and coexisted as flexible elements for self-identification in different settings.

**Traditionalism.** This third strategy decreased as contact and relations of power with the social and symbolic world of Euro-Canadians became established. Traditionalists refused any incorporation of Christian and traditional Spirituality and practices. They sought to build a symbolic bulwark towards new symbolic and political structures. Ironically, this form of “traditionalism” was a reaction to the colonial encounter. Prior to the incursion of colonial agents, Northwest Coast cultures liberally inspired each other through several kinds of material and symbolic exchange such as masks, myths, and other ceremonial regalia.

Obviously, the combinations within and between these positions were several. The mediating strategies varied over time, depending on the conditions of the situations, the enduring presence of Christianity, the development of relations of power, and the dynamics of long-term cultural processes. Also, there is ample evidence that several individual actors shifted strategies several times in their social career.

An example was Charley Nowell, a high-ranked advocate for potlatching, who in 1935 married his second wife in a church and did not give any potlatch. Yet he continued to believe in the legitimacy of the potlatch. Twenty years earlier the same action would have rendered ridicule and shame to his family and his title. Hence there were changes of meaningful and legitimate behavior within the positions themselves. Another example of the different mediations between the Me’s, and thence positioning, is the actions of Jimmy Sewid. He was born the oldest son of a numaym chief and received the proper training appropriate for the highest standing position in the house of the Wi’umasg̱am of the Kwikwasutï’inux̱w. In his
youth he also attended the Indian Day School at Alert Bay. Jimmy Sewid was at the same time a very active member of the Anglican Church, an active politician, and a very successful fisherman. Having participated in several potlatches, he renounced potlatching in the mid- to late 1930s (Spradley 1969: 109). However, once potlatching was again legal, he was instrumental in the reemergence of native cultural activities in Alert Bay in the 1960s. I do not think that it was a coincidence that the first to recommence these activities were chiefs from communities less exposed to governance in daily life. Chiefs who came from Fort Rupert, Kingcome, and Giford were among the first to embrace the resurgence of native customs in public. As opposed to some of the younger chiefs from Alert Bay and Cape Mudge, they had witnessed and participated in several ceremonies and were trained in the competences needed (Spradley 1969: 158-62)\textsuperscript{121}.

Jimmy Sewid, however, exemplifies a rather successful negotiation of the repertoire of different social identities, different Me’s, that were a result of, and motivating for, social practices. Others did not manage to negotiate these identities as successfully as he. Moreover, the example also indicates the increasing diversity of the categories of personhood among the Kwakiutl. The hegemony of one symbolic order was jeopardized by Christianity and produced new meaning and new identities. Different Me’s coexisted in cognition and in practice, when they were rendered meaningful for the individuals. These sometimes opposing categories became part of mediating strategies where the people sought to create new meaningful symbolic orders and practices, where they came into play in the social world. The mediating strategies were different meaningful solutions to the dilemma of politics of identity of personhood.

The fluctuation in these identifications must be understood diachronically, learning is not only situated. It is also lifelong. Former students were

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{121} Apparently, the individuals instrumental in the resurgence of potlatching were all acknowledged hereditary chiefs.}
subject to many different learning opportunities. Once the person resituated in the native community practices, language and its classificatory schemes could be learned, although the reintegration into the native community may not be cognitively, emotionally, and socially unproblematic if the symbolic orders are sharply juxtaposed by social agents as was the case in early 20th century Alert Bay. As Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger point out, there is no unambiguous internalization (Lave and Wenger 1991: 47-49). Therefore, individual circumstances become central in the mediating strategies they opted for and continually reconstruct in their narratives.

On a collective level, the above positions can be interpreted as the production of meaningful utopias in the Foucaultian sense, which juxtaposed the heterotopias of the other positions, which was the case between “potlatchers” and Christian “anti-potlatchers” in the first part of the 20th century.

Thus, impact of institutional changes in education and potlatching must be viewed in this context of learning as an always already situated activity, because after school days the communities themselves constituted a community of learning. In this light, the disarray of the missionaries’ and government’s utopian projects, despite pervasive policy implementation, makes sense. The former pupils of the residential school resituated themselves in a community undergoing changes, with strong symbolic juxtapositions. Some opted for learning more of traditional practices, whereas others opted for pursuing Christianity, nuclear housing, and wage labor as their resolution. In any case, their positions situated them to learn in a community and thus delineating a historical trajectory for their own children and thus the future of the community as a whole.
Conclusion: (Dis)Continuities

The concept of “change” implies a temporal dispersion and certain benchmarks for comparison. Certainly, change measured in social, political, economical, and cultural terms occurred amongst the Kwakiutl in the period described. However, I reserve certain uneasiness for the term, because it irrevocably focuses on “events” marking change rather than the subtle everyday practices which are rendered pragmatic and productive, yet meaningful, by the social actors themselves. I prefer to consider these actions as trajectories of continuities and discontinuities whereby the social order and cultural practices are (re)produced. As relations of power, as an instance of social relations per se, are continually negotiated, so are all relationships continually arranged and rearranged to accommodate to structural constraints, pragmatic concerns, tactics, or strategic actions. The outcome, I doubt, is never quite intentional. While investigating the changing notions of personhood, the inappropriateness of the concept becomes clear because it does nothing to investigate the subtle workings of power on the “micro” level, the gradual trajectory of new practices, the subtle shift of languages that did not appear in the grandeur of defining moments.

Therefore let me recapture the (dis)continuities investigated in this chapter. Several sources of historical evidence confirm a general syncretization of native and Christian cosmology and practice. Christian forms and aspects of Western Civilization influenced changes of aspects of the winter ceremonies. Also, changes in the social organization and economic and subsistence patterns are all closely related to the structural changes implied by colonial entrenchment.

As I examined in chapter 8, traditional Kwakiutl morality dissuaded the pursuit of individualized goals. Social control severely limited such ventures. Metaphorically, this was gluttony and was considered loosening of self-control inappropriate for a noble person. In categories of personhood, the ideological lack of distinction between the person and the
individual through the acquisition of names and titles was indicative of this
dissuasion. The noble individual was a person, because he or she was a
member of a social group. Although Kwakiutl society was hierarchical,
there was strong emphasis on solidarity within the group, and the chief of
the numaym was the personification of the group in their dealings with
others numayms, or other tribes.

Kwakiutl participation in first the fur trade and since wage economy set a
social process of individualized practices in motion. It is therefore likely
that the agency of the missionaries and government enhanced and
directed cultural and social dynamics already in motion years before their
advent.

Nevertheless, I examined how individuals who were subjected to
schooling were also at the forefront of the missionary work in the
community as well as renouncing potlatching. As a result, I asserted,
social identities became far more complex following the attempted
“symbolic violence” by colonial agents aided by segments of the native
community. This, in response, triggered different strategies on the part of
the Kwakiutl. The impact of missionary incursion must be understood in
the light of these structural changes. Categories of personhood were
significantly reconfigured in the period 1880-1951. New distinctions
between private and public, the individual and the social, were drawn, yet
the importance of ancestral prerogatives, potlatching, and winter
ceremonies remained in some extended families.

Despite the rigorous subjection to technologies of power which subjectified
and objectified the Kwakiutl bodies, these practices were inscribed in
ongoing social and cultural processes that were negotiated, enhanced,
and formed in different ways by Kwakiutl persons.

In the late 1930s to 1940s, a number of the institutional and symbolic
pillars of colonization were in place and perpetuated by the Kwakiutl
themselves: the use of English, the use of Christian names, high rates of
schooling, medical aid, and the diminishing support to native ceremonials and practices. Indeed, individuals who were at the forefront of Christianization also became political leaders and reasserted their hereditary positions late in life to aid the resurgence of Kwakiutl ceremonials.

The following chapters will underline that such perpetuation was not singularly an equation of the internalization of the colonial situation. It is also productive processes that structure the use of social institutions and negotiate their meanings.
Part Five. The Kids Are Our Future: 
Recontesting Personhood, 1951-1999
Chapter 11. Reclaiming Education – Negotiating “Culture”

In 2001, the T’lisəlaki’lakw School at Alert Bay celebrates its 25th anniversary as an educational institution. Today it is one of the longest existing native educational institutions in B.C., and the native inhabitants of Alert Bay pride themselves on the school’s cultural program and the marvelous architecture of the school.

In chapter 9, I delineated the politics of education whilst colonial agencies imposed themselves in Kwakiutl territories, whereby schooling became an assimilatory means in the attempt of these agents to define and control native life and self-conception. The establishment of the T’lisəlaki’lakw School signifies an important historical change in the struggle over education. Several issues are at stake here: politically, the internal and external relations of power determining the conditions of possibility of its establishment must be understood. Herein, the community’s internal dialogue of the school as responsible for the “cultural” education of children. Theoretically, the hegemonies of learning do not vanish because actors of the community seek to grasp power over education and the ends of the educational process. Its guises and enunciations may change, but politics as embedded in education remains.

In this chapter I analyze the historical trajectory of the politics of education leading to the present. This chapter explores the establishment of the T’lisəlaki’lakw School at Alert Bay. I view this as an institutional attempt to realign the power relations to define education and the balance of the politics of identity, which gravitated towards colonial agents for nearly a century. In doing so, I show that native control over native education features an ironic reversal of the political means of education. That is, schooling changed from initial function of “Canadianizing” the indigenous. Today, education has turned towards an “Indigenization” of the Canadian.
However, the reversal is not unproblematic because the success of indigenous education is contesting the numaym as the social setting of learning. At the same time, the particular ownership of ancestral prerogatives is by definition restricted rather than shared, which jeopardizes its position in the “cultural” curriculum of the school.

**Theoretical Prelude**

Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger’s approach suggested that learning is participation in a community of practice, where meanings are communicated, negotiated, and renegotiated. Whereas the approach demonstrates that such relations are structured by a “hegemony over resources” that is embedded in the practices and knowledge which constitute, shape, and legitimize the setting of learning, it does little to understand the political context that may enable or disable social actors to gain a hegemony of the resources inherent in the educational process.

In this case, native social agents facing colonial agents reclaimed the right to educate their own children. That is, to impose control over a specific setting of learning, its spatial and temporal dimensions, and the meanings construed within these settings. In other words, the functional level of education had to be reclaimed to define and structure the other, political level of education, which relates to the politics of identity, to define oneself, and *an-other*.

**Global and National Context**

In many respects, the 1951 revision of the Indian Act was the result of an emerging revisionism of Canadian Indian policy. The Third Reich’s horrors and ideologically inclined persecution of ethnic minorities in World War II provided an imposing backdrop for self-reflection. Canadian Indian policy was not left unscathed. The emergence of bipolar political structure in international politics and the United States of America becoming the...
dominant political and military power in the West also played a role in destabilizing colonial relations between the European powers and their colonies. Domestic politics was not untouched by these international realignments.

The interpenetration of national and global contexts also influenced the historical figuration on the Northwest Coast. Gradually, the division of labor between the provincial and federal governments became subject to political negotiations, as the Federal government sought to disentangle itself from its past as a British colony. In the 1960s, the Canadian government sought to centralize government and supplant British institutions with supposedly indigenous “Canadian” institutions. Throughout the decade, virulent debates on the existence of a unique “Canadian identity” flourished among politicians and intellectuals. This “nation building” process was perceived by many as threatening traditional ties to the British motherland, and conversely by the French speaking as a threat to the contribution and uniqueness of the Francophones in Quebec. Agents in other regions imitated the kind of ethno-nationalism displayed by some agents of the French-Canadians in Quebec. These agents also laid claim to the uniqueness of their character and contribution to Canadian national identity.

By the end of the decade the Liberal government, led by Pierre Trudeau, designated a task force, the Royal Commission of Bilingualism and Biculturalism. Its terms of reference were recommend policies for an equal partnership between the British and French “founders” of Canada, while recognizing the contribution of other immigrant groups as well. In the 1960s and 1970s the term “multiculturalism” gained increasing currency as a way to acknowledge the unique place and contribution of all immigrant groups.

However, Evelyn Légaré points out that domestic politics is not explanation enough to understand why the Canadian government as official policy embraced multiculturalism. Firstly, the independence from
Great Britain and the manifestation of Canadian identity was at stake, and secondly, the relation to the much more populated neighbor, the U.S., was at stake. Despite amicable relations, many Canadians worried over the possible cultural hegemony that the populous American neighbor might exert upon Canada. Thus, embracing an official policy of multiculturalism was opposite the American “melting pot” ideology. “Multiculturalism,” Trudeau’s government believed, could serve as the ideological metaphor for the Canadian nation between emancipation from the British colonial past and the fear of Americanization (Légaré 1995: 349-50).

As for the Canadian First Nations, the inception of the Trudeau government seemed full of promise with initial consultations and dialogue, but the 1969 “White Paper” on future Indian policy eliminated native leadership’s trust in a bilateral dialogue with the federal government. The White Paper suggested an extinction of aboriginal title and identity, and to indigenous leaders, little had changed regarding Canadian Indian policy. After massive opposition from native organizations the Government withdrew the implementation of the policy. However, the loss of confidence was not restored. In an era of the New Left, political radicalism, and the influence of the Red Power movement from south of the border, politics found new expression and especially younger natives sought active confrontation with the government through demonstrations, blockades, and in 1990 the armed standoff with the government at Oka.

Within an international context of decolonization and a national context of increasing confrontation, the Canadian government at best lacked understanding for and priority to native affairs, or at worst continued an agenda of assimilation couched in humanitarian terms. In this political climate the National Indian Brotherhood, the predecessor to the Assembly of First Nations, issued the 1974 rapport on: “Indian Control over Indian Education” as one component leading towards self-government for aboriginal people.
Thus, from a national and international context, notions and strategies towards self-government by gaining increasing control over institutions such as education, health, and resource management became the heart of native politics at Alert Bay and beyond.

The Beginnings of the T'lisalagi'ilakw School

By the mid-1970s the government's intention of integrating natives into the provincial school system had been implemented for several years. A decade before, the integration was complete as the “Indian Day School” folded, and natives and non-natives attended elementary and secondary schooling in the same classroom. However, while integration was complete nominally, it was an abysmal failure in terms of educational attainment. 99% of the native students dropped out of school prior to completing secondary education.

At Alert Bay Elementary School the attendance of native students was acknowledged, and the school commenced a cultural program in the early 1970s with singing and dancing as a part of the curriculum. Nonetheless, a number of parents, band councilors, and other members of the native community were dissatisfied with the provincial school system in general, and the Alert Bay Elementary School in particular.

In 1976, less than two years after “St. Michael's” ceased operating, the very same buildings ironically provided space for an “Indian School” run by natives themselves. The school was named T'lisalagi'ilakw School, after the mink, a trickster figure in Kwakiutl mythology. Within Kwakiutl territory, band-administrated schools since started operating in Kingcome, Fort Rupert, and on the Tsaligwadi Reserve in Port Hardy.

The History of The School

The beginning of the “Indian school” was not uncontested within the native community. The entrepreneurs for the new school were all young.
politically active and, they stress, coincidentally closely related. Whereas adversaries stressed that the group were “radicals,” “Maoists,” “Marxists,” or otherwise influenced by the New Left, the core group still maintains that the group was neither politically homogenous, nor was the school ideologically motivated.

The core group active in the establishment of the school were: Gerry Larkin, Fah Ambers, George Speck Jr., Lawrence Ambers, Dara Culhane Speck, Gerry Ambers, Kelly Ann Speck, and Renee Taylor. Others in the periphery offered their support, competences, and advise to the project.

Years later, Euro-Canadian anthropologist and member of the 'Namgis First Nation through marriage, Dara Culhane, recollected the beginning of the school in the following way:

“When I was living on reserve in Alert Bay, the mother of two school-age children, I was part of the group of young political activists intensely involved in aboriginal land rights and the self-government movement. For us, schools represented the very core of the colonial relations of domination we sought to dismantle, and local control over education lay at the very heart of the new relations of autonomy we sought to construct. We gathered a sufficient number of our children together to qualify for funds to hire one teacher; took over two dormitory rooms in the old St. Michael’s Residential School that had just been closed down; scrounged used furniture and supplies; held “name the school” contests; and T’lis’alagi’lakw School was born. T’lis’alagi’lakw School opened under the direction of a community-based Board of Directors consisting of members of the Nimpkish Band Council, parents, and Elders in the local Kwakwaka’wakw community. Community members volunteered to teach Kwak’wala language, culture, art, history and sea harvesting and “Indian food” preparation techniques. Other people shared their skills by teaching photography,
politics, legal rights, sailing and women's self-defence.”
(Culhane n.d.: 8)

To some of the established political leaders in the native community, the notion of an Indian School seemed contrary to the goals they had sought to achieve for several decades: integrated schooling rather than racially segregated schooling. The erection of a new Indian school indicated a voluntary re-segregation of native students. Others, more eloquently, dismissed the school as being a school “for dummies,” because some of the first students of the new school were maladjusted to the provincial school system.

Formally, the school was under Band Council control from the outset, but it seems that the Board of Education were operating somewhat independently from Band Council policy. For the first five years the Board controlled the school, and gradually the student population rose.

Following the rise of the student population the school was gradually relocated to a web of portables adjacent to the old residential school. As the T'lisalagi'lakw School gradually became solidified as an educational institution, the majority of the core group left the community to pursue higher education in the urban centers. By 1980 the Principal, Lawrence Ambers, was the only one remaining at Alert Bay.

In the 1980s the school gradually became established, and consensus part of the Band Council’s policy. The school’s enrolment further increased, and today the school has more than 120 students from nursery and kindergarten through grade 1-10. The increasing Band Council control over the school also led to increasing funding, legitimacy, and professionalization of the school. Not only has the Board of Education become an elected body with terms of reference to the council, a councilor is also represented on the Board.
With the recognition of the T’lisalagi’lakw School as an important part of the process towards self-government, the ‘Namgis facilitated a educational program in cooperation with Simon Fraser University for about a dozen young adults, who received a university degree and teachers’ certificate after an educational process which took place partially in Alert Bay and partially on campus in Burnaby, British Columbia. Since they graduated, the T’lisalagi’lakw School has, permanently or intermittently, employed the majority of the teachers\textsuperscript{122}. Today, the school provides the educational setting for the majority of the native children at Alert Bay.

**Institutionalizing Politics of Education**

Asking what the ideal community is elusive and seldom provides coherent answers. Nonetheless, the notion of “the good community” is continually shaped in individual narratives about the past, about tradition, and about the conduct of “the old people.”\textsuperscript{123} In the Foucaultian sense, this is a mental space, utopia, which is an abstraction of real society. In contemporary discourse, the historical past is constructed as a utopia. While the past, present, and future goals are hotly contested, a discourse about the common “good” defines the discussion. In public discourse, the divide between “traditionalists” and “modernists” persists, although the identification with such positions differs.

\textsuperscript{122} While this move facilitated education, job opportunity, and income for the graduates as they were employed at the T’lisalagi’lakw School, the supervision and mentorship from a majority of experienced teachers was lost. The school has gone through a process where a number of teachers had to learn the practical reality of being an educator at the same time.

\textsuperscript{123} Contrary to Western discourse, “old people” is not a derogatory categorization alluding a defunct, useless, and outdated being. The “old people” is a category, sometimes inappropriately translated as “elders,” deriving from the Kwak’wala rendering ni’nogad (Eng.: “the-knowledgeable-ones”/ “those-wise-in-their-ways”). Several informants confirm that “nogad” and “noxsqala” were overlapping categories insofar as only nobility had access to the forms of knowledge in question. Today, the category seems to be based on age rather than the kind of knowledge that the person purports.
As a utopia, most people conceive of pre-contact society as ordered, where individuals acted according to rank, people were respectful and loyal to their families, and lived in harmony with nature. They lived healthy lives, with longevity and harmonious relations. This conception of traditional lives is extrapolated into the present. A uniquely native identity is defined in the schism between traditional practices in a late modern context. In this utopia, self-government is implemented in a well-educated community with various employment opportunities, a flourishing culture expressed in artwork, participation in ceremonial life, and interaction in Kwak'wala. Lives lived by social beings in healthy bodies that unproblematically pursue and interchange between life in native and Euro-Canadian society.

In 1994, the 'Namgis First Nation secured funding for the erection of a new school. The intention of building an appropriate physical structure for the school existed from the outset, but it was delayed for several years because of changing policies on the scale of the school, such as how many grades it were to include. Once the Band Council agreed on the size, they also managed to secure funding from the Department of Indian Affairs. Additional support for the building was secured through logging companies that sponsored the massive cedar logs used for the school. According to Lawrence Ambers, the former Principal and now Band Manager, the community wanted a building that reflected the native identity, culture, and history of the 'Namgis and provided a positive environment for learning. They wanted a unique looking structure. Thus, the native community organized a project team which was closely involved in designing the school in collaboration with an architectural company. The team met on the average of once per month.

As illustrated by Foucault's notion of space, the heterotopia is a laboratory for the ordering of the social, an enactment of utopia. In this sense, the T'lisalagi'lakw School is not different from the residential school as it provides a setting for the inculcation of certain practices, knowledge, and
self-understanding deemed desirable by the agents who constructed the heterotopia.

**T’lisalagi’lakw School as Heterotopian Space**

Physical space is at once functional, social, and symbolic. Insofar as space is functional, it is designed and designated to certain activities: classrooms, offices, gymnasium, kitchen, and washrooms are all functional, and yet they are also social and political insofar as space is subject to restrictions in access, behavior, and expectations which are tacitly inscribed in the space. Symbols indicate access and social differentiation and denote expectations of behavior.

One is left in no doubt that the school is native. While looking from the outside, the Thunderbird adorning the roof over the entrance is distinctly Northwest Coast artwork as is the large wooden plaque of a killer whale on the siding of the school. The huge cedar cross beams metaphorically allude to the Big House, where Kwakiutl rituals and ceremonies take place. One enters sacred space. The following excerpt is a field note description of parts of the T’lisalagi’lakw School.

“The impression of the T-School, when one enters, is almost “cathedral-like.” There is a long hallway with massive cedar cross beams all the way down. The hallway is about 60-70 meters long. The lowest point to the ceiling is approx. 8 meters as the hallway is slightly declining. The highest point to the ceiling is 10-11 meters. The end wall (at the far end of the entrance) has been constructed with a glass door and two large windows. Both windows are five-edged and provide much light to the hallway. The hallway is three meters wide and is somewhat narrow. These dimensions give the “cathedral” like height to the building … Windows running parallel with the ceiling enhance the light effect, which ensures that the hall is very light (contrary to ordinary dim hallways). The hallway is the spatial backbone of the school. Here, the students from the different grades meet and interact and the kids also have to pass through the hallway to go to their classrooms. The classrooms are distributed on both sides of the
hallway. The social distribution of the classes is structured in a way that the oldest grades are placed at the far end of the school. It is not only in the hallway that light is an "ominous" theme. All classrooms have glass doors and small, rectangular windows where you monitor what is going on in the class rooms… All classrooms are named after the various bands of the Kwakwaka'wakw. Bathrooms are named in Kwak'wala names for men and women: “Bibagwanam” and “Tsi’dak." The dance/song room is centrally placed where the hallway narrows and visible when one enters the school. It is central and very transparent. The whole side facing the hall is made of glass framed with cedar. All day one hears the drumbeat and voices emanating from the room. The song/dance room is called 'Nawalag'watsi, which can be translated as “house/place of the supernatural powers”… The room itself has a high ceiling. The ceiling is at a slope and, I guess, about 8 meters at the highest point. Inside the room stands the characteristic red cedar frame of the Gukwdzi (Big House). In the Gukwdzi they have a central constructional function. Here it is purely symbolic. It has got no constructional function whatsoever. Nevertheless they give a unmistakable feeling of being inside a Big House…” (Excerpt from Steffen Bohni Nielsen field notes, 1998/06/09, translated from the Danish)

Native identity is thoroughly inscribed in the space. The very physical structure creates a connotation of the positive relation between culture and school. Schooling is a way of acquiring one’s culture and history and attaining formal Euro-Canadian education at the same time. It is a space of creation of the future ‘Namgis person.

All offices, classrooms and otherwise are marked by Kwak'wala names (most of the existing Kwakwaka'wakw nations), which are – on the one hand instructional for Kwak'wala immersion which has been a defined goal of the school since the mid-1990s – on the other thoroughly symbolical.

124 Several architectural prizes have been awarded to the T'lisalagi'lakw School for its unique architecture.
and political as pertaining to a definition of the self as a Kwak’wala speaker, and the other as a non-Kwak’wala speaker.

Nowhere is the connotation more apparent than the dance/song room: ‘Nawalagwatsi – The house/place-of-supernatural-powers. The very name, the most sacred power in the universe, connotes the sacredness of the space. It is a sacred place, a symbolic space of learning and connecting to the ancestral spirits that transcend time. The architecture of the room symbolically reiterates the connection. Inside, the frame of large cedar beams are analogical to those of the Big House. It is a physical space which in return, with the habitation of modern houses, has become an outmoded space for profane living. Now its function is purely sacrelized, as it is entirely a space for cultural celebration and ceremonial events. The Big House per se has become a powerful symbol for the sacredness of the Kwakiutl culture.

Indigenizing the Body

Whilst Goffman’s total institution depended on a spatial separation and a temporal isolation of the persons subjected to institutional powers, the school seeks an active dialogue between parents and teachers. As opposed to the era when education was an assimilatory tool for the government, the school encourages parents to visit the students and school and actively participate in the learning of the child – whether the cultural program or the standard curriculum.

The federal government does not financially support the cultural program of the T’lislagi’lakw School. The funding for the program is a priority that the ‘Namgis Band Council makes, and it is under constant scrutiny because of the lack of means. However, it also means that the band has autonomy over the outcomes of the program. Most leaders of the community pride themselves on the resurgence of “culture,” and attribute the skills of the younger generation to their training in the school. Each year the school hosts a “cultural celebration” in which the students perform.
dances and songs rehearsed in the cultural program. The event also functions as a fundraiser for the program.

The teaching of specific bodily practices and knowledge is instituted from nursery class, when the children start attending dance and song classes. By the time students graduate from the school, they are expected to know more than 70 songs and mastering about 40. Many students are also accomplished dancers. Children take pride in performing, and every day 10-25% of the children wore t-shirts from potlatches or from the T'lisalagi’lakw School with slogans like “Alert Bay – Village of Culture” or “Pride in our Culture.” The mobilization of the concept of “culture” as a metonym for ideal community is common today and literally embodied by the students at the school.

Today, the students’ curriculum of learning is as much a “feeder” to participation in the potlatch as was the marriage in the old days. Therefore, the teachers seek to instill the etiquette expected in the Big House in the children. This is evident from the discourse of reprimands to children that “fool around” in the class. They are told that they cannot behave like that in the Big House. Interviews with former and present teachers, K’odi Nelson, Sandy Willie, and William Wasden Jr., shed light upon the dialogue, expectations, and aims of the program.

Steffen Bohni  
“I guess, mostly when you were teaching, uhm, the T-School was still down in the old trailers, eh?”

William Wasden Jr.  
“Yeah, I was working out of the [U’mista] museum.”

Steffen Bohni  
“So, the museum is pretty much built like an old style Big House. Did you demand the same kind of etiquette and protocol of the kids as if it were a Big House setting, or potlatch setting?”

William Wasden Jr.  
“Yeah, when I used to teach, I was very strict about trying to get back to the old ways where you enter into the dance floor on one side and you leave on the other. And then, when I used to sit in the U’mista I would sit here and the
kids would line up here, up on the structure, and when it was time to dance they would come out and finish their dance here... Anybody that horsed around with the class, I took that very seriously, and I was very strict.

Uhm, I tried to teach those kids as much I could about the protocol, and I practice it, when I go into the Big House I will sit in a seat like everybody else until I am called by the host to go and sing that's just proper...you know, that's protocol, that's the way I was taught so I try to teach the kids that, you know, you don’t jump up, unless you’re real Hamat’sa, when you’re at a potlatch. You know, trying to teach them the rules…

Me and Sandy [Willie] used to work together and used to be really strict and teach the kids to use the washroom when the dance is over or during breaks, not when people are on the floor or during... when people are making speeches. We were always trying to teach them the rules, even to the point, you know, where you walk around the fire. Even when your seat was, you know, the bathroom, like your seat was here, you would have to go all the way around to go there. You had to go back to your seat and there was like, a sacred flow, that you have to follow. Right down to where the girls had to wear dresses…"

The expectations are not entirely similar to those of the dance teacher that succeeded him:

Steffen Bohni “That brings me onto the topic of etiquette and respect within the [dance] class here. Uhm, could you tell me a little bit about the etiquette that you demand from your kids when they are in here? I am thinking, for instance, in terms of walking to the wash room, or eating or yelling and talking or so on.”

... Sandy Willie “Well one of the things that we do teach them ... is to emulate the behavior that we want them to in the Big House setting, so the behavior that we want there is the behavior we want here because of the respect there is.”

Steffen Bohni “So you’re saying that the [educational] structure of the room here is basically, I mean, you could say, a model of
the [behavior] inside of the Big House with the beams.”

K’odi Nelson: “I’m sure that just the basics like no talking...Those rules apply no matter whether you’re sitting in the Gymnasium or the Big House. It’s just simple courtesy skills that we learn at a young [age], and that’s what we try to instill in some of them.”

The cultural program acts as a social space where bodily conduct is taught, practiced, and learned by the students. This not only pertains to dancing and singing. Traditional skills such as cedar bark weaving, button blanket making, and drawing native designs also take place at the school.

**Heterotopian Time**

Today, little over 200 Kwak’wala speakers remain, and they are all 50 years or older. Despite Kwak’wala teaching programs, manuals, and tapes, the interventions failed to produce one fluent speaker. The stated goal of the school is to implement a Kwak’wala immersion policy at the school as a final attempt to revive the language. The implementation is slow. First of all a curriculum must be developed, and secondly, the teachers must become fluent Kwak’wala speakers as well. In 1998 only the nursery class was fully immersed. Kindergarten was partially immersed, and the remaining grades all received two hours of Kwak’wala instruction during the week.

Complementing the cultural program, the school offers an academic program that includes compulsory subjects according to the Ministry of Education of B.C. standards. The two are not integrated in the sense that aboriginal knowledge and themes dominate the content of the academic training. However, several assignments relate to local events and cultural symbols. In pedagogic terms the school preferred a structural approach to an integrated approach in the learning of “culture.” This was not always the case, as the school earlier sought to integrate cultural themes and practices with the academic training. Ironically, an integrated approach is being propagated by the Provincial School District which has paid
particular attention to developing a curriculum with native content in the 1990s. The temporal duration of the daily life in the school was structured by lessons, dividing the day into segments designed for lessons — academic, physical, or musical. No bell marked the regimentation of time. An example of this regimentation of time is the weekly itinerary for grade 6-7 in the T'lisalagi'lakw School in the 1997-1998 school year. Figure 11.1 illustrates the structural division between academics subjects, Kwak’wala, dancing and singing, and physical education. The shift in subject was further illustrated by the shift in teaching personnel for the different subject. One teacher was responsible for the academic subjects, while others were responsible for the cultural subjects. For the 30 hours per week school lasted, 23 ¾ hours were spent on teaching. The remainder was a quarter of an hour recess time before noon, and a whole hour at noon where the children would go home to eat. For grade 6-7, 3 hours per week are devoted to various parts of the cultural program: Kwak’wala and dance/song. That is, 13% of time spent learning in school was devoted to the learning of “culture.”

Figure 11.1 Grade 6-7 Weekly Schedule, school year 1997-1998

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>09:00-9:30</td>
<td>Academics</td>
<td>Academics</td>
<td>Kwak’wala</td>
<td>Academics</td>
<td>Kwak’wala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09:30-10:00</td>
<td>Academics</td>
<td>Academics</td>
<td>Kwak’wala</td>
<td>Academics</td>
<td>Kwak’wala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00-10:30</td>
<td>Academics</td>
<td>Academics</td>
<td>Academics</td>
<td>Academics</td>
<td>Academics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30-10:45</td>
<td>Recess</td>
<td>Recess</td>
<td>Recess</td>
<td>Recess</td>
<td>Recess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:45-11:30</td>
<td>Dance/song</td>
<td>Academics</td>
<td>Dance/song</td>
<td>Academics</td>
<td>Academics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30-12:00</td>
<td>Academics</td>
<td>Academics</td>
<td>Academics</td>
<td>Academics</td>
<td>Academics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00-13:00</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:00-13:30</td>
<td>Academics</td>
<td>Academics</td>
<td>Academics</td>
<td>Academics</td>
<td>Academics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:30-14:00</td>
<td>Academics</td>
<td>Academics</td>
<td>Academics</td>
<td>Academics</td>
<td>Academics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:00-14:30</td>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td>Academics</td>
<td>Academics</td>
<td>Academics</td>
<td>Physical Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:30-15:00</td>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td>Academics</td>
<td>Academics</td>
<td>Academics</td>
<td>Physical Education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

125 3 hours divided by 23 ¾ x 100 = 12.63%.
Education and Self-government

In a political context of land claims and negotiating self-government, the ‘Namgis Band Council and administration are well aware of the pending irony of having to employ Euro-Canadians to administer the increased governance, which may become the result of the treaty negotiation process. While education in the short run is beneficial for the employment opportunities for the individual, it is also part of a long run strategy of training members of the nation to become active participants in the administrative, political, and economic future of the ‘Namgis First Nation. In this sense, education is a political means in negotiating ‘Namgis governance externally as well as internally. Still, the native and non-native communities encounter a number of challenges in the years to come.

In the context of the Department of Indian Affairs increasingly becoming a funding agency rather than implementing its policies, increasing political, economic, and social responsibilities are delegated to the First Nations’ Band Councils. ‘Namgis is no exception. Having fought for gaining control over health care and education, several windows of opportunities have been created by the administration to appropriate this new situation for generating new kinds of employment, political authority, and socio-cultural reproduction. This process of re-claiming political self-government is being expanded on institutional pillars such as the Health Center, an Elders’ center, economic entrepreneurship, and education. With the dismantling of the fisheries on the Pacific Northwest Coast, which has provided the most important source of income for many in the community, the need to re-train many former native fishermen arises.

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126 In the 1970s the Band Council sought to implement an integrated development plan, “the NIDA plan,” which included running a small shipyard, a salmon enhancement project, a lounge and a cafeteria. Today, only the salmon enhancement project, which includes a hatchery, remains.
Hitherto, it was predominantly women who found employment as administrators and clerks, whereas most men found employment in the fisheries, logging industry, or other vocational work. With the crisis in the industries, a new division line in the community has been created over the competition for scarce steady employment. The gendered division of labor seems to be changing.

Following decades of impaired native health, the T’lisalagí’lakw School faces a high percentage of special needs to children in the school, which calls for special resources and funding difficult to secure in a remote community. Still, far fewer Kwakiutl adolescents graduate from secondary education than their non-native peers. The band has entered a formal dialogue with the Provincial School District to prevent the trend from continuing.

In the previous three decades, the Band Council and its administration have increasingly reclaimed the power to administer their own affairs – albeit under the dictation of government policies. This process granted increasing power to a political body which, ironically, was instituted by the federal government itself. The authority of the Band is negotiated in several complex practices which I will turn my attention to below.

**Contesting Authorities**

Since 1957, the Band Council has been the political representative of the “band,” or First Nation as defined by the Department of Indian Affairs. Members of the band council are elected representatives of the people. As a result of increasing native demands to govern their own affairs, local political authority, under the auspices of the Department of Indian Affairs, has been passed on to the Band Council. While the colonial encounter deprived the ‘Namgis people of its political autonomy, it was to a limited extent handed back. However, the political authority did not come back to the hereditary chiefs, but to democratically elected councilors. Thus, the impact of colonialism was a shift from the heads of the numayms as the
core political unit to becoming the elected Band Council. Although there are several examples of hereditary chiefs who act(ed) as Band Councilors or Chief Councilors, and voting patterns follow family allegiances, it was a new form of government which was partially appropriated by the ‘Namgis leaders.

Coexisting with Council politics is another realm, a ritual realm, sometimes intertwining with Council politics\textsuperscript{127}. By ritual realm, I define active participation in potlatching and perpetuation of the complex of knowledge and practices that comprise such events. In this realm, ritual authority is still in the possession of the numaym, not the Band Council. In the present day, several numayms, or “families” as they are referred to in public discourse, actively participate in potlatching. Several do so under the complex situation that they are ‘Namgis First Nation band members, yet their ceremonial privileges and titles stem from another social group. The reason may be that (i) the person or his parents resided in Alert Bay, and their membership was transferred to the ‘Namgis as a result of the place of residence or (ii) that the person received his privileges from a relative from one of the other social groups. As explained in chapter 5, the numaym was the politico-religious unit in the pre-colonial period which straddled both realms. Today the realms are formally, temporally, and spatially divided. The Band Council is an elected political body, and it holds Council meetings in the new building of the band administration, where the council chamber is structured like a Big House within the building\textsuperscript{128}. Meanwhile, ceremonial privileges are still passed on in the Big House.

\textsuperscript{127} An example is the Winalagalis Treaty Society consisting of six different Kwak'utl First Nations: The Fort Rupert Kwakiutl, ‘Namgis, Tlatlasikwala, Da’naxda’xw, Gwasala/Nakwaxda’xw and Quatsino/Gusgimaxw. At meetings, I was informed, two treaty coordinators represent each band, and protocol is respected in the order of speaking amongst the bands.

\textsuperscript{128} The Band Manager explained to me that they deliberately wanted the room to exude power and gain an advantage in negotiations with the government.
Participation in the realms entails the acquisition of the competences needed to operate successfully in various social realms. Before the arrival of colonial agents, the community of practice and the settings of learning were overlapping insofar as relatives took part in the training and education of the child. In Meadian terms of the social self, the different social roles, or Me’s, complemented each other. However, the learning of specific practices and knowledge was guarded and stratified insofar as only people of nobility had access to certain knowledge and the right to perform certain ritual and economic practices.

**Schooling between Political and Ritual Authority**

By the advent of a new political order, i.e. the integration into late-modern Canadian society, the emphasis on schooling as a form of education steadily increased among the Kwakiutl and beyond. Increasingly, higher education has become a necessary means to achieve administrative and executive positions. In this process the school is the central setting of learning.

With the institution of the cultural program at the T'lisalagilakw School, it has increasingly become the setting for learning some of the embodied competences needed for participation in the ritual realm as well. Arguably, the community of practice within which the child learns is increasingly within the school setting rather than within the numaym.

However, there is a disparity in the logic of acquisition of status in the two realms. While political authority is based on achievement and, ultimately, democratic election, ritual authority is based on, at least ideologically, ascription through birth and to some extent achievement through the maintenance and validation of the person’s title. The former is, at least as an abstraction, attainable to all members of the ‘Namgis First Nation based on democratic access to knowledge. The latter is restricted to birth, rank, and gated knowledge. In other words, we are dealing with two
different curriculums for teaching. One is based on democracy and equal access to knowledge and status. The other is based on stratification and restricted access to knowledge and status.

The cultural program at the T'lisalagi’lakw School operates within two different notions of learning. Above, I suggested that the school is gradually encroaching on the numaym as the community of practice within which children learn the embodied competences needed for social action in the ritual realm.

**Negotiating Ownership**

One example of the negotiation of a teaching curriculum and its intrinsic relations to positions of power is the content of the song and dance classes. The first teacher of the dance and song program was Jack Peters. Albeit not a trained teacher, he insisted on teaching the children traditional dances and songs as a way of counteracting the declining knowledge of these competences among the younger generations in the 1970s. He encountered adversity from a number of hereditary chiefs, who did not want him to teach their songs to all children. Jack Peters’ solution was innovative. He composed a Hamat’sa song himself that he could use for teaching the children the basic movements of the dance. Arguably, this solution did not gain acceptance in all corners. However, today Jack Peters’ contribution is hailed for his foresight and his agency in securing the perpetuation of dances and songs.

Another solution practiced today is a mediation of the gated and democratic access to ritual knowledge. Here, the dance and song teachers seek permission to use songs and dances owned by specific families. While rehearsing songs they emphasize to the children, which family the song belongs to. The interview excerpts below enunciate the considerations and protocol put into selecting songs and dances that acknowledge as many of the students as possible.

Steffen Bohni  
"The dances that you were teaching the kids, how did that
go, did the families come with a message to you, that now you can use these dances...."

William Wasden Jr.  “Well, first I looked at the children and I picked the songs from there. I know what good songs are. Some are mediocre some are great booming songs. Then I chose them and before I started teaching them, I went to the families and asked them for permission. Not to be touting my own horn or anything, but I have a good, reputation or whatever you call it, good etiquette with elders and the respectful families are still in potlatching. I knew I could get permission. But I wanted to go through the proper channels and the protocol, I guess, to go ask for them and it was easy for me to get.”

Steffen Bohni  “Was there a written statement or anything?”

William Wasden Jr.  “Verbal, verbal is as good as anything around here. And then we’d have a cultural celebration and I would stand these families up and thank them for being so generous and share these (songs) with the kids. I would stand in front of the singers and the kids would be dancing to it and I would be thanking them publicly for allowing their sacred songs to be shared with the children. The good, the great elders I know, they who are good, loving and caring people, their attitude is; if you teach it to a hundred kids it will live forever, but if you’re stingy, you know, stingy with your songs and don’t want them sung they are just gonna fade like everything else.”

A similar opinion and practice was followed by his successors at the T’lisalagilakw School:

Steffen Bohni  “So, the dances you’re teaching, do they come from a variety of different tribes or do they all belong to the different families of the ‘Namgis people?”

K’odi Nelson  “Um, a lot of the songs that we do belong to the ‘Namgis people and their families and the kids learn to which family each song belongs to, but we don’t just sing ‘Namgis songs here, because we have, eh, a large variety of all our tribes, Kwak’wala speaking people. So we try to teach a wide variety of stuff. Ah, a wide variety of songs and
dances from different areas, but in order to do that we must have the family’s permission.”

Steffen Bohni  “When you hear a wicked song, let’s say from the Tlakima or somewhere else you would be approaching the family and ask them for permission to use that specific dance or teach that specific dance to the children in the T-school.”

…

K’odi Nelson  “You don’t just hear a song and say: well I’m gonna learn that and teach the kids on Monday. There is a process that goes along with it, you do your research, you talk to the family that may own it and see how their feeling is about us teaching that song in the school. Explain to them that the kids are learning that it belongs to your family, they will learn, we teach them, how your family obtained it. And that’s the process you take (before?) we take it to the kids. But to just go to do that for your own... I wouldn’t do that, no. So there is a process that goes along with it.”

Thus, in a complex negotiation of identity, different First Nations, different numayms, and different individuals need to be acknowledged while reiterating for the children that the dances and songs they are rehearsing cannot be transferred from the social space of the school to that of the Big House. What they share as culture is not shared outside the school.

Mobilizing “Culture”

It is evident that the limited social accessibility to signifiers such as the private “treasure box” of dances and songs belonging to one single numaym presents a problem for popular symbolic signification. Social accessibility is contextually dependent insofar as cultural performances at the school and to some extent for tourists are allowed. However, performing dances and songs without the permission of the privileged may evoke serious conflicts.

Thus, symbols that are socially accessible become much more significant in the public realm. One example of such public symbols that are equally accessible is the canoe journeys. Canoe journeys in cedar dugouts or fiberglass re-makes have gained considerable notoriety in native 328
communities all along the Northwest Coast in recent years (Harkin 1997b). Alert Bay is no exception. The community has participated in every major pan-tribal canoe journey for more than a decade. In 1998, youths from several Kwakiutl communities, and one ethnographer, yours truly, ventured on a 14 day canoe journey to visit several of the abandoned Kwakiutl settlements in the Johnstone Strait. The community owned canoe, “Galuda,” has become a rallying symbol for the mobilization of culture across numaym boundaries and political affiliations. The importance of the canoe as a powerful public symbol is further enhanced by the Band Council’s 2002 invitation to a pan-tribal canoe journey with Alert Bay as the final destination.

A second example is the “cultural celebrations” at the T’lisalagi’lakw School, which exemplifies the decontextualization of symbols. Each year, the classes of the school perform songs and dances learned in the cultural program. The event is well-attended, as 200 or more individuals attend. The Cultural Celebration also acts as a fundraiser and occasion for awarding particularly apt pupils for their interest in “culture.” The form of the occasion is innovative, while the content of dance and song performances is recontextualized from the ritual realm of the Big House to the school. While the performances evoke a sense of “tradition,” the event is non-traditional enough in publicity and accessibility to crosscut the ubiquitous ownership of the dances and songs. However, this is only to the extent that the owners are publicly acknowledged and hailed for their collaboration.

Such events are further emphasized by other symbols used to commemorate the event. Each year, new T-shirts are produced and sold that mobilize the concept of culture such as: “Alert Bay – Island of Culture” or “T’lisalagi’lakw School – Pride in our Culture.” While embracing and reifying the concept of culture as a political strategy evokes a sense of

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129 See Andrew Frank Everson’s analysis of the Comox First Nations’ use of the I-hos canoe for similar symbolic purposes (Everson n.d.: 31-34).
irony for the Boasian ethnography introducing the concept on the Northwest Coast in the first place, it is also a publicly and accessible symbol for all ‘Namgis and Kwakiutl people, which provides it with a unifying character. It is not exclusive and gated like the treasures owned by particular numayms in the ritual realm. It gains the “authenticity” as proposed by Michael Harkin, in the sense “that [it] move[s] people affectively (and move[s] them to action).” (1997b: 98)

A third example, however, points to the control over such representations. In Alert Bay, frequent positioning takes place between the rival families or individuals in regard to public representations in museum displays, movies, books, and public statements in a variety of social settings. Mostly, such positioning takes the form of public or semi-public statements that are not explicitly directed at any person or persons. However, the direction of the statement is clear to any community-insider.

This general character of social conflict is also reiterated in the representations of symbols and their ritual framing. Not all agree that the U’mista Cultural Center’s emphasis on the 1921 potlatch at Village Island is an appropriate way to interpret and represent Kwakiutl culture (Saunders 1995: 51). One suspects that the Band Council, in order to successfully negotiate symbols and representations, must focus on ways of framing symbols which are divested of internal political struggles and unifying towards external political agents such as the provincial and federal government. So far, the cultural celebrations at the T’ilisalagi’ilakw School have developed into one such powerful symbol.

130 An example may be the legend of Gwa’ni’ilalis the founding ancestor of the ‘Namgis people. Although owned by a particular family it is unifying in recounting the fellow origin of the ‘Namgis, which makes it a powerful political expression in internal and external political relations.
Conclusion

In this chapter I analyzed contemporary politics of education while exploring the establishment of the T'lisalagi'lakw School at Alert Bay. I view this as an institutional attempt to realign the power to define education and the balance of the politics of identity. This found a powerful expression in the T'lisalagi'lakw School as an institutionalized form of education in general, and its Cultural Program in particular. The program negotiated meanings in a complex interrelationship between the separated political and ritual realms. Learning is thus inscribed in complex relations of power that negotiate meaning and representations on several different levels; internally, this is negotiated between powerful social agents or between different numayms and at times even between the different Kwakiutl First Nations. Externally, these representations are negotiated with the provincial and federal government in the context of self-government and land claims. In the process of reclaiming education as an instrument in the politics of identity, there is an ironic reversal; following forced “Canadianization” of the indigenous through institutional means, there is now a process of “indigenization” of the Canadian through the reappropriation of educational institutions originally brought about for the colonization of the very same people.

As a distinct language, Kwak'wala is almost extinct, the production of a unique material culture such as artwork is not subject to societal control, and forms of subsistence have but entirely been replaced by grocery shopping. As I suggested in this chapter and elaborate in the next chapter, ritual knowledge and practice remain fairly intact, but the means of learning these competences are gradually changing. I showed that the content of the “Cultural Program” was not unproblematic. From the outset, the notion of teaching sacred and restricted knowledge and practices to children who had no access to such symbolic property was problematic. As the school negotiated a mediation of this structural tension, schooling gradually seems to be taking over some of the curriculum of teaching previously confined to the numaym as a community of learning. To
appropriate structural tension between restricted ownership of “culture” and popular rallying around “culture” as talismanic for native identity, the band needs symbolic events that are ritually framed as such, but are publicly accessible such as the canoe journeys, cultural celebrations, and, as I will show in the next chapter, soccer.
Chapter 12. Potlatch and Soccer: Negotiating Identities

This chapter expands upon the preceding chapter insofar as it explores the negotiations of meaning, modifications of institutions, and their relations to the politics of identity. Finally, the chapter exemplifies the complexity of identity, sources of social power, and their relations to personhood. The latter problem will be further elaborated in the next chapter.

Instead of the school as a European institution, this chapter firstly explores the vagaries of an indigenous institution, the “potlatch,” and secondly, an institution which has been re-appropriated by the Kwakiutl, namely soccer. In contemporary Alert Bay, the soccer tournament, “June Sports,” and potlatches are among the events that attract the most popular attention. Both the potlatch and soccer are arenas, where (i) negotiations of identities – externally and internally — take place among the Kwakiutl. As social events, they are multiple-layered signifiers. Soccer and potlatch are connected arenas (ii) where significant personal and collective identities are negotiated and prestige can be attained. (iii) Both practices are marked as events that draw temporary conclusiveness, or closure, to dialogues of identity. The potlatch does so in the form of validation and affirmation of the chief’s achievements and rank. Soccer does the same through the competition, where the winning team entitles itself to the trophy. Below, I will argue that both institutions are construed and interpreted within a logical framework which is at the same time socially integrating and socially differentiating.

However, the social institutions are different in their units of identification. While the extended family, headed by a hereditary chief, continues to give potlatches, soccer is different. Team membership and support is based on band allegiance. That is, a player with parents from i.e. Guildford Island...
and Alert Bay may opt to play for either one of the two teams. Therefore, identification with and the organization of teams follow First Nations boundaries rather than extended family boundaries. Thus, different identities are contested and negotiated within these institutions. However, the institutions offer identity schemes at different levels that are inherent in contemporary Kwakiutl social order and negotiate specific social identities: the extended family and the First Nation. In this sense, these social identities are bound up with contemporary Kwakiutl notions of the person.

**Legitimate Peripheral Participation**

The social actors that are participating on the soccer field and in the potlatch at a fixed point in time differ. Nonetheless, it would be wrong to conclude that the two practices are not related. Rather, one must focus on the social careers of persons and varying ways of participating. In the course of the individual’s social career, he or she may participate in these institutionalized practices in various ways. In this chapter I approach the two institutions from the concept of legitimate peripheral participation as proposed by Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger (1991).131

During their social careers, a large percentage of natives in Alert Bay and adjacent Kwakiutl communities play, or have played, or otherwise participated in soccer. From a young age, boys and girls kick the soccer ball and join the fledgling youth teams. As they get older, they may join one of the adult teams or retire from playing. They may remain active as spectators, coaches, helpers, and organizers for the soccer teams or the June Sports Tournament, which has taken place in Alert Bay for more than 40 years. The final of June Sports attracts most of the native community at Alert Bay and several hundreds of other natives from adjacent native communities and urban areas, who come to play, watch,

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131 Harry Wolcott must be credited for being the first to analyze the potlatch by applying the concept of legitimate peripheral participation (Wolcott 1996).
visit relatives, or “party.” Soccer is undisputedly one of the most important cultural phenomena of contemporary Kwakiutl society.

Similarly, participation in potlatching also provides varying ways of participation. From an early age, children are brought along to potlatches, and some even become initiated as dancers before they turn 10 years old. For some teenagers, the potlatch provides a convenient social backdrop for meeting friends, relatives, or sweethearts. Others still become intensely involved as witnesses, dancers, singers, speakers, or organizers of the event. A few become the holders of potlatches.

Both institutions provide a social setting of increasing participation in communities of practice, where different competences and identities are practiced, negotiated, and learned. Both events provide defining social situations for a curriculum of learning for contemporary Kwakiutl children. Continuous practice and embodiment of the competences needed culminate in these events where other social actors monitor and evaluate the skills of the social actors as they perform in the events.

While the social cohesion for participation is not forced, participation in both practices is alluring through the attention and status associated with soccer and “culture” in public discourse. Participation is thus an effective means for personal and collective valorization in the community.

Valorization in soccer is symbolically displayed in the emphasis on the soccer “stars” who, by the end of the tournament, receive trophies as Most Valuable Player, Most Valuable Defender, and a host of other awards for the individual as well as collective achievements. A number of the trophies are native designed artwork, while others are sizeable trophies. I observed several natives refer to contemporary soccer players as “our warriors” and the June Sports Tournament as “our World Cup.”

132 In June 1998 the FIFA World Cup was held in France, and as metaphor it was analogous to the June Sports tournament held at the same time.
relatively gated insofar as legitimate participation is dependent on different aspects of Kwakiutl identity\(^\text{133}\). Both events symbolize, negotiate, and constitute Kwakiutl identities along tribal and extended family belonging.

**Negotiating Tradition**

While contemporary potlatching is the ultimate institutional framework for the continuity of Kwakiutl tradition, soccer stretches native rhetoric and “tradition” to its limits. To conceive of these different practices, we need to conceive a theoretical framework that grasps the various notions of tradition without collapsing into notions of “invention” that ultimately refer back to a preconception of cultures as being bounded and immutable or invented (Mauzé 1997a: 1). This framework must enable us to understand the symbolic and political significance of new forms and content, or even new institutions, invoked as “traditional” as sociological phenomena without dismissing these institutions as “invented” with its incumbent politico-theoretical presuppositions of what “culture” is.

As proposed in chapter 11, the approach forwarded by Michael Harkin is a suggestive one. He suggests that “traditions” may be (i) authentic insofar as they affectively move people and inspire them to action. As opposed to notions of “invented” or “artificial,” this conceptual approach is truly pragmatic. Circumscribed this means that what is believed to be traditional becomes traditional in its consequences. (ii) A limited number of symbols can be selected and framed or reframed to achieve these effects. This kind of symbolic action is always political (Harkin 1997b: 98)\(^\text{134}\). In this

\(^{133}\) The negotiation of identity and legitimate participation is not unambiguous. Different degrees of “otherness” exist: rank, participation, native from non-Kwakiutl First Nation, or Euro-Canadian. Nonetheless, long serving friendships are honored, and ethnographers Peter MacNair and Bill Holm have both been bestowed titles by Fort Rupert Kwakiutl numayms. Similarly, native soccer is for individuals of native descent, but “others” also exceptionally participate such as I did in one tournament.

\(^{134}\) Aaron Glass investigated the “Intention of Tradition” of the contemporary Hamat’sa dance among the Kwakiutl. Here he documented how form,
approach “tradition” is recontextualized as a part of socio-political intercourse rather than related to impermeable cultural practices.

In Kwakiutl context, both institutions must be understood as different ways of negotiating individual and collective identities. Thus, it explores different aspects of personhood enacted in Kwakiutl society. In the increasingly complex global society an expanding array of opportunities for identity construction becomes possible. For instance, Marie Mauzé documented intertwining scholarly and Kwakiutl discourses in ethnography, documentary movies, books, museum exhibits, and university lectures that lend credence to individuals, since the objects do not have authority per se (Mauzé 1997b).

While these practices ultimately refer to claims to particular identities contested in the potlatch, soccer is a different social phenomenon. It is not entangled in a long history that lends legitimacy to it as tradition. It is blatantly modern. It was a game that was instituted by the British missionaries of the C.M.S., who used soccer as a part of the physical education and leisure activity which were to be embodied by the native students. Yet, it is thoroughly popular and socially important in contemporary Kwakiutl society. In this sense, it illustrates the expanding array of identities and sources of valorization in contemporary Kwakiutl communities.

The Potlatch

In chapter 5 I indicated that the social phenomenon coined “potlatch” in ethnographic literature, which has subsequently gained life on its own in various scholarly publications, was not known as such in pre-colonial Kwakiutl society (Cf. Mauzé 1986, Sewid-Smith 1997). Rather, an array of interconnected and distinct institutions existed. The “potlatch” was as...
much an entity defined by ethnographic and colonial agents in their interactions with Northwest Coast indigenous peoples (Bracken 1997). Nonetheless, as Marie Mauzé argued, it is a distinct irony that today the “potlatch” exists as a celebrated institution marking cultural perseverance and continuity (Mauzé 1986: 63). As Kwakiutl intellectual Gloria Cranmer Webster writes:

“If my ancestors from two hundred years ago were able to be with us today, I often wonder what they would think of a contemporary potlatch. Would they be able to recognize what we do as being related to what they did? Would they pity us for having lost so much, or be proud that we are still here? I think that after recovering from the shock of seeing so many changes, not only in the potlatch but in all aspects of our lives, they would tell us that under the circumstances, we are not doing too badly. They would also urge us to keep on *strengthening* what we have, if we are to *survive* and continue having our *good* times.” (Cranmer Webster 1991: 248, my italics)

Thus, in Gloria Cranmer Webster’s words, the contemporary potlatch is the result of a continuous process, albeit perceived in a discourse of loss, and in this discourse tradition is perceived normatively as something good which is central to the continued survival of the Kwakiutl as a distinct people. In contemporary Kwakiutl communities, the vast majority agree that the potlatch is an institution worthy of being preserved.

**Reviving the “Potlatch”**

While potlatching never entirely ceased in Kwakiutl territories, it ceased in certain communities such as Cape Mudge and Alert Bay. Potlatching ceased for different reasons. Alert Bay was the center of Indian presence of government agents and law enforcement agents, it hosted a strong Christian fraction of the community, and community members were actively participating in the burgeoning wage economy in the region. In
this context, spectacular potlatches were hardly feasible. The repercussions of the anti-potlatch law, omitted in the 1951 Indian Act, were still felt in the early 1960s when the Indian Agent ambiguously stated that “it was not illegal” to potlatch (Wolcott 1967: 56, 1996: 471).

Nonetheless, the first “public” potlatch held outside the remote settlements was Mungo Martin’s 1953 potlatch held in Coast Salish territory. The potlatch was held in a Big House he constructed on the lands of the British Columbia Provincial Museum and commissioned by that institution. In 1959, Mungo Martin and his son David constructed a similar Big House on the Comox reserve for chief Andy Frank and his wife Maggie. The latter was the daughter of Charlie Wilson, a high-ranked chief of the Fort Rupert Kwakiutl and a close relative of Mungo Martins. In 1963, a new Big House was constructed in Alert Bay with chiefs Jimmy Dick, Simon Beans, Henry Speck, and Jimmy Sewid among the initiators of the project (Sewid-Smith 1997: 599). As opposed to the ancient Big Houses, this one was constructed as a building for the whole community and not for a particular numaym. Notably the crests displayed on poles of the Big House were not exclusively ‘Namgis (Spradley 1969: 237). They represented all the social groups of the Kwakiutl peoples. Since then Big Houses in Fort Rupert and Campbell River have been constructed as well. The most

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135 In Cape Mudge, it seems that the community more intentionally embraced Christianity and the advent of modern institutions (Cf. Assu & Inglis 1989). For several years the Cape Mudge reserve was hailed by Euro-Canadian media as a “model Indian village,” because of the relative prosperity and “progress” of the community.

136 To this day, Big Houses still stand in the native settlements in Kingcome Inlet and Guildford Island. Both are still used for potlatches and other events.

137 Notably, none of these were Chiefs of ‘Namgis numayms. They all originated in adjacent Kwakiutl communities.

138 In his biography Jimmy Sewid lists the following people as the ones forming a building committee: Henry Speck, Simon Beans and his wife, Max Whonnock, Charlie George, Arthur Dick, Billy MacDougal, Jimmy’s daughter Dora Sewid Cook, and his wife Flora Sewid (Spradley 1969: 237). Several other individuals contributed to the construction of the Big House.
recent Big House to be constructed was the 1998-1999 erection of a new Big House in Alert Bay following the arson of the old one.

Arguably, the resurgence and continuity of the art, craft, and practices of the potlatch in the 1970s were encouraged and perpetuated by the renewed interest for native artwork (Blackman 1977: 3) and performances for tourist display (Spradley 1969: 237) as well as some outside agencies such as the British Columbia Provincial Museum and the Museum of Anthropology, whose policy it was to lend ceremonial regalia to its former owners and offering cost-free recordings of potlatches (MacNair 1986: 515-17). Today, many Kwakiutl, predominantly male, earn a living as professional artists selling their artwork to a host of takers ranging from high profile native art galleries to corny tourist shops. These carvers often supply masks to contemporary potlatches139.

Stanley Walens seemingly suggests that the influx of individualized wealth finances the contemporary potlatch rather than the whole extended family (Walens 1992: 104-106). I very much doubt this assertion. One thing is the monetary currency that finances a contemporary potlatch. Few individuals may be able to afford the estimated $Can 20,000-50,000 that a normal potlatch costs. Another issue is the mobilization of the support, consent, and labor in preparing and hosting the potlatch140.

While individuals are considered holders of contemporary potlatches, as was also the case in the 19th century, the event still presupposes the collective support of the extended family for the logistical and economical support, political validation, and social embodiment of performances and tasks involved in carrying through the event.

139 In fact, artists and gallery owners alike informed me that the price increases if the mask has been “danced” in a potlatch.
140 Gloria Cranmer Webster provides two fine accounts of the preparations for and hosting of a potlatch (Cranmer Webster 1990, 1991).
From Numaym to Extended Family

Today the social boundaries between numayms are obscure. Individuals are affiliated with several extended families following their parental and grandparental ancestry. Thus, an individual may receive ceremonial names from several different numayms because of his ancestry. Citing the cognatic relations, such a transfer may be rendered legitimate. While the numaym system was always flexible and to some extent bilateral, the difference between the 19th century social order and today’s is the discrepancy in the internal ranking. Each extended family still have an acknowledged hereditary chief as the Head of the House who sponsors potlatches, has formal rights to the house’s treasures, and is crucial in deciding the social transfer of title and ceremonial names. However, the ranked seats below the first position have become far more obscure. Today individuals hold title names and ceremonial names, even hereditary chieftainships, from several different numayms. In other words, title names of a specific numaym remain, to some extent, in the possession of an extended family that can trace its symbolic and genealogical ancestry to the specific numaym. However, several extended families have not held potlatches for reasons such as Christian belief, lack of interest, or because they biologically died or vanished. These names were in some cases transferred to more distant relatives, or in other cases “revived” by such entrepreneurial relatives. While formally, these individuals uphold the title name of numaym of the distant relative, this mode of numaym exogenous acquisition of names is not considered legitimate by anyone. To acknowledge the disintegration of the internal ranking system of the numaym, I shall use the term “extended family” for the social group that sponsors potlatches.

Nevertheless, preparations for a potlatch involve several planning meetings, and that sketches the extensive and detailed organization entailed in hosting an event with 200-800 people attending. At these events, influential members and heads of the different branches of the extended family all participate, and most come to some form of consent.
The potlatch is still a collective affair which takes place at certain occasions such as:

“Naming children, mourning the dead, transferring rights and privileges, and, less frequently, marriages or the raising of memorial totem poles. Times for potlatching that would not have been known in earlier days were the opening of the Kwagulth Museum in Cape Mudge in 1979 and of the U’mista Cultural Centre in 1980.” (Cranmer Webster 1991: 229)

Marie Mauzé asserted that: “The potlatch today is perceived as the main road to identity-making be it on a tribal or individual level.” (Mauzé 1997b: 2) While it may be a matter of terminology, I argue that identity-making is performed at an extended family and at an individual level rather than at a tribal one141.

In Michael Harkin’s terms, the potlatch as a symbol of tradition still moves affectively, and it is thoroughly political insofar as the claims, their affirmation and validation still take place at, around, before, and after a potlatch.

**Attendance**

Contemporary potlatch has undergone several modifications in form, content, and meaning. While Bill Holm sought to summarize these modifications, his important essay has not been updated at the end of the 20th century (Holm 1977). In my estimate, between 30 - 50% of the total Kwakiutl population attend at least one potlatch a year. At Alert Bay the proportion may be closer to 50% due to its proximity to a large Big House, the regimented cultural program, and relative contingency of cultural practices in daily life. Of these I estimate that 200-300 individuals attend

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141 Interestingly, hereditary chiefs I interviewed named far more chiefs from the same or adjacent communities, and seemingly the politics of identity was directed towards these incumbents rather than those further away.
potlatches regularly. Others go when the potlatch is in their community or their relatives hold the potlatch. Some rarely, or never, attend a potlatch.

Invitations for potlatches are given at previous potlatches, through word of mouth or telephone calls, and sometimes invitees receive printed invitations or letters reiterating their importance for the event. In the 19th century a party would travel by canoe to the settlements and invite people. With the incorporation into wage economy and the advancement of modern communications, this mode has become obsolete.

As opposed to 19th century ceremonials, attendance is not limited to Kwakiutl nobility (Holm 1997: 11)\(^\text{142}\). With the decline of the Kwakiutl population restricted attendance weakened, and today all Kwakiutl who want to are present. The majority of contemporary potlatches are held in the aforementioned Big House, although a few potlatches and feasts are still held in community halls in Port Hardy and Quatsino. Seating in the Big House is no longer structured in the way it was in the 19th century. Individuals are no longer seated according to individual or tribal rank. They sit anywhere they please. Exceptions are the host families who sit to the left in the back, the singers who are seated around a log in the back of the Big House, and finally the chiefs who are seated on chairs in front of the log facing the rectangular floor. They no longer sit with their people. Other non-Kwakiutl guests frequently attend potlatches such as Euro-Canadian friends of the host, ethnographers, and others. Despite the reprimands of elders, children frequently “travel” in and out of the building. Similarly, many bring food and beverages for the occasion. Elders consider this improper conduct. On some occasions people have been warned not to bring food and beverages.

**Form and Content**

Two marked differences between 19th century potlatches and the late 20th century equivalent are (i) the shortening of the duration and (ii) the

\(^{142}\) Only on very special occasions were all villagers called to a potlatch.
immediate succession of the winter dances and the tl'asala. In the aforementioned essay, Bill Holm sought to create a tabular overview of the development in the Kwakiutl potlatch. Below I have copied the table (table 12.1) and added another column which updates the table to contemporary practices in the 1990s\textsuperscript{143}. The tabular overview indicates that a number of forms and the content of the winter dances are still practiced today. Interestingly, some of the practices that seemed to be vanishing have been reintroduced to the rituals. This I will return to below.

\textsuperscript{143} The table is appropriated from Bill Holm's "Traditional and Contemporary Kwakiutl Winter Dance." (Holm 1977: 8-10) The responses in the grey shaded column reflect contemporary practices that I collected. They are based on active winter dance participants' responses. Orthography is altered from Holm's original table, and the term tl'asala replaces Holm's term "LewElaxa," which is rarely used in contemporary discourse. The classificatory categories in Holm's table have been fully worded. The original scheme was: Usual practice = U, Frequent observance = F, Rare observance = R, Absent = A. Question marks (?) signify that the informants were not sure of the practice.
Table 12.1 Continuity in Kwakiutl Winter Dances

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice</th>
<th>19th Century</th>
<th>1940s</th>
<th>1960s-1970s</th>
<th>1990s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dance derived from story</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dance considered as privilege</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certain offices (master of ceremonies, cedar bark distributor, etc.) passed from father to son</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most dances transferred from bride’s father to groom for children</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice (sometimes father to son)</td>
<td>Usual practice (from all lines)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal invitation from canoe</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice (from fishing boat)</td>
<td>Frequent observance (at previous affair, word of mouth, telephone, printed invitation)</td>
<td>Rare observance (at previous affair, word of mouth, telephone, printed invitation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inviters paid by invitees</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Frequent observance</td>
<td>Rare observance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inviters formally report</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Rare observance</td>
<td>Absent practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guests housed with relatives</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mourning songs composed specifically for deceased</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Frequent observance</td>
<td>Rare observance</td>
<td>Rare observance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three mourning songs one dance song</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice (sometimes more)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mourning completed before nightfall</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal female mourners</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Symbolic return of deceased Chief</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Frequent observance</td>
<td>Rare observance</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Usual Practice</td>
<td>Rare Observance</td>
<td>Absent Practice</td>
<td>Frequent Observance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cedar bark distributed for headrings</td>
<td>Usual Practice</td>
<td>Rare observance</td>
<td>Absent practice</td>
<td>Frequent observance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting specifically to distribute bark, eagle down, etc.</td>
<td>Frequent</td>
<td>Rare observance</td>
<td>Absent practice</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change to “cedar bark” names</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Frequent observance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division of “seals,” “sparrows” and non-initiates</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Rare observance</td>
<td>Absent practice</td>
<td>Absent practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isolation of Hamat’sa (“four” months)</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice (ten days – two weeks)</td>
<td>Rare observance (overnight, if at all)</td>
<td>Rare observance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taboos for certain dancers</td>
<td>Frequent</td>
<td>Rare observance</td>
<td>Absent practice</td>
<td>Absent practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Showing of masks at ‘Gilagamlia’</td>
<td>Frequent</td>
<td>Frequent</td>
<td>Absent practice</td>
<td>Rare observance (if this refers to the dropping of screen)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four nights of “free” dancing</td>
<td>Frequent</td>
<td>Frequent</td>
<td>Absent practice</td>
<td>Absent practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New dancers spirited away</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Frequent</td>
<td>Absent practice</td>
<td>Rare observance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghost dancer heralds Hamat’sa’s return</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Frequent</td>
<td>Absent practice</td>
<td>Absent practice?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamat’sa returns through roof</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Rare observance</td>
<td>Absent practice (enters from screen)</td>
<td>Absent practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamat’sa disappears again</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Rare observance (leaves by front door)</td>
<td>Rare observance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K’imya to recapture dancers next morning</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Frequent</td>
<td>Absent practice</td>
<td>Absent practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tethering pole (Hamspeq)</td>
<td>Frequent</td>
<td>Absent practice</td>
<td>Absent practice</td>
<td>Rare observance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dance begins one or two nights later</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Rare observance</td>
<td>Absent practice (begins day of mourning)</td>
<td>Absent practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Rare observance</td>
<td>Absent practice</td>
<td>Absent practice (all tribes combined)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singers all from host tribe</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Song leader calls words of song</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Songs composed for dancer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Batons beaten on plank</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box Drum</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counter-clockwise circuit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left pivot at front and rear of House</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamat’sa “eats” corpse</td>
<td>Rare observance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Absent practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8, 12 or 16 attendants</td>
<td></td>
<td>Absent practice</td>
<td></td>
<td>Absent practice (two, rarely four attendants)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hemlock dress in first dance</td>
<td></td>
<td>Frequent observance</td>
<td></td>
<td>Rare observance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamat’sa tamed by fire</td>
<td></td>
<td>Rare observance</td>
<td></td>
<td>Absent practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hemlock burned, cedar bark donned</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cedar bark dress in following dances</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Details of dress symbolic</td>
<td></td>
<td>Rare observance</td>
<td></td>
<td>Absent practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamat’sa runs wild at taboo word in song</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Absent practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mask dance for Hamat’sa (Hamsamia), song dress, form and style</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Absent practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last dance with blanket, apron</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Absent practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Usual Practice</td>
<td>Frequent Observance</td>
<td>Rare Observance</td>
<td>Absent Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female attendant dances alone</td>
<td>Usually</td>
<td>Rare</td>
<td>Rare</td>
<td>Rare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female attendant dances with relatives</td>
<td>Usually</td>
<td>Usual</td>
<td>Usual</td>
<td>Usual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dancers &quot;washed&quot; with bark ring</td>
<td>Usually</td>
<td>Frequent</td>
<td>Absent</td>
<td>Absent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawinalal suspended from pierced skin</td>
<td>Frequent</td>
<td>Absent</td>
<td>Absent</td>
<td>Absent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuxwid ridiculed by attendants, spectators</td>
<td>Usually</td>
<td>Usual</td>
<td>Usual</td>
<td>Usual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuxwid displays magic</td>
<td>Usually</td>
<td>Usual</td>
<td>Usual</td>
<td>Usual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuxwid is killed and revived</td>
<td>Frequent</td>
<td>Rare</td>
<td>Absent</td>
<td>Rare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mamak’a throws power, hits victim and subsequently cures</td>
<td>Usually</td>
<td>Usual</td>
<td>Usual</td>
<td>Usual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuxlistachlüs destroys fire, handles coal</td>
<td>Usually</td>
<td>Frequent</td>
<td>Rare (may throw burning wood)</td>
<td>Rare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuxmachl, Grizzlies punish mistakes</td>
<td>Usually</td>
<td>Frequent</td>
<td>Absent</td>
<td>Absent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mistakes are very serious</td>
<td>Usually</td>
<td>Frequent</td>
<td>Rare</td>
<td>Frequent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four nights dancing, masks on last night</td>
<td>Usually</td>
<td>Frequent</td>
<td>Absent (everything in one night)</td>
<td>Absent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last song to remove cedar bark</td>
<td>Usually</td>
<td>Usual</td>
<td>Rare (may follow tl’asala)</td>
<td>Frequent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tsek’a and T’agala completely separate</td>
<td>Usually</td>
<td>Rare</td>
<td>Rare</td>
<td>Rare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T’agala initiate disappears, returns</td>
<td>Usually</td>
<td>Rare</td>
<td>Absent (does not disappear)</td>
<td>Absent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Usual practice</th>
<th>Rare observance</th>
<th>Absent practice (one nigh, after tsek’a)</th>
<th>Absent practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dances four nights with headdress</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Rare observance</td>
<td>Absent practice (one nigh, after tsek’a)</td>
<td>Absent practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendants tease dancer</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dancer escapes, attendants return with regalia</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horns heard, attendants investigate</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Absent practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Return with masked crest figure dancer</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headdress with sea lion whiskers, ermine</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice (sometimes substitute)</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dancer uses raven rattle, if any</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Frequent observance (raven rattle preferred)</td>
<td>Frequent observance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goods displayed before dance</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Rare observance</td>
<td>Absent practice</td>
<td>Frequent observance (flour etc. at beginning)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goods displayed before distribution</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual payments are pre-planned</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Frequent observance</td>
<td>Rare observance (sometimes singers)</td>
<td>Frequent observance (for singers and some chiefs, elders)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Names of payment recipients called</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Frequent observance</td>
<td>Rare observance</td>
<td>Absent practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singers, dancers, speakers paid</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
<td>Absent practice</td>
<td>Usual practice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Let me recapture some of the major features that changed. Firstly, duration of planning and the event itself have been shortened. From lasting several weeks, a potlatch today lasts between 1-4 days and nights. This means i.e. that the “free dances” in the beginning of the potlatch vanished and the number of songs and elaborateness of ritual complexes have been shortened considerably. The temporal separation between mourning songs and proceeding dance complexes has been shortened. A poignant example of the shortening of the ritual complexes is the Hamat’sa dance.

In the 19th century, the Hamat’sa initiate was said to be secluded in the woods for four months before being captured and tamed in the tsek’a ceremony. In the 1930s, the duration of the initiate Jimmy Sewid’s seclusion was 10 days whilst he would sneak back into the house at night. Bill Holm recollected a Fort Rupert initiate from the 1940s who informed him that he would go out at night for two weeks, reversing the schedule of Jimmy Sewid. In contemporary potlatches I only heard of one person who stayed out for one night before he was initiated. As Bill Holm noted:

“Today the Hamatsa initiate may disappear just long enough to don his soccer shorts and hemlock branch ornaments, although a really conservative family may require their scion to stay out of sight a day or two before his appearance as a Hamatsa.” (Holm 1977: 11)

The other poignant change in the “potlatch” is the immediate succession of the tsek’a by the tl’asala. In 19th century ceremonials, the two were temporally and spatially separate. While the content of the winter dances was thought to be more sacred, the summer dances had to do with the pending secular season. Today the two ritual complexes are distinguished by a hard knock on the cedar log by the singers, and the participants part with their cedar bark headpieces.

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Contemporary potlatches usually take place in May to June and September to October, accommodating the fishing season when, until recently, a large percentage of Kwakiutl men and women worked. In the 19th century, winter dances took place from October-November through March or April. Undoubtedly such modifications of the ceremonial forms are related to the economical and social integration into the wage economy and body politic of the Euro-Canadian society. In this sense the shortening of the temporal duration and integration of space of the winter and summer dances are related to pragmatic concerns and appropriated to these new conditions.

Within this new form the content has also been modified. While contemporary potlatches still boast a number of ritual complexes such as the Hamat'sa, albeit shortening, some modifications have taken place. Above, I discussed the seclusion prior to the Hamat'sa. Another modification is the ritual or symbolic cannibalism of the ceremony. It was said that Hamat'sa bite marks were proudly displayed by those scarred in the 19th and early 20th century. Not surprisingly, in today's potlatches such attacks are merely feigned. Nor are elements such as killing slaves to saturate the hunger of the Hamat'sa practiced.

Similarly, irreversible body marking such as piercing the skin and suspending the Hawinalal dancer from the roof has not been practiced for several decades. The inscription of the ceremony on the body of the individual is limited. The faces of Hamat'sa dancers are no longer painted black, although most initiates today are adorned in hemlock regalia and cedar bark at various stages of the ritual complex. Nonetheless, the event is not irreversibly inscribed on the body in contemporary potlatches.

Contemporary informants still discuss whether cannibalism was actually practiced in ceremonial context, or whether it was merely staged.
Also new content has been introduced such as the baptizing of children, when they are given their Christian name\(^{145}\). At another occasion in 1988, the Kwikwasut’inuxw Kwakiutl made peace with the Bella Coola people following their 1858 raid at Guildford Island, which nearly exterminated the whole social group (Wolcott 1996, Sewid-Smith 1997).

Significantly, an increasing portion of the potlatch oratories, although still communicated in Kwak’wala, is accompanied with explanatory remarks in English for the large percentage of the attendants who do not understand the language. Some informants also state that most Kwak’wala today is basic and not as eloquent and skillful as the speeches made in earlier times (Cf. Cranmer Webster 1991: 246, Berman 1994).

Following the resurgence of the potlatch, the chiefs agreed that coppers should no longer be broken in the potlatch as a means of conflict, or contesting rival claims. While copper breakings are frequently rumored, they have not happened since the public resurgence of the potlatch.

Gifts are distributed to the participants by the end of the potlatch. The items distributed are mostly standardized or monetary. The introduction of Western commodities already commenced with the Hudson Bay blankets as the standard for exchange in the 19\(^{th}\) century. Goods are distributed according to rank and other differentiating principles. As Gloria Cranmer Webster wrote:

> “Finally, it is time to bring out the goods to be given away. All family members help to carry the cartons, boxes, and bags, which are emptied and spread out on the floor. While everything is being unpacked, the host and an older family member begin to distribute money, first to the chiefs and singers, then to the rest of the people. The chiefs and singers may receive up to one hundred dollars each; men and chiefs’ wives or widows, twenty dollars

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\(^{145}\) The late Dzawada’enuxw Kwakiutl, Ernie Willie, was an ordained minister and also active participant in potlatches (See also Harkin 1997b).
each; then, for younger men and women, from two to ten dollars each. Those who give out gifts are reminded that chiefs and their wives, chiefs’ widows, and those who have come from far away most receive more than ordinary people. Even chiefs who are not present must be remembered and their gifts and money must be sent home with a relative. Special gifts, such as silver bracelets, may be given to those who have contributed in a significant way. If the potlatch has included the recognition of young girls who have reached the age of puberty, the gifts for children will include bars of soap, combs, and toys, symbolic of earlier purification rites and the fact that the girls are leaving their childhood behind them.”
(Cranmer Webster 1991: 246)

Resacrelization

While rituals are affective and political, evoking strong personal and collective emotions, they should not be considered impermeable in their meaning, form, and content. Table 12.1 illustrated continuity and changes in the form and content of the Kwakiutl potlatch. While Bill Holm’s table provides an informative benchmark for the continuity and changes, it does not expand upon the sociology of the potlatch. It neither informs us whether women gain an increasing role as organizers, dancers, or at other functions. Nor does it inform about the continuity of social actors involved in the potlatch, their standing, and their practice of transferring titles and ceremonial privileges.

It does inform us, however, that continuity in form and content of the Kwakiutl potlatch remains and, indeed, some practices and forms have been rejuvenated. Ceremonial regalia such as cedar bark dress, button blankets, chilkat blankets, masks and attire for specific animal dances have been elaborated in recent years. Some also talk about rejuvenating the secret societies (Cf. Boas 1897) and observe protocol that Hamat’sa’s

146 See Aaron Glass’ discussion of the female Hamat’sa dancers (Glass n.d.).
147 Arguably, the “rejuvenation” may be a continuous practice that Bill Holm neither observed nor was told about.
must be served their meals first, that they appear with blackened facial paint, and that protocol and procedure must be observed in a stricter fashion.

That, combined with an ongoing discussion whether the most sacred ceremonial complexes such as the Hamat’sa and the spirit dances should not be taught in the T’lisalagi’lakw School’s Cultural Program any longer, suggests a process of resacralization of the potlatch. Ironically, this has been facilitated by the rejuvenated popularity of singing and dancing, often learned in the school’s cultural program, as a poignant manifestation of native identity.

In a context of integration into the social and economic fabric of Canadian society, the potlatch increasingly becomes the institution for negotiating individual and family identities among the Kwakiutl. It is not surprising that the emphasis on form and content increases within a discursive framework of “tradition.” While structural, political, and global cultural conditions encroach on Kwakiutl everyday life, the ritual institutions present a spatial and temporal opportunity for the negotiation, validation, and affirmation of distinctively native identities. It remains a social arena where legitimate participation in and access to learning the competences remain restricted. In this sense, the potlatch presents a heterotopic space for native identities. Upon the omitting of the anti-potlatch law, this heterotopic space is emotionally and cognitively, socially and politically defined by natives themselves.

**Cultural Learning**

As I investigated in the preceding chapters, in heterotopia, as an institutional site, social agents control and define the representations and activities of the participants. Arguably, individuals’ mere presence at potlatches are central to the situated learning of competences needed to reproduce the institution.
Ideologically, the rule of primogeniture still prevails in contemporary potlatch. However, the incursion of the 19th century demographic disaster, Christianity, and social integration strain the applicability of this rule. Ideally, the inheritor of a hereditary chief’s title and privileges is the firstborn son of the hereditary chief. This person should emanate keen interest in the potlatch, be thoroughly knowledgeable of the oral history, legends, and genealogy of his extended family, be aware of the standing of others, trained in the songs, masks, and protocol of the Big House, and be a competent speaker of Kwak’wala and exhibiting a life style agreeable to the old people. Such is the cultural ideal person. This ideal, as any, is rarely attained. Contemporary titles and privileges are often bequeathed on an individual based on a combination of ascription and achievement148.

In contemporary potlatching, active involvement is centrally important in gaining the recognition of others. Achievements such as being a renowned singer, composer, dancer, story keeper, speaker or otherwise educated in the ceremonial complex are central to such valorization. Until the beginning of the 20th century, at least the nobility was expected to participate in potlatching, and it was a prerogative for the maintenance of specific social identities. As analyzed in chapter 11, the arrival of Christianity, the dispersal of half the Kwakiutl population to urban areas, and the pursuit of other identities through work and leisure in Euro-Canadian society were all contributing factors that undermined the cohesiveness of the institution.

While the ascription by birth remains the ideological and symbolical legitimization for acquiring rank, its sociological imperative gradually diminished. Ascription by birth may still impose certain expectations upon an individual. But the modes of social control to make the individual fulfill these expectations, let alone identify with these expectations, have changed and become less cohesive. In the 19th century, change of

148 Nonetheless, several present hereditary chiefs are firstborn sons of former hereditary chiefs (Cf. Sewid-Smith 1997).
residence was not optional, the unit of subsistence was the extended lineage, and they also decided whom the individual was going to marry. Today, the Kwakiutl have for three or four generations chosen their own sexual partners, they live in nuclear houses, and the modes of social control exerted by the older generation are limited. Today, involvement in and identification with the social identities reinforced in the potlatch are optional. Before such individual choice did not exist, as the ranking system was pervasive and integral to Kwakiutl social life. In other words, contemporary life offers a diversification of identifications and identities. Not all choose to become actively involved in the potlatch.

However, by way of birth all Kwakiutl are participants in the community of practice that constitute what I defined as the Kwakiutl ritual realm in chapter 12. Thus, it is problematic to understand contemporary potlatches from a perspective of insider and outsider. Rather, a web of intertwining positions exists. I propose that Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger’s term “legitimate peripheral participation” may be helpful in understanding these relations and the dialectics between ascription and achievement. In this perspective, non-involvement becomes a form of participation as well. An example is an individual born as the first son of a hereditary chief. Without being present at potlatches or showing interest in learning the oral history, legends, names, songs, and dances associated with his extended family, the individual may forfeit the hereditary chieftainship that he would otherwise inherit. In such instances, the father has two options (i) passing on the title to the disinterested son and then risking that he never fulfills the obligations that come along with the title and privileges, let alone fails to command the respect and legitimacy of his chieftainship within the extended family. In the worst case the title name fails “to be kept alive.” That is, the name will no longer be embodied and transferred to consecutive persons within the extended family through several generations. (ii) His other option is to transfer the chieftainship to someone else, i.e. a younger son, a nephew, a brother, or even a distant relative who exemplifies the qualities needed for fulfilling the obligations of the title.
The strategic reflections entailed in transferring ceremonial titles resemble those following the decimation of the Kwakiutl population in the second part of the 19th century. Here, the ideology of primogeniture could not always be abided by as a result of the severe depopulation. Thus, the nobility had to resort to taking several names, letting women hold title until they gave birth to a son, make sham marriages etc149.

Within this field, individuals may choose to be actively involved in potlatches as personifications of titles, as dancers, singers, composers, or otherwise. In this sense, the potlatch as event provides a situation for learning protocol, procedures, and competences involved. Other settings such as the extended family and, as investigated in chapter 12, the school also provide other communities of practice for learning the competences needed. While ascription by birth validates the probability of acquiring rank, this is only affirmed through active involvement and the eventual transfer of ceremonial titles and privileges. As Harry Wolcott describes, participation and position may change as individuals identify with the potlatch system (Wolcott 1996: 478-80). Thus, within the context where involvement in potlatching becomes increasingly optional and a matter of individual identity-making, it is likely that individual achievements continue to become increasingly important.

Validation and Affirmation in the Potlatch

In contemporary Kwakiutl society, individual involvement and knowledge become increasingly important for the transfer of ceremonial privileges. It would seem that succession of titles is no longer distinguished between the rules of primogeniture for title names, and the transfer of ceremonial title through marriage. To the best of my knowledge, the rules of succession have become bilateral, which has "opened" a window of

149 Several scholars paid attention to these upheavals, asserting that commoners conversely sought to validate claims to these titles (Kobrinsky 1975, Masco 1995, Sewid-Smith 1997).
opportunity based on achievement and ascription, rather than predominantly ascription. In other words, succession has been a matter of choosing from several candidates rather than from a single candidate, who, ideally, remains within the immediate family of the chief. The intricacies of such considerations were described by Daisy Sewid-Smith who deserves to be quoted at length:\^150:

“My late great-uncle, Chief Henry Bell, announced his living will to Chiefs and the people of our Nation at his last potlatch in Alert Bay, British Columbia, in 1976. It is customary for Clan [DSS definition of a numaym, sic] Chiefs to name a successor at a Potlatch, well before his passing. My uncle chose to \(lawgqilla\), or bequeath, his Clan Chieftainship to my father [James Sewid]. My father accepted my uncle’s bequest publicly, but privately confided in me that Clan Chiefs cannot straddle two Clans. Since his uncle had cancer and was not expected to live long, he did not want to dishonor him or hurt him by refusing the position. My father also considered that by his accepting of the Clan Chieftainship, my uncle’s name would be forever buried. According to our strict customs and traditions, Clan Chiefs can only uphold one Chieftain name, and since my father had held his grandfather’s name since birth, he had to carry on with his own. My great-uncle had clearly understood this point when he chose my father as successor. He had entrusted my father to choose an heir for him. He had in fact given him his proxy for this monumental decision. In the end, after many months of deliberation, my father chose Henry Walkus, the son of Chief Henry Bell’s youngest daughter, Doreen, to be the successor of the Clan Chieftainship of Clan.

\(^{150}\) The context of the written account, contrary to the oral history of Kwakiutl nobility, was a response by Daisy Sewid-Smith to Harry Wolcott’s article about the potlatch in 1988, where James Sewid transferred the Chieftainship to Henry Walkus. Harry Wolcott described how some parts of the Bell family did not agree with this transfer of title (Wolcott 1996: 476-83).
Udzistalis [Henry Bell]. My father had chosen a grandson who would be financially able to uphold his uncle’s Clan Chieftainship through the many Potlatches and responsibilities required of him. As well, he had chosen to leave the Clan Chieftainship in the immediate Bell family. And so at the end of my uncle’s Potlatch in 1976, before the other Chiefs spoke in their usual protocol ranking order, Chief Henry Bell announced to his nephew, Chief James Ol Sewide, “Now you will inherit both sides of your ancestors, my child.” This was his formal, publicly validated announcement of his Chieftain successor. This was where my Great-uncle’s Box of Treasures was symbolically pushed to my father. This was where my great-uncle’s tangible wealth, his songs, his names, his dances and his history were symbolically placed onto the shoulders of my father to uphold.” (Sewid-Smith 1997: 598, original italics, my insertions) 

Her narrative clearly illustrates how finding a successor is imbued with many considerations: birth, involvement, willingness, and ability to uphold the responsibilities expected of a chief, and the financial ability to affirm and validate his position through potlatches are all important aspects. Based on several observations, it would seem that such considerations are at least as important as birth order. To validate the transfer of a title such as a chieftainship, it is centrally important to (i) mobilize the internal support of the extended family and (ii) externally mobilize the support of other acknowledged hereditary chiefs.

Firstly, at the planning meetings the heads of each family, the “old people,” and often other important individuals meet and discuss which privileges are going to be displayed, the sequences of these dances, and which titles are going to be transferred and to whom (Cf. Cranmer Webster 1991: 232). Mobilizing the support from the extended family may

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151 Spelling of Kwak’wala names is slightly altered, due to technical application.
152 This is what Daisy Sewid-Smith classifies as a Clan Chieftainship.
not always be easy, since the different families have different material and symbolic interests vested in preferring one individual receiving a title to another. At some occasions these meetings may evoke considerable dissent, as some actors may feel that others “claim” privileges for their immediate family. Ownership and succession are carefully negotiated within a discourse of “tradition” where particular ownership to certain titles, rules of succession, and contesting representations are discussed. Not all decisions accommodate the interests of all branches of the family. In the end the chief, upon listening to the council, decides on what will happen.

The ultimate discursive strategy is stressing the importance of the extended family, with its English rendering “we-are-all-one” and the need for collective support. The transfer of titles is as much a matter of internal organization of the core social unit as it is related to external reciprocity to other extended families (Cf. Boelscher 1988: 48-90). As Marianne Boelscher wrote in her outstanding analysis on Haida social and mythical discourse:

“Individual social rank is in many respects contingent upon, and in turn influences, the collective reputation of the corporate group, its main importance among the Haida lies in socially and politically differentiating members of the same lineage.” (Boelscher 1988: 48, my italics)

The individual achievements of the social actor are important, but ultimately the person needs the support and consent of the extended family to determine his standing and ability to uphold this social identity in public.

Secondly, equally important is the mobilization of other Kwakiutl chiefs. Without their presence as witnesses, a potlatch loses its social and ceremonial legitimacy. Again, the importance of oratories stressing mutual descent and affinal relations works as a prerogative to validate and affirm claims to titles. The successful negotiation of claims in relation to other
chiefs prior to and during the potlatch is central to the validation of the standing of the chief hosting the potlatch. In her analysis of Haida oratory, Marianne Boelscher noted three rhetorical principles effective in mobilizing the public support of other chiefs. (i) Thanking, (ii) kinship links, and (iii) joking and anecdotes (Boelscher 1988: 85-89). The host and the chiefs carefully structure reciprocal relations in the speech making.

I.e. as a continuation of the public validation of a transfer of title, the chiefs give speeches that acknowledge the transfer. The speeches involve the chiefs thanking for being invited by a great chief and may stress kinship ties. Most chiefs are gifted speakers who are able to capture the listeners through verbal eloquence and humor.

Such public consent is one powerful way of affirmation and validation of claims. That is negotiating the politics of identity within the ritual realm. Ultimately, the symbolic property claimed in the form of titles needs to be validated by the distribution of material property. Still today, the *t'li'nagila*, a potlatch where eulachon oil is distributed, remains the most powerful and “the distribution of such a valuable commodity greatly enhances the stature of the potlatch-giver.” (Cranmer-Webster 1991: 229)

**Contesting Individual and Family Identities**

The extended families guard their symbolic property, lāda, and stature zealously. Within a discourse where modesty and humbleness are considered ideal attributes, overt confrontation towards individuals or extended families that appear as rival claimants has become exceedingly rare (Cf. Drucker and Heizer 1967: 113). Several informants recount that former chiefs “used to” get up and speak against such claims. Another and severe confrontation was the rival potlatch. While the latter institution, as a symbolic and material contestation of claims, no longer exists, claims – or identity-making in Mauzé’s phrase – are subject to competing narratives that are presented publicly.
While doing fieldwork, I observed several different strategies which served to legitimize one’s claim or delegitimize that of the other. Rarely are differences uttered in a direct fashion. Mostly such contestations are offered in public as allusions, where the personal address is obvious through the nuances of speech to community members. Private remarks may have far more address with the inherent danger of being publicly confronted with such claims if confidentiality is breached. While at Alert Bay, I encountered four different principles through which rival claims were contested: (i) competing narratives in public, (ii) delegitimizing the rival’s cultural competences, (iii) public absence, and (iv) delegitimizing the rival on personal grounds.

Firstly, one could exert a competing narrative to the ownership of a certain privilege. The setting for such performances is a potlatch hosted by the claimant or a relative who lends space to the performance as a form of affirmation, and the validation in the form of telling its origin story, the story of its previous bearers, and the occasions on which the title was transferred. Such potlatches assure to “set things right.”

A second strategy, which may be less publicly confrontational, is a delegitimization of the cultural competences of the rival claimants. Such claims may refer to the rival claimant’s misinterpretations of “tradition,” malpractice of ritual protocol and procedure, or his lack of continuity in potlatching.

A third strategy, if the rival claim is known beforehand, is the lack of involvement in the claimant’s potlatch. Either by staying away altogether, thus not acknowledging the person’s ritual authority to host a potlatch, or by refusing to participate in the proceedings within the potlatch (Cf. Wolcott 1996: 474-81).

The last strategy is more malicious in the sense that it delegitimizes the rival claimant on the grounds of personal behavior. Issues such as drinking, drugs, commoner origins, sexual preferences, and racial purity
figure as principles on which the collective and individual integrity of the claimant is delegitimised.

While contestations of identities remain at the very core of ritual politics, it would be wrong to consider these contestations as merely fractious and potentially disruptive for the social fabric of Kwakiutl society. Rather than that, I tend to think that contesting identities are based on a dialectical premise of acknowledgment. While contesting claims, one also acknowledges the rival as a Kwakiutl with certain social identities, and as a legitimate participant in the ritual realm. In this sense, Kwakiutl politics of identity resembles the dialectics vividly described in Georg Simmel’s essay on fashion; even those who act against fashion must follow fashion to act against it (Simmel 1971: 299-304). At the one and same time, the institution is socially integrating and socially differentiating through a principle of “antidotal correspondence.” Kwakiutl social actors acknowledge each other as Kwakiutl as they react against somebody’s claims or cease opportunities on the lack of involvement of others. Contestations are as much social integration and form part of identity making and collective boundary maintenance. This does not preclude that rivalries are experienced, heartfelt, and lived. Antagonisms may go back several generations and continue to shape social interactions in the community.

In sum, the social institution currently known as “potlatch” has undergone several changes in its form, content, and meaning. Similarly, the organization of the social unit sponsoring such events underwent change. While a number of elements such as ownership of ancestral prerogatives remain intact, the social cohesion and internal rank of these social units have lessened and become less explicit and rigid. Today, participation in potlatches is rather the result of individual choice than collective cohesion. Nonetheless, the institution remains centrally important in negotiating individual and extended family identities. I argued that the potlatch constitutes a heterotopic site, where these identities are enacted, constituted, and learned by the individuals who engage as participants in
varying ways. Whilst the potlatch can be considered as a poignant manifestation of native culture in relation to Euro-Canadian society, I argued that the institutionalized practices as much negotiated identities between different extended families and within the extended family giving the potlatch. Thus, as a ritual it signifies several different levels of identity-making. Finally, I also argued that the modes of acquiring names associated with prestige within this ritual realm have become increasingly dependent on individual achievement to warrant legitimate ownership of the privileges. However, such individual acquisition remains dependent on the collective support and solidarity of the extended family to sponsor a potlatch. Thereby one of the socially significant kinds of social identities is constituted in the potlatch. It is a social identity that links contemporary Kwakiutl personhood with the extended family as a central social unit in society.

As shown above, identities within the ritual realm are often negotiated within a discourse of antagonism that renders these exchanges as conflictive. While I do not dismiss that this may very well be the case, I also argue that such antagonisms work as a form of acknowledgment through antidotal correspondence. Similarly, if we trace another trajectory in the social career of a Kwakiutl person, this antagonism may show in another institutional guise, namely that of soccer. In the organization of soccer, I argue, another level of social identities is negotiated through these institutionalized practices. Thus, these practices serve to underline the production of several social identities leading to a diversification of contemporary personhood.

**Appropriating Soccer**

The ritual realm of potlatching provides a mean of affirming and validating the individual identity of the person and the collective identity of the extended family. However, it is to a lesser extent the identity of the First Nation which is contested. Despite the fact that the First Nation is a
relatively new political body, this has not precluded changes in the core social unit hosting potlatches elsewhere (Cf. Dauenhauer & Dauenhauer n.d.) 153.

I argue that soccer has become a neo-traditional institution which provides a meaningful template for practicing rivalries and contesting contemporary collective identities. However, these collective identities refer to different social units than those of the potlatch.

In many ways, the institution of soccer is situated in a liminal position. As shown in chapter 10, it is part of a colonial heritage, as it was a means of learning and embodying new cultural practices which were not inscribed in the indigenous educational complex. However, it is also a significant part of the contemporary native culture that mobilizes the greater part of Kwakiutl communities in various roles as players, coaches, organizers, or spectators. It is too simplistic, if not outright wrong, to conclude that soccer manifests an internalized colonization. Rather, I suggest that soccer is a social institution and practice which has been learned, modified, and reappropriated to existing cultural meanings and strategies. In other words, it demonstrates the inherent cultural productions of meaning and mutations of form, content, and meaning possible with any given institution.

Soccer has been reappropriated to the cultural schemes of rivalry between different social entities. The competitiveness of soccer almost beckons rivalry as found in potlatch, in warfare, marriages, and trade that all evoke symbolic juxtapositions. In soccer the contestations find a temporary resolution as the match ends and claims to superiority are validated, but

153 In Boas’ terms, this would be called the “tribe,” federal agents speak of “band,” whereas I have tentatively used the term social group or band in the 19th century as the confederacy of numayms did not have a governing political body. Since the federally imposed construction of the Band Council, such a political body exists, and subsequently I employ the term First Nation to denote the social entity.
the rivalry continues. The symbolism in contemporary native soccer is fiercely competitive and loaded with oratories signifying warfare, raids, warriors, and tribal superiority. Thus, we find a similar logic of antidotal correspondence in the potlatch and soccer as social institutions. Both are socially integrating and differentiating at the same time. However, the level of social integration differs.

Soccer testifies to the negotiated and dynamic nature of individual and collective identities. Identification shifts with the opposition. In competition between local Kwakiutl teams identification is local, and in competition with the Coast Salish teams identification may shift to support the Kwakiutl nations teams where relatives ply their skills. As an event “June Sports,” held annually at Alert Bay, displays the identities at stake and the practices involved. Soccer is a large part of contemporary Kwakiutl lives and culture. It is authentic in Michael Harkin’s sense, because it evokes emotional, symbolical, and social identifications and is therefore a constituent of individual and collective identity-making. While soccer as a symbol is not “traditional,” its logic of social boundary construction is readily applicable for local recontextualization.

**June Sports**

Native soccer teams gather for weekend long tournaments from spring to the fall. In 1998 the local “Alert Bay Cormorants” participated in four large tournaments in Victoria, Duncan, Campbell River, and Alert Bay. The latter, known as “June Sports,” is undisputedly the most significant for most of the Kwakiutl teams.

In 1998 June Sports celebrated its 40th anniversary, and it is the longest running native soccer tournament on the Coast. However, its roots go further back to the Sports Days that have been organized in the community since the 1920s (Spradley 1969: 55).

Locally, June Sports is one of the biggest events of the year as native soccer players, supporters, and relatives seize the opportunity to visit their
families and swarm the island. Most of the island’s native population attends the games, the youth lahal competition, or various other forms of entertainment taking place on the sidelines of the soccer fields. For many, the evenings of the tournament provide an occasion for visiting relatives, partying, and recuperating for the morning games.

The tournament has four classes of competition; adult males, adult females, young males, and young females. The event is formally organized by the Recreation Committee that is comprised of a group of dedicated native women who act as volunteer organizers and entrepreneurs for a host of different arrangements in Alert Bay. Several employees of the ‘Namgis First Nation act as volunteer vendors, scorecard keepers, and in a variety of other functions. Arguably, the tournament is the most prestigious for a Kwakiutl team to win.

**Contesting Tribal Identities**

Kwakiutl soccer teams are formed on the basis of tribal identity. In practice, this means that most players have the opportunity to play for more than one team if they can trace their ancestry back to the team. In 1998 several players were known to have shifted team once or twice in their playing career. The shifting allegiance of the players can be seen as one instant of the negotiation of identities among the Kwakiutl. The individual may choose to overcommunicate his or her relations to the settlement where the team he or she wants to play for hails from.

Being a regular for one of the teams earns a certain stature in the community. Several players making extraordinary impact on the field were referred to as “our heroes” or “stars.” Soccer, indeed, is serious business in Alert Bay. In the 1990s the local team, Alert Bay Cormorants, organized a reunion where current and former team members gathered together to commemorate their achievement. At the event, it was recounted, the community hall was packed, and it was a very emotional moment for all involved as the survivors of the “original 11” made their entry.
The soccer teams are named following three general principles: (i) An event in the history of the First Nation, (ii) a mythological or founding ancestor or (iii) a geographical place. In 1998 the Kwakiutl teams playing the Adult male tournament were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Nation</th>
<th>Team Name</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fort Rupert Kwakiul</td>
<td>&quot;Tsaxis United&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Namgis</td>
<td>&quot;Cormorants&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Namgis</td>
<td>&quot;Reds&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dzawada’enuxw</td>
<td>&quot;Kingcome Wolves&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kwikwasu’tinexw</td>
<td>&quot;Guildford Breakers&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gwawa’enuxw</td>
<td>“Hopetown Warriors”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gwa’sala / 'Nak’waxda’xw</td>
<td>“Henderson Memorial”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ligwilda’xw</td>
<td>“Campbell River Gold Wings”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Kwakiul</td>
<td>“Thunderbirds”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

June Sports soccer provides an effective means of tribal identification which many use by supporting “their” team vocally, flagging its team colors and cheering the teams on in the competition. Rivalry between the Kwakiutl teams remains fierce. Supposedly, the rivalry between the Guildford Breakers, the Kingcome Wolves, and the local Cormorants went as far as spectators howled like wolves to denigrate the Kingcome teams, while they broke kindling over their knees to do away with the Breakers. The supporters of these teams conversely hung dead cormorants on the crossbar the night before the game. While such fierce symbolism is no longer practiced, the significance of victory is clear to all. Tribal pride, prestige, and superiority are at stake.

154 Urban Kwakiutl is not a First Nation. Rather, it signifies the social network among Kwakiutl people situated in Victoria, Vancouver, and the Lower Mainland.
In other words, the discourse of antagonism through competition and rivalry can readily be translated into the practice of soccer. At stake were no longer the particular identities of the extended families, but those of the First Nation. As players performing or supporters cheering, they rallied around the new formation of the First Nation.

In the previous chapter, I showed how the First Nation embraced popular events mobilized around the concept of “culture.” Similarly, soccer is a social institution capable of moving affectionately, but lacking the historical pedigree to be interpreted as “tradition.” Nevertheless, with the popular attention and significant individual and collective prestige from participation, involvement is both intense and emphatic. The organization of the teams follows tribal identities. Thus, it constitutes the players as the representatives of the First Nation in competition with its adversaries from other tribes. The symbolism of the event is clear; social identities as ‘Namgis, Kwikwasu’tinexw, or Dzawada’enuxw are important in this setting. The antagonisms between the extended families are secondary in this setting.

It is not only collective prestige that is at stake at soccer tournaments, as individual valorization can also be attained through excellence on the pitch. A host of individual awards ensures that individual excellence is celebrated. However, the institution embraces identity-making at a tribal level, and these identities become accentuated at the event. In this sense, identities constructed as administrative and political entities in everyday life become meaningful and socially significant categories by individuals. At soccer, it makes sense to be Kwikwasu’tinexw or ‘Namgis rather than belonging to the Willie, Scow, Alfred, or Hunt families, and it is this identity that prevails.
Conclusive Remarks

In this chapter I exemplified how politics of identity operate at several levels of dialogue: between the Kwakiutl and the Euro-Canadian agents such as the government, between the various First Nations, between extended families, and between individuals. In these negotiations of meaning and authority, the framing of “tradition” as a means to represent identity is crucial.

I sought to exemplify these developments with two social institutions that, at first glimpse, seem unrelated, but espouse the negotiation of identities in different realms. The potlatch continues to reproduce individual and family identities. Thereby, it offers the construal and embodied practice of a specific notion of the person, where the extended family remains the core unit of identification. As the families guard their ancestral prerogatives zealously, the institution has, so far, offered limited means for defining First Nations (tribal) identities.

As shown in chapter 11, this form of identity-making is produced through popular and publicly accessible symbols that are not restricted as those in the ritual realm. Soccer represents a popular institution loaded with symbolism and social boundary maintenance where ownership of symbols is not exclusive. The institution establishes an effective way to construe identification with the First Nation, thus suggesting another social identity relevant for understanding contemporary Kwakiutl personhood.

Again, one witnesses an indigenization of the Canadian, as the institution is meaningfully interpreted in local contexts. I demonstrated that the logic of identity construal in potlatch and soccer were based on a similar dialectic that integrated and differentiated the collective through antagonisms. While the potlatch negotiated individual and family identities, soccer negotiated nation identities.
In both cases social agents, from extended families or the First Nation, are pivotal in organizing and orchestrating these events with their immanent meanings and politics of identity. However, it remains important to keep in mind that these agents are not conflictive, as the same individuals are often participants in both realms. In the particular social career of an individual, he or she may participate in both realms in different functions. Although such institutionalized practices may be equally meaningful and accessible to the individual, it remains important that they espouse vested interests and representations that negotiate social identities. It may be interesting whether First Nations identities will prevail in the long run, or if the oscillation between the identities will continue to add to the diversification of contemporary personhood.
Chapter 13. Contemporary Kwakiutl Personhood

My initial assumption in chapter 1 was that notions of personhood are constructed and reconstructed in a complex interplay between shifting social agents from outside and within Kwakiutl society. I also asserted that analyses of social agents are central to the understanding of personhood. They, at various times, have occupied relative social positions of power under shifting structural conditions, and they have had a central impact on the construction of categories of personhood. Throughout this dissertation, I documented that factions of native agents, missionaries, and government agents actively sought to gain control over or impose social institutions such as the potlatch and the school central to the definition and practices of social identities. These relations I coined politics of identity. Concurrent with the shifting structural conditions of interethnic relations in Canada, and to some extent globally, this balance of power between these social agents has been shifting.

In Part Four I outlined the attempt to “civilize” the Kwakiutl in the conjoined effort of missionaries and government. So far in Part Five, I have outlined the changing structural conditions since the 1950s and the increasing empowerment of Kwakiutl agents, while other social agents such as the missionaries were relegated to minor roles in the historical figuration. In this period, different native factions and government agents negotiated, and sought to impose, the primacy of differing social identities by gaining or retaining control of social institutions such as the school, potlatch or family, or reframe other institutions such as soccer.

In and through these institutions, identities are defined, represented, enacted, embodied, and learned by social actors. Thus, controlling such institutional practices are inherently embedded in relations of power and knowledge. As argued in chapter 2, personhood subsumes social
identities. That is, the range of social identities possible are constituent for personhood. In this sense, this chapter integrates the analyses in chapter 11 and 12.

In this chapter, I focus on contemporary notions of personhood which have come about as a result of the complex interplay of global and national structural conditions, and the work of local social agents who, in turn, have formed a unique historical trajectory structuring future socio-cultural conditions of possibility. The chapter focuses on a microlevel of analysis that compares to chapter 6 which outlined the general features of contemporary Kwakiutl society at Alert Bay. To investigate contemporary Kwakiutl personhood I employ the analytical framework which I sketched in chapter 2 that integrates both a structural and a processual understanding of personhood.

Similar to chapter 8, I investigate the practices of naming as I propose that these acts exhibit a number of the intricacies at stake in contemporary personhood. On the one hand, the conflation of some types of names reflects the impact of colonization and the discontinuities in the reproduction of personhood. On the other hand, the practices of naming and the meaning of names reflect the continuous production of meaning and appropriation to new structural conditions by the end of the millennium.

I investigate how the acquisition of title names has become a strategy of identity-making rather than marking differentiated stages in the social career of the person within a hierarchical social order. I also examine how Christian names have become widely used, but such names do not merely reflect an internalization of colonization. Rather than that, Christian names are now re-appropriated to reproduce the social and symbolic significance of the extended family.

Finally, I propose that contemporary personhood reflects the increasing complexity of the social order in late modernity. Kwakiutl personhood has
diversified and increasingly become the object of individual identity-making as a result of social cohesion of the Kwakiutl community.

The Continuing Importance of Kinship

In the previous chapter, I argued that the social entity of the numaym has to some extent been modified to the extended family, although social and symbolic boundaries have become increasingly complex. Individuals choosing their own partners, interethnic marriages, and lacking social cohesion within this social unit have contributed to the demise of external boundaries. Nevertheless, affinal relations within the extended family are still crucial in several ways.

By the end of the 20th century the extended family continues to play a crucial role as a social network, in social discourse, and for the political relations of Kwakiutl communities. Although the primary childrearing unit is the nuclear family, children frequently live with, or are nursed by, grandparents, aunts, and uncles. The extended family remains crucial for gaining support in various political, economic, and social matters. While the internal ranking of the numaym has faltered, the social fabric and notions of solidarity and mutual support within the extended family persist.

In contemporary discourse, extended families are mostly referred to in social contexts as (i) my/our “family.” In ceremonial context the resemblance to the old numaym order is further enhanced. Members of the large extended family at Alert Bay with the surname “Alfred” may for example refer to themselves as “House of the Sun.” This rendering refers to the main crest of the numaym as well as the Kwak’wala term for the numaym, “Si’santla.”

Dissent within extended families occurs, but it is rarely communicated in public. When such conflicts become public, it is the cause of public attention, and many emphasize that the head of the “family” or the “old
people” should get the parties to consent. Such social friction is hardly surprising given that individual disagreements and antagonisms may be real. The fact that such disagreement is voiced publicly is noticeable. Arguably, the public expects family members to voice their disagreements in private while appearing in unity in public matters.

When actions deviate from this pattern of expectations, it is noted in the remainder of the community. While social control of the heads of the extended family may have diminished in the past century, I did not witness that anybody publicly spoke against the head or the old people from their own family.

In the previous chapter I showed how skilled rhetorical use of kinship was an effective means in gaining support to and validating positions in the potlatch. It is not only in ceremonial and public events that the effective negotiation of kinship is socially significant. The implicit or explicit use of kinship is central for social actors to successfully negotiate social interaction.

One example of the imperative of kinship is the public meeting about the rebuilding of the Big House, where some suggested that the Big House should be rebuilt at the waterfront instead of at its original location. While some argued that traditionally, Big Houses were located at the waterfront, others argued that this was not necessarily the case, effectively disclaiming the argument of “traditional” location. At the end of the meeting, one of the oldest ladies in the community, related to numerous individuals present, expressed her sorrow if the Big House would not be built at its original location. According to several individuals, her wish was deciding for the casting of their vote. Bearing her position in mind, the enunciation of her emotional state of sorrow was an effective means to persuade numerous individuals not wishing to inflict emotional distress upon one of the old people they were related to.
A second example of the way that reference to the extended family and emotional states are used in public discourse came while observing classroom behavior at the T'lisalagi'läkw School. Here, teachers and teaching assistants often stressed a vocabulary of emotions to correct the children. One student, a nephew of the teacher, was corrected as she told her nephew: “I will be sad, if you don’t listen.” Another student was told that his parents and grandparents “would be embarrassed” by his behavior. The social and emotional importance of kinship is thus enunciated as guidelines for social behavior insofar as shaming and embarrassment of the extended family remains a deterrent for many people.

In a third example, kinship ties between two friends may be overcommunicated, while the opposite is the case for relatives where personal relations are strained. Several times, such friends referred to each other as “brothers” while stressing the kinship ties to me. When first cousins, individuals often stressed that in the “Indian way” they were considered brothers and sisters. At other times the Kwak’wala terms for close relatives were used to interpellate other individuals.

Similarly, the strategic use of kinship terminology may be useful in social situations where a person wants to elicit favors from another, such as borrowing money, joining a party, or catching a ride to the city.

A fourth example may be the potential sexual relationship between two adolescents or young people. While referring to kinship, such a relationship can be condoned or dissuaded by parents and grandparents by referring to the individuals as either too closely related, or by referring to traditional customs of marrying somebody within the same extended family.

Public discourse places great emphasis on the mutual love, care, and respect for relatives. When approached within kinship terminology, it is not easy for Kwakiutl individuals to reject favors asked for. Thus, the
successful negotiation of kinship and native identity in social discourse are central facets of social and cultural competences. Social actors can use Kwak’wala teknonyms and classificatory systems as an effective means to strategic action by skillfully negotiating these categories in both the ceremonial, political, and daily occurrences.

English has been the dominant language in public discourse since the 1940s, and only few fluent Kwak’wala speakers are alive. As described in chapter 11, language retention efforts have not resulted in the rejuvenation of the language as the vernacular. Language has two functional dimensions: one is its communicative function. Outside the ceremonial realm, English has effectively replaced Kwak’wala. The second is its symbolic function. While children did not learn to speak Kwak’wala at home, they still have a fair comprehension of the language from listening to parents or grandparents. Similarly, language retention programs may not have resulted in fluent speakers, but most Kwakiutl understand a rudimentary vocabulary such as greetings, basic conversational skills, words in songs, and for categories of songs and dances. This vocabulary is frequently employed in social discourse, while initiating conversations, enhancing points, joking, or furthering claims for ritual knowledge. Usage of Kwak’wala in social discourse establishes boundaries of inclusiveness, and defines native identity in relation to the non-Kwak’wala and non-native interlocutors. In contemporary public discourse, whether in a ceremonial or everyday setting, the use of Kwak’wala becomes emblematic of the cultural competence of the speaker. The use of Kwak’wala, in full or in phrases, becomes a strategic means to include and exclude others from the conversation and marking semantic boundaries of group inclusiveness.

Both categories of kinship and the employment of Kwak’wala work to establish symbolic distinctions between “we” and “them” at various levels: within the extended family, within the First Nation, to other native communities, and to non-native society. Thus, when Chief councilors or hereditary chiefs commence speeches to a Euro-Canadian audience in
Kwak’wala, such utterances on the one hand interpret the continuity of Kwakiutl “culture,” but on the other hand they also establish symbolic boundaries between “we” (the unique Kwakiutl) and “them” (the Euro-Canadians). Arguably, the enhancement of social identities through such symbolic means on both extended family and tribal levels is further necessitated by the changing patterns of residence on and off the reserves.

**Spatial Reorganization**

In the 19th century, physical space was ordered into social divisions and symbolic demarcations. As noted in chapter 5, the external physical location of the Big Houses was determined by the social order, as was the internal division of space where the head chief of the numaym rested in the center at the back of the house.

Today, all live in modern houses or apartments with nuclear families or singles as the social unit of the household. The pattern is not dissimilar to the one of adjacent Euro-Canadian society. Similarly, the physical positions of houses are not subjected to the social order any longer. Today, the newer houses are built in the back of the reserve or up the hill in distinct North American subdivision fashion. The only discernible social characteristics are that members of other Kwakiutl First Nations than the ‘Namgis reside at the “Whe-La-La-U reserve” behind the defunct residential school155. While the extended family continues to be the predominant ideological and social point of reference, the nuclear family is the predominant residential unit.

Thus, I should be clear that the extended family plays a crucial role as a sociological phenomenon as well as a point of reference in social

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155 Kwakiutl individuals from Village Island, Kingcome, Gilford Island, Turnour Island, and other settlements relocated to Alert Bay in the mid-1960s, leaving some of the settlements deserted or with a diminished population. See Harry Wolcott’s account of the Indian School (1967) for the period immediately preceding the abandonment of the settlement at Village Island.
discourse and practice. However, it remains to be examined if the extended family is still constituent of personhood through acts of naming and names as was the case in 19th century Kwakiutl society.

**Naming and Personhood**

In chapter 8 I demonstrated the central social importance of names for the synchronic and diachronic maintenance of the social order. Marking stages in the social career of the person and the range of possible social identities of the person, names were ubiquitous in Kwakiutl conceptions of personhood.

Let me recapture the main points from chapter 8. While drawing from Marianne Boelscher's analysis of Haida naming practices, I previously outlined six categories of personal names that were bestowed upon the individual throughout his or her social career, asserting that full personhood was reached by the bequeathal of a chief's name (Boelscher 1988: 153).

To trace the historical trajectories of personhood through the past 150 years, let us revisit the use of such personal names among contemporary Kwakiutl. In 19th century ceremonials, the act of naming provided a ritual link between the symbolic property, such as names and privileges (tangible and intangible), and the material property exchanged. Names constituted Kwakiutl personhood by linking individual and collective existence in different ways:

Cosmologically, names also mediated between the supernatural and the social world. Certain names are thought to originate from supernatural ancestors or events, thus “reinforcing the constant flux between information from the supernatural world and socio-political activity.” (Boelscher 1988: 152)
Spatially, they linked a name to a lineage and places and privileges owned by that lineage, which was explained through the oral history of the numaym.

Temporally, names linked past generations with present and future generations. They classify a person synchronically in relation to contemporary society, and diachronically to previous holders of the same name.

The categories of names I investigated were childhood names, teknonyms, everyday names, ceremonial names, titles, and Christian names. In the following, I devote particular attention to the latter three because, I assert, these categories of names are the most socially significant in contemporary Kwakiutl society.

**Childhood names**

In chapter 8 I outlined how names were bestowed on children after the place of birth, and again a new name after 10 and 14 months. This practice has been discontinued. Most children are named with a Christian name at a Christian baptism instead. This phenomenon will be investigated further below. It is, however, still common that the child receives a name at a feast or potlatch in its infancy. In some families, children receive ceremonial and title names throughout their social career, marking their progressive standing\(^{156}\). In other cases the name given may remain in the ceremonial realm until the child assumes the position of a chief (gigame). In everyday discourse the child is interpellated by its Anglo-Saxon name or by an everyday name.

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\(^{156}\) An example is Fort Rupert Kwakiutl chief Peter Knox's oldest son, David Knox, who has received ceremonial names at various naming feast throughout his social career.
**Teknonyms**

19th century Kwakiutl made no classificatory distinction between the descriptive terms “brother,” “sister,” and “cousins” as they were all raised within the numaym, with grandparents or uncles and aunts often being the primary educators of the children (Kirk 1986: 37). Today, social relations and to an extent the classificatory terms of the Kwak’wala system are still acknowledged, as close bonds between many cousins are forged and encouraged from an early age. Similarly, children frequently stay with and are nursed by their uncles and aunts or their grandparents, as the extended family still play a crucial role in the upbringing of the child. Children may live with their grandparents, aunts, and uncles for extensive periods, while their mother or parents live in the city or are at work distant from the community. As shown above, the Kwak’wala kinship classification system remains operative in practice and at times in the strategic use by the social actors.

With the shift in vernacular from Kwak’wala to English, the Anglo-Saxon classificatory system has been adopted as “brother,” “sister,” “1st cousin,” “2nd cousin” and “3rd cousin,” “father,” “mother,” “uncle,” “aunt,” “grandmother” and “grandfather,” and “great grandparents” remain the most commonly used classifications. In this sense, two classificatory systems operate. One is Anglo-Saxon and most frequently used in public discourse, while the other still remains socially effective. At times, the dual classification systems overlap, when cousins are referred to as “brothers” or “sisters.” As shown above, the ambiguity of the classificatory systems provides ample opportunity for strategic action where kinship ties are over or undercommunicated depending on the intentions or reciprocal relations involved in the social situation of the interlocutors.

**Everyday Names**

In daily public discourse, three categories of names find usage: (i) teknonyms, (ii) everyday names, sometimes nick names, and (iii) Christian
names. The immediate family or peers construe everyday names. Sometimes they derive from Kwak’wala, but most come from English and may refer to events, utterances, or physical characteristics. Almost everybody in the community have an everyday name, used in certain contexts, that differs from the Christian name. In some cases the everyday names or nicknames derive from a person whom the family believes the person resembles, or he or she is an incarnation of.

The Symbolic Significance of “Indian Names”

In chapter 8 I concluded that title names were embodied by, and a constituent part of, persons as socially significant beings who connected past generations with present and future generations. Title names also differentiated the social significance of persons as embodied repositories of mytho-social power. Personhood thus corresponded with the social organization of Kwakiutl society. However, souls were reincarnated within the numaym, but not through primogeniture. The circulation of souls was, I argued, instrumental for the social integration within the numaym.

In contemporary Kwakiutl social discourse the categories of Kwak’wala names are mostly summarized as “Indian names.” When querying about the different kinds of “Indian names,” some individuals made the above distinctions between everyday names, title names, and ceremonial names, frequently complaining that others did not make this distinction and bestowed childhood names, everyday names, or nicknames upon individuals in the Big House although these names are devoid of the spiritual powers and privileges associated with title names and ceremonial names transferred in the Big House.

Throughout the process of colonization the continuous transmission of social and ritual knowledge has been at stake. While results of the colonial encounters differed from one community to another, so did the transmission of knowledge and practices today associated with “culture.”
The discontinuity of potlatching in some communities, or by some extended families within some communities, may provide one reason for the discontinued record of certain names and practices157. In Kwakiutl communities, it seems that the record of the most important names such as title names and some ceremonial names such as Hamat'sa has been zealously guarded in most extended families.

That said, an extensive “ethnographization” of culture is perpetuated individually and collectively in rediscovering titles and ceremonial privileges belonging to the extended family158. Several sources are used to document the treasure box of their original numayms: (i) oral history, (ii) old potlatch books, (iii) ethnographic publications and field notes, especially those of Franz Boas, (iv) diaries, notes passed on within the family, and (v) video and audio recordings. Arguably, this documentation has been well organized from the time the first Kwakiutl individual learned how to read and write. In his biography, Charley Nowell recollects how his father made him write down the history of his numaym, their rights and privileges, and the stories that were associated with each privilege (Ford 1941: 107-108). Several others kept written records, the so-called potlatch books, of the commodity and money distributions at potlatches (Cf. Mauzé 1992: 106-108).

Such practices may objectify title names as something to be acquired, rather than the titles are emblematic of social identities. Following such practices, title names are conceived of as a symbolic property, rather than emblematic of continuous social relationships (i.e. relations of social

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157 As investigated above, Christianity, wage labor, and schooling may be other significant aspects of acculturation.

158 Ironically, this kind of research is similar to the salvage ethnography conducted by Franz Boas, rather than objectifying contemporary Kwakiutl lives. The Boasian records are treated as a written repository of “culture.” Names, legends, and practices are rediscovered and redeployed in contemporary usage.
status). Thus the practice becomes similar to acquiring ceremonial names through marriage, head hunting, and spirit quests in the 19th century.

Arguably, in the late 20th century, the acquisition of titles is a strategy of identity making rather than marking differentiated stages of social significance within the social career of hierarchical persons. As explored in the previous chapter, contemporary potlatches are increasingly dependent on optional participation, and thereby individual achievement has become central to identity-making within the ritual realm.

In other words, the objectifying nature of acquiring ceremonial titles can be seen as a cultural strategy to attain mytho-social power that has been continued and appropriated to the acquisition of all kinds of “Indian names.” To understand this process further, we need to look further at the meanings that names hold in contemporary Kwakiutl culture. Reiterating the analytical meanings derived from names in chapter 8, I investigate the cosmological, spatial, and temporal dimensions of “Indian names.”

Cosmological meanings. This symbolic significance of title and ceremonial names is still the same, as these types of names provide a person with the symbolic ascription which validates social status in the Big House. However, in contemporary society this is not the only source of social power. Other sources of social power such as economic wealth and educational achievement diminished the social significance of titles relatively, since a chief unable to uphold his chieftainship with ceremonials is not considered a great chief.

Spatial meanings. While the origin stories of certain titles are still perpetuated as a means of validating claims to title, they also identify privileged access to resource bases of certain geographic places, such as

159 The similarity between the objectification of names is concordant with the strategies employed by commoners to access titles by the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century.

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rights to eulachon fishing at Knights Inlet. The spatial connotations of the
title names still yield symbolic powers. However, the numaym ownership
of the resource use is effectively extinguished. First, by the loss of political
autonomy and unrestricted use of its territories as a consequence of
colonial entrenchment. Secondly, in the current treaty negotiations that are
well underway for a number of Kwakiutl First Nations, the claims to land
are community-based – with the First Nation as the political unit, not the
extended family. In this political context it is likely that the spatial
connotations of names remain purely symbolical as they are, and will
continue to be, devoid of political and economic significance in regard to
individual or extended family based ownership.

Temporal meanings. Arguably, title names and ceremonial names are still
significant in connecting past and future generations within the extended
family. However, this form of social ordering faces other structural
processes from wider Canadian society, where social power is based on
other sources such as economic resources as well as the ideology of
democracy, and relatively equal access to education. Furthermore, the
lacking transparency of the total body of titles and their social history may
have eclipsed its domination as principle for social ordering. Arguably, it
has become the domain of specific knowledge for a number of individuals,
thus eclipsing its function for the social integration of the extended family.

“Indian Names” in Flux

In the context of mobilization of the concept of “culture,” as investigated in
chapter 11, and a process of resacrelization, as investigated in chapter 12,
two different developments seem to take place that may indicate the
trajectory for the future.

On the one hand first nations communities, urban and reserve, have been
mobilized around different concepts of culture (Cf. Carocci 1997, Glass

160 For an update of the stage in the treaty negotiations of each Kwakiutl First
Nation, see: www.bctreaty.net/index.html
n.d.), sparking a popular interest in active involvement in various kinds of cultural celebrations. In most Northwest Coast societies in general and Kwakiutl communities in particular, having an “Indian name” is emblematic of native identity\(^{161}\). While the Kwakiutl population has gradually increased since the 1930s, the introduction of the Bill C-31 made non-status natives almost doubled the population. While many were not identified as natives by the federal government, many native communities acknowledged their native identity. Today the total population of all Kwakiutl First Nations number approximately 8,000\(^{162}\). With “Indian names” as emblematic for native identity, there is bound to arise a shortage of title and ceremonial names in the near future. Thus, there is a structural juxtaposition between the equal access to “culture” as forwarded in community sponsored events and education, and the social order of the ceremonial realm upon which the naming system is based: a hierarchical one, with gated access to knowledge and privileges such as titles and ceremonial names. This structural juxtaposition may have prompted some families that have run out of names to make innovative solutions such as sharing names and dances, naming individuals with childhood or everyday names, or even bequeathing dances to individuals without names following the privilege.

On the other hand the process of resacrelization, partially sparked by the popular support for “culture,” has mobilized an increasing number of intellectuals gaining interest in the “traditional” practices and knowledge, and thus it is also possible that the (re)production of knowledge on the category of names and strategic action in the representation of this knowledge may lead to a intense scrutiny of “Indian names” and their historical validity in future ceremonials.

\(^{161}\) Arguably, the increasing ambiguity in the physical characteristics of many natives following two centuries of interethnic contact may further enhance “Indian names” and formal status as modes of self-identification rather than physical characteristics as a mode of identity-ascription by dominant Euro-Canadian society.

\(^{162}\) It is likely that some of those eligible for “status” applied for status because of the health insurance as well as the economic and other benefits involved in having native status today.
Hidden Meanings. The Cultural Appropriation of Christian Names

When considering names as purporting different kinds of meaning, it remains interesting to focus on the most recent type of names adopted by the Kwakiutl, which also remains the one most extensively used in contemporary public discourse. The names of 96 children from nursery to grade 8 collected from the T'lisalagi’lakw School provide a sample of contemporary Kwakiutl naming practices. At least 78 percent of these students have one or more middle names. While the younger students were generally unaware of the origins of their names, I obtained detailed knowledge from the students from grade 6-8. Of the 31 students responding to my query, 18 were girls and 13 were boys. It turned out 84 percent of these had been named after one or several relatives. Three examples of such names are Margaret Rose Jessica Anne Daly, Helen Anne Cathy Beans, and Peter David Richard Matthew Moses Sandy Douglas Mountain. I shall return to these names below.

For the students there was no significant difference whether they were named after their paternal or maternal relatives. However, when controlling for the gender of the individual, another pattern developed. 4-9 of 18 girls had one or more names following the paternal line of descent (22%-50%), while 6-10 of 18 girls had one or more names following the maternal line (33%-56%). Similarly, there exists a slight tendency that

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163 I was unable to verify more. It is likely that more of the remaining 22% also have one or more middle names.
164 11-16 students of 31 had one or more names following the paternal line (35%-52%). 13-17 of 31 students had one or more names following the maternal line (42%-55%). The ambiguity in the totals are due to uncertainties in the line of descent of certain individuals, they responded they were named after. One must bear in mind that the total exceeds 100%, since one individual may have several names and be named after both maternal and paternal relatives. Thus, the categories are not mutually exclusive.
more girls were named after relatives of the mother. There exists a
tendency that boys more frequently are named after a paternal relative
than a maternal relative. 9-11 of 13 boys had one or more names after a
relative from the paternal line of descent (69-85%), while 4-7 of 13 boys
had been named after a maternal relative (31-54%). However, the
categories are not mutually exclusive since many children have names
after both maternal and paternal relatives.

One individual is often named after both paternal and maternal relatives,
because he or she has several names. Of the grade 6-8 students, 39
percent carried one or more names from their grandparents. These names
were not necessarily the first name of the grandparents. No girls and 5
boys were named after a parent (16%), while more than one third were
named after one or more uncles or aunts (35%). Only 2 of the 31 students
were named after a cousin (6%). None carried the same name as a
brother or sister (0%).

In sum, an overwhelming percentage of the students were named after a
relative. There exists a tendency that most boys are named after a
paternal relative, while this does not exclude that he is also named after a
maternal relative. For girls a slight tendency existed that they were named
after maternal relatives.

The clearest pattern, that emerges, however, is that an individual is
infrequently named after a parent, rarely after a cousin, and never after a
brother or sister. In other words, the pattern is generational. Kwakiutl
individuals are named after a grandparent, great grandparent, or an aunt
or an uncle. Generally, naming practices follow gender lines, but they may
be circumscribed. One example is a girl named after Patrick who is
baptized “Patricia,” or a girl named after Charles who is baptized
“Charlene.” Let me illustrate with the three examples above:

- Margaret Rose Jessica Anne Daly
- Helen-Anne Kathy Beans
• Peter David Richard Matthew Moses Sandy Douglas Mountain

The first student’s first name, Margaret, and her first middle name, Rose, derive from her maternal grandmother, while the 2nd and 3rd middle names derive from her paternal grandmother.

For the second student her first name, Helen, is after her paternal grandfather’s sister and her maternal aunt, while Anne comes from her great grandmother on her paternal side and her maternal aunt. Her 1st middle name comes from her paternal aunt.

The third student, Peter, is named after his paternal great-grandfather. His 1st middle name derives from his maternal grandfather, while the 2nd and 3rd as well as 4th and 5th middle names come from his uncles on both the paternal and maternal sides. These examples suggest that there is no uniform rule to the naming of Christian names within two overarching principles: (i) The individuals are named after another individual one or more generations older and (ii) the individual they are named after comes from the same extended family.

While Christian first and middle names remain constant, last names change for the majority of women who marry in a Christian marriage ceremony. Chapter 8 exemplified how types of names were, and to some extent still are, situational in the Kwakiutl context. Everyday names, ceremonial names, and increasingly in the late 19th century also title names were dependent on the social context and the stage of the social career of the individual. However, I suggest that there are several contingencies in the act of Christian naming with 19th century forms of naming.

In chapter 8 I outlined how title names also carried spatial and cosmological meanings insofar as they linked the person to a specific status in the social order as well as to the rights to the economic usage of certain places. Christian names are not inscribed with access to such
symbolic and material property, which is not surprising insofar as the continuation of the ceremonial complex also perpetuates the titles and ceremonial names, which orders membership into different categories of persons.

However, Christian names are temporally significant as they link past and present generations together by way of the Christian names. They are collectively and bilaterally significant insofar as the situated transient names of earlier times have been replaced by a naming practice where both belonging to the maternal and paternal extended families is acknowledged in naming the individual after persons from both the maternal and paternal sides. The infinite number of middle names is a readily applicable form of such symbolic contingency. It is also individually significant, since it privileges specific persons through naming the child after that particular person. It was explained to me that it was to honor a particularly valued person. In some instances it was added that the parents wanted the child to inherit some particular attributes from him or her\textsuperscript{165}.

As was demonstrated from the sample of Christian naming practices above, names did not necessarily follow a discernible rule of primogeniture or other rules of paternal or maternal descent. However, Christian names are continually circulated, or recycled, within the extended family, which suggests their significance in the social integration and symbolic boundary maintenance of the family. A similar function was discernible in the flow of “souls” among the 19\textsuperscript{th} century Kwakiutl. The similarity in the form of circulation between the “soul” traveling for one or two generations before being reincarnated in an individual from the same numaym is striking.

\textsuperscript{165} This sort of analogic causality is further evidenced by some individual asking a relative to wear the umbilical cord of the newborn as a wristband in order for the child to inherit personality traits from the wearer of the umbilical cord.
Christian Naming and the Incarnation of the Soul

Arguably, social “rules” are subject to continual production and modification, trial and error. Speaking in a linguistic metaphor widely used in anthropology, I tend to think of social activity as speech, with its ambiguities in meaning, incongruities, errors and situatedness rather than the impeccable logic of its grammar. Thus, relatively novel meaning-laden activity may take some time to become patterned as shared meaning.

Several different meanings seem to have been produced by the circulation of Christian names. The first example is a circulation of the Christian name from one to another, suggesting the incarnation of the soul. One particularly illustrative case is Andrew Frank Everson, who, pertaining to his own biography, wrote:

“My grandmother, Maggie, was born to Chief Charles Mountain Wilson and Emily Hunt of Fort Rupert. Emily was the daughter of the ethnographic ‘informant’ George Hunt who is most well known for his collaborative works with famed anthropologist Franz Boas. In fact, my grandmother used to make tea for the doctor and would even clean his clothes. In the 1920s my grandmother met a young fisherman named Andy Frank who had made port in Alert Bay where she had worked. Not long after this meeting, they wed and moved to Andy’s home village of Comox. Largely because of Maggie’s highborn status, Andy subsequently inherited the position of the old Pentlatch Chief Joe Nimnim after his death in 1940... In 1972, several months after my grandfather had passed away, I was born and given the name Andy to represent reincarnate connections recognized by the old people. My widowed grandmother would even refer to me as her “little husband.” I grew up spoiled by her, but aware of the responsibilities that are inherent when upholding the name and privileges of a late great man. I was raised to know that I was from Comox and that I was also Kwakiutl from Fort Rupert.” (Andrew Frank Everson n.d.: 7-8, orig. italics)
In this case, the birth of the young Andy suggests an instance of soul reincarnation. The death of the member of the family prior to the birth of the child appears to be the criterion for interpreting the infant child as a case of soul reincarnation. While in Alert Bay I experienced a number of cases that were interpreted as reincarnation. In each case, such interpretations, not surprisingly, were made by individuals actively involved in the ceremonial complex. This suggests that the inference made between Chief Andy Frank’s death and the newborn child was no coincidence. Certain physical traits such as his dark eyes, his hands, and dark hair also prompted Maggie Frank to conclude that “Andy has come back.” The belief was further evidenced when Andy danced in a similar fashion to his departed grandfather. In this case Andy inherited his grandfather’s ceremonial name, Nagadzi (Big Mountain), and his Christian name, Andrew Frank.

A second example is the naming of a child after a living member of the extended family such as an aunt, uncle, or grandparent. In these cases I did not observe any interpretations of the person’s being as an instance of reincarnation of someone’s soul. However, the naming practice per se, in a secular fashion, continues to stress the importance of the extended family as a core social and ideological unit. Hence, the extended family is a repository of socially significant names.

A third example is the correlation between the succession of title names and Christian names. There exist some examples of this practice as well. With the focus on succession rather than reincarnation, it seems that genealogy and birth order rather than death are the defining principles. Daisy Sewid-Smith described one case of succession of title and Christian name. Herein she wrote about the transfer of the hereditary chieftainship of her numaym (clan):

“My great grandfather, Clan Chief Ol Sewide, and his sister Wayol, were two of the few remaining survivors of that
massacre at Gilford Island. At the death of my great-grandfather, his son, James Sewide 1st, was the successor of the Clan Chieftainship of the Wi'wumasgam. Clan Chief James Sewide 1st died in the arms of my maternal great-grandfather, Clan Chief Jim Bell, six months before his son was born [James Sewid 2nd] and shortly after his own father’s death... The Clan Chief in my family has been named by my father for three generations. They are my eldest brother, Robert James, his eldest son, Harold James, and his eldest grandson, James.” (Sewid-Smith 1997: 595, 600, my insertion, Kwak’wala orthography altered)

In this case the Christian name, James, has been passed on for five consecutive generations of primogeniture. The inheritors of the chieftainship not only inherit the privileges and responsibilities entailed by the title, they also inherit the Christian name, James. The continuity of title succession is also perpetuated in the naming of Christian names.

Practices of Christian naming suggest different productions of meaning in regard to reincarnation, succession of title, and circulation within the extended family. While it may be a minority who believe in the content of reincarnation of the soul, and act upon it, the form of today’s circulation of Christian names as everyday names within the extended family, and the intra-numaym circulation of souls and everyday names in the 19th century, are strikingly similar.

Arguably, the usage of Christian names, once a colonial case of subjectifying native people, has been actively appropriated and continually reinterpreted by the Kwakiutl people themselves to integrate local social and cultural content in the new form imposed by colonial agents. Today, Christian names, and the act of naming, (re)produce the notion of the person as socially integrated in the extended family.
Bodily Practices

Acts of naming and the cultural construal of emotions are but dimensions of the total social person. The constitution of the person is as much the constitution of the individual as a person in society. Therefore we must look further into the ways in which meanings are negotiated in society in the constitution of the person as an agent–in-society and as a social self.

As has been evident in ethnographic analysis for decades (Mauss 1973), the body is always already inscribed in and through culturally constructed signs. These signs function as communicational codes that precede verbalization. It is a tacit repository of taste, style, embodied practices, and social distinctions. In chapter 8, I demonstrated that bodily practices and aesthetics in 19th century Kwakiutl society were thoroughly inscribed in the social through the use of tattoos, head flattening, and other practices to embody social stature. In chapter 9 and 10, I described how aboriginal bodies became the locus of relations of power between colonial agents and the Kwakiutl themselves. Subsequently, in chapter 11 and 12, I described how the body was still the locus of relations of power in a process of indigenization through the workings on the body in various institutions. However, other processes also remain at work insofar as Kwakiutl individuals are part of and engage in Canadian society as citizens, consumers, and otherwise producers of meaning. Pasi Falk observed some general tendencies of body marking in late 20th century Western societies:

“Western body elaboration may be characterized as follows. (1) The emphasis has moved from working on another’s body to the elaboration of one’s own body. (2) Stigmatizing body-marking is lessening, this is paralleled by the expanding range of positive body-moulding. (3) Lasting traces give way to removable signs, which accordingly (4) tend to exclude the transformation of the body-gestalt.” (Falk 1995: 97-98)
When the individual works on his or her own body, it is mainly through reversible body markings. In the late 20th century bodily practices are intrinsically related to the social and symbolic meanings inscribed in consumption (Featherstone 1991: 170-73). The Kwakiutl at Alert Bay as social actors engage in, to varying extents, such bodily practices creating physical appearances that exude different taste and style that are local appropriations of global trends within mass consumption.

**Embodied Identity-making**

Characteristically, most houses on the ‘Namgis reserve are supplemented by huge satellite dishes that feed global and national news as televised events, while economic recession may result in job losses in the nearby logging camps where many Kwakiutl males intermittently work as loggers. The Kwakiutl are not exempt from the global economic trends, the latest developments in fashion, televised events, and novel commodities. They are consumers acquiring new cars and huge TVs. Younger adults and adolescents play recent tunes picked up on MTV and purchased at one of the local stores or on shopping trips to Vancouver and Victoria. Young people stride down the waterfront in new Fila tracksuits, Adidas tops, and soccer sneakers. All are well aware of the sign function of certain material objects such as houses, cars, clothing, shoes, and TV sets. As modern consumers, they display tastes and styles with meaning-laden references to local and global affairs.

Commodities today are used as means of status, and are modified to signal the identity-making of the owner. In this sense, commodities are one form of symbols negotiated in public space\(^{166}\). One of the important

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\(^{166}\) While natives on the Northwest Coast soon after contact adopted European clothing as a substitution for furs and cedar bark clothing, their appropriations of this material culture to local meanings followed soon after. An example that survives today is the so-called button blanket that has been appropriately described as “totem poles on cloth,” as elaborate design of one or more crests of the numaym are embroidered upon the blue and red cloth (Masco 1995: 54).
features of some commodities is the ability to exhibit multiple layers of signification. To different onlookers, the significance of the object evokes different kinds of identification. An example is the silver jewelry with Kwakiutl crest designs. To some interpreters, the object carried by a native person signifies native identity. To others, more competent in Northwest Coast art and the history of crests, the design signifies Kwakiutl identity. And for the exceptionally knowledgeable, the combination of crests on the silver jewelry may denote the extended family identity of the individual carrying it (Cf. McCracken 1990: 57-70).

On the ‘Namgis reserves at Alert Bay the majority of houses within the community are standard houses, financed by grants from the Department of Indian Affairs, where the owners get to choose from a limited range of models. Houses provide little opportunity for individualistic decor. Although several individuals talked about raising poles, painting house fronts with native design or otherwise decorating their houses, this has yet to materialize. The inside of many houses holds large comfortable couches, numerous framed photographs of relatives, and native artwork such as plaques, basketry, or framed silkscreen prints. Several stereos play songs that are professional or intermittent recordings from potlatches, feasts, and other cultural celebrations.

Given the economic circumstances a huge number of large trucks, 4x4s, and new cars are owned by native persons in the community, suggesting that cars may be a form of conspicuous consumption associated with social status in the community. The majority of these cars adorn some piece of material culture that symbolizes the native identity of the car owner.

First, some have bumper stickers on the rear. Some of these stickers commemorate a tribal canoe journey, native soccer tournament, the North

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167 Cedar planks that differentiate them from other houses in the community frame a few houses. Members of the Beans family own three of the four houses. They operate a small sawmill at Alert Bay.
American Indigenous games held in Victoria, B.C., in 1997, or refer to a native NGO.

Second, a few individuals personalized their plates, as for instance Chief Councillor William Cranmer who operates a vehicle with the personalized plate “NAMGIS,” or Band Councillor Stanley Hunt Jr. whose personalized plate displays the name “HU-MAS” which was the title name of his grandfather, George Hunt, Franz Boas’ famed collaborator.

Third, a number of cars have a piece of material culture attached inside the car. On numerous vehicles I observed a dream catcher, a quintessential “native” symbol, although not an original part of Northwest Coast material culture. As opposed to the house, the car, like the body, is a moving signifier that can be deployed in several different locales.

While such public displays of symbolism are prevalent, the predominant physical object that espouses identity-making is the body. As an inadvertent result of the cutback of public funding, the U’mista Cultural Centre has increasingly had to resort to alternate sources of income to meet operation costs. Another result is the sizeable increase of the well-assorted gift shop in the museum, where ethnographic literature on the Northwest Coast peoples, music cassettes and CDs, videos, clothing adorned with native designs, silver and gold jewelry, plaques, masks, and other artwork is sold. Inadvertently, the Cultural Centre has become the island’s largest supplier of commodities emblematic of native identity. Glancing in the 1996-97 Annual Report of the U’mista Cultural Society, the gift shop generated approximately $Can 200,000 revenue. Breaking down this figure Sales Manager Andrea Sanborn, estimated that $Can 25,000 were spent on clothing, and $Can 50,000 were spent on jewelry. She further assessed that 60% were sold within the community, that is $Can 45,000, adding that most resorted directly to the artist to have jewelry

168 One such business venture is the establishment of a full-scale “traditional” Kwakiutl settlement at a theme park in Harderwijk in the Netherlands.
made rather than buying at U’mista, suggesting that the figure is significantly higher for the total consumption. Further commodities for body marking were purchased in stores in Vancouver, Victoria, Campbell River, and Port Hardy\textsuperscript{169}.

Following Pasi Falk’s general remarks, the use of clothing and jewelry as a form of symbolism and bodily aesthetics is a predominant phenomenon in Western societies, as social actors consciously use their bodies as a form of non-verbal communication of style and taste. With the lessening of stigmatizing, body marking within the dominant Euro-Canadian society such as tattooing and scarification is increasingly becoming a mode of individual expression\textsuperscript{170}. Table 13.1 summarizes contemporary and past bodily practices to illustrate the shift towards reversible body marking.

\textsuperscript{169} Native clothing is a growing industry where native design is integrated in the latest fashions, as can be seen i.e. in the store owned by Haida designer Dorothy Grant in Vancouver, B.C. Indeed, retailers of native clothing and artwork cater for different strata of consumers.

\textsuperscript{170} An illustration of this tendency may be an exhibit on the aesthetics tattoo at the internationally renowned Vancouver Art Galley in the spring of 1997, thus elevating tattooing to “art” within the public symbolic space of the art gallery.
Table 13.1 Kwakiutl Body Markings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Body markings</th>
<th>Reversible</th>
<th>Irreversible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ceremonial realm</td>
<td>• Donning cedar bark head piece</td>
<td>• Piercing skin in Hawinachi dance (no longer practiced)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Button blankets</td>
<td>• Bite marks from Hamat’sa (no longer practiced)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Regalia, masks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Facial paint – ochre/char coal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Piercing skin in Hawinachi dance (no longer practiced)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Bite marks from Hamat’sa (no longer practiced)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everyday realm</td>
<td>• T-shirts and sweatshirts with native designs</td>
<td>• Tattoos with native designs, often a crest of the extended family – such as the sun, a chilkat design or otherwise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Jackets with native designs</td>
<td>• Head flattening (no longer practiced)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Silver and gold jewelry – earrings, nose rings, necklaces, bracelets</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Abalone ear and nose rings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Trade beads, necklaces</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Head flattening (no longer practiced)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

19th century bodily aesthetics such as head flattening, tattoos, and the adornment of abalone rings were subject to social control as they were gendered and socially stratified insofar as only nobility were allowed this kind of body marking. Today, such restrictions are no longer socially sanctioned, although tattoos with crests are usually based on the crests belonging to the extended family of its bearer. It is likely that had this not been the case, it would be subject to social sanction. Generally, body marking is rather an individualized expression of taste and style communicated to the collective, rather than collective inscription on the individual body (Cf. Bourdieu 1994: 201-225).171

Thus, native identity is symbolically inscribed on the body through modified, reversible, and irreversible forms that embrace, and are

171 That is not to say that social class does not influence life-style and taste. Rather, choice between commodities intervene the act of consumption.
incorporated into, the consumer culture of Western societies. The symbolism and aesthetics of native design on the body evoke a sense of native identity which is modified and communicated in differing social contexts by the individuals. While tattoos and scarification were subject to embarrassment at times with symbolic juxtapositions between natives and missionaries, native identity inscribed on the body is worn with pride as expressions of culture within a discourse of “tradition.” One young woman explained to me that she had her nose pierced and wanted a piece of abalone in her nose ring, because “that is what noble women used to do.” Another had the crest of her extended family tattooed on his shoulder and explained: “It has a special meaning to me, because that is where I come from.” Similarly, a young man drew a chilkat design and had it tattooed between his shoulder blades, which signifies the Tlingit origins of the Hunt family that he is a member of.

Today, bodily expressions of native identity are, if not positively valued, acceptable rather than stigmatized in Euro-Canadian society. While native descent is generally identifiable through physical attributes, the body has become an object of individual construction according to the social identifications of the individual. Contemporary native bodily expression signifies the complexities of contemporary personhood through its manifold guises.

**Social Selves and the Diversification of Personhood**

Previously, I proposed that the social self is constructed in social and symbolic practice. That is, individuals always already engage in social processes where they learn meaning-laden signs. In contemporary society, global and local events increasingly intersect and interpenetrate, thus diminishing the time/space distanciation (Giddens 1991). In other words, the community of Alert Bay is continually influenced by recent events, trends, and news from mass media and other channels of information.

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New signs and their meanings are continually probed, negotiated, and appropriated in local contexts. At the turn of the millennium, technological innovations continually speed up the informational flow to and from the community, thus integrating the community ever more with the rest of the regional, national, and global figurations. Undoubtedly, these structural changes also alter local social relationships, as new sources of social power derive from maneuvering in, and understanding, the social and technological conditions of the 21\textsuperscript{st} century. Similarly, global culture continually feeds into social identities that are locally shaped, reshaped, and negotiated in a global context.

As Grace Harris points out, it is difficult to validate interpretations of the inner experiences of individual selves (Harris 1989: 601-602). However, I propose that attempting to grasp the social identities – or social kinds, as Grace Harris would have it – provides a useful way to understand the complexity of contemporary social lives. Using G.H. Mead’s notion of I and Me I seek to show the subjective production of meaning in this social order. I define social identity as similarity in activity or characteristics that are practiced or displayed by social actors. Social identity can be enunciated or ascribed to social actors as a socially effective category based on activities or characteristics.

In the course of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century the range of social processes and social identities have multiplied, thus enabling new social and political identifications and alliances both locally and globally. In other words, a person is ascribed to, or identifies him or herself with, a broader range of situationally defined social identities.

It is not only the range of identities available that has increased, so have the sources of social power. It is not merely social power stemming from the indigenous ranking system that warrants legitimacy. The merits from participation in Euro-Canadian society, such as the economic and educational attainment of the individual, render positive evaluation.
Exactly such competences may facilitate access to a new range of social identities. In Bourdieuan terms, the development of social power could be phrased as; previously symbolic property mattered the most. Today, this form of capital is supplemented by economic and cultural (educational) capital as sources of social power.

While some of these identities are socially applicable in local contexts, others only become relevant in regional, national, or global contexts. A generalized list compiling interweaving female identities that crosscut age may look like this:

- Aboriginal person
- Artist
- Aunt
- Canadian
- Ceremonial/Title holder
- Cousin
- Daughter
- Elder/ Old lady
- Educated
- Member of extended families
- First Nations person
- Girlfriend
- Granddaughter
- Grandmother
- Great grandmother
- Kwakwaka'wakw
- Mother
- 'Namgis and/or other Kwakiutl tribal affiliation
- Noble
- (Non-) Drinker

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172 The list is ideal typical and may not be exhaustive or accurate for the social identities relevant for any one individual. Male identities are not dissimilar, but, evidently, espoused other classifications based on gender and to some extent work.
• (Non-) Drug user
• Potlatch participant
• Professional occupation
• Resident on/off reserve
• Sexual orientation
• Sister
• Wife
• Woman

Obviously, these social identities are not contingently interrelated as they do not all share the same social and structural context and may not be available simultaneously in an individual’s social career. Similarly, a number of social identities were restricted by access in the 19th century hierarchical social order. Today, access to such identities may still be restricted, but increasingly individual achievements may warrant access to title within the Kwakiutl ceremonial order.

As shown in the previous chapters, social agents within the extended families, Band Council, and government invest considerable effort in some of the social institutions analyzed in this dissertation that produce identities available for the individual. For instance schooling seeks to construct identity as an “educated” First Nation Kwakiutl person. Having attained high school graduation is thus important at Alert Bay. Having passed through this institution entails potential access to other identities such as occupation. Also, I argued that schooling, soccer, and different forms of cultural celebrations were important in constructing identities as First Nations, Kwakwaka’wakw, or members of a particular Kwakiutl First Nation such as the ’Namgis.

Similarly, participation in potlatching and learning knowledge and practices associated with “culture” is the source to social identities such as considering oneself a person of nobility, active potlatch participant, and in some contexts as a First Nations or aboriginal person.
There are two elements at stake here. On the one hand the diverse social identities are not all defined, enacted, and learned within Kwakiutl society. On the other hand, these identities are associated with differing values in different social contexts.

In other words, identities are situational, relational, and negotiated. For example, a Kwakiutl female may communicate her identity as an aboriginal person in one social context such as attending university as a student. In a setting with fellow native individuals she may wish to combine a range of identities to present herself as an urban, aboriginal, lesbian artist of the Kwakiutl descent. The negotiation of such identities depends on the social context and the relative value placed on identities such as noble, chief, academic, homosexual, and alcoholic.

The diversification of social identities relativizes Kwakiutl conceptions of personhood, as importations of Western categories and practices simultaneously take place as native people engage in social action inside and outside Kwakiutl communities. Involvement in these different kinds of social identities becomes a reflexive endeavor of the individual who opts for an individual social career that is constantly negotiated, contested, and interpreted by himself and others. Nonetheless, institutionalized practices are sites, heterotopias, where such identities are produced, reaffirmed, and valorized. Legitimate peripheral participation is at times gated such as in the potlatch.

In a Meadian phraseology the individual importation of the social processes, the establishment of relevant Me in relation to I, comes about in a variety of contexts that are not confined to the social space of the local community. New social identities embraced and reflected upon as Me come about through the continual engagement in social interactions and modifications of signs (Mead 1967: 186-188). In late modernity the sources of such signs and their social reference have diversified. It should be clear that as practice, categories, and social life change, so does the Me as construed in Kwakiutl society.
As identities are relational and situationally defined, they are subject to a degree of negotiation by social actors. Personal accentuation of specific social identities may be greater due to the lessening of the social control on the individual’s life. As the importance of kinship has decreased, individuals may place greater emphasis on their professional identity, their political office, or other identities that do not reflect the local social order. One example was a late Kwakiutl man who emphasized his identities as a Free Mason, hugely successful entrepreneur, and politician rather than his native identity.

As shown above, individuals may be able to sustain themselves financially, but the extended families are still placed centrally when social identities are negotiated locally. Nonetheless, social cohesion is not ubiquitous, as the extended family is no longer the central social point of reference for all significant social identities, thus exclusively defining Kwakiutl personhood as was the case in the 19th century.

Today, situated learning of the social identities comes about in communities of practice that take place in other social contexts than the extended family such as the school, in peer groups, or in urban settings. The functional equivalence between the learned social roles has diminished in contingency in space and continuity in time.

In Meadian terms, the different Me’s that are assumed through one’s social career are no longer contiguous. Social identities have diversified as has the importation of the appropriate knowledge and conduct of successfully negotiating these identities. It follows that the social career of the person becomes increasingly individualized with the increase in social identities and social roles within and outside the local community. I speculate that social reproduction of social identities within the extended

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173 A number of social identities may be ascribed and stigmatizing, and in the balance of power it may be difficult to negotiate such categorical ascription.
family becomes increasingly difficult as this identification, however emotionally and cognitively pervasive, remains but one of several possible identifications.

This diversification of identities also diminishes the social cohesion around the potlatch which may become increasingly based on individual interest and achievement rather than based on ascription and close identification with the responsibilities and privileges associated with i.e. a chieftainship. I suspect that title names will increasingly become objects of acquisition rather than personified stages of the social career of a noble person. In other words, “Indian names” become objects rather than the embodiment of social identity and responsibilities.

In other words, indigenized social institutions such as the extended family, the school, and the potlatch continue to face the structural constraints and opportunities invoked and facilitated by wider Euro-Canadian society.

**Concluding Remarks**

In this chapter I investigated contemporary Kwakiutl personhood delineating the changing meaning of Christian names, title, and ceremonial names. I argued that title and ceremonial names lost their spatial importance, and to some extent the cosmological importance. However, they are still temporally important for the continuation of the social order. Arguably, titles and ceremonial names are increasingly becoming symbolic objects rather than personifying social standing.

In the face of massive colonial encroachment, Christian names became established as the types of names most frequently used in public discourse. However, seemingly emblematic for colonial subjectification and Christianization, these naming practices reproduce social integration within the extended family and have been meaningfully re-appropriated by the Kwakiutl.
However, in an increasingly globalized culture, Kwakiutl also engage in practices of consumption and derive meanings from the signification of material objects. I investigated how identities were communicated through body marking, particularly through commodities. Thus they appropriate material items of global consumer culture to local meanings. Particularly, reversible forms of body marking such as clothing and jewelry were important to negotiate different levels of identity, whether individual, family, or tribal.

Using George Herbert Mead’s analytical framework of the social self, I also exemplified how social identities diversified, as the extended family increasingly loses ground as a community of practice where such identities are learned. Nonetheless, the extended family still remains the social and ideological linchpin in Kwakiutl society. Increasingly, Kwakiutl personhood is diversifying as individual social careers take play in an array of different social settings that are not confined to the social order of local native communities. Thus the social careers of individuals follow an increasingly individual trajectory, adding to the complexity of contemporary Kwakiutl personhood.

Facing constant oscillations between the hierarchical, stratified social order of yesteryear and the structural pressures from the surrounding liberal democratic Canada with an ideology of individualism, Kwakiutl personhood remains in a structural limbo, where categories of the person are negotiated between two different social orders: one based on exclusiveness and collective ownership, and one based on inclusion and individual merit. In this context, local social agents seek to produce notions of the person and social identities through institutionalized practices. In the previous chapters I showed how the school, the potlatch, and soccer exemplified such institutional sites where identities are produced, learned, and enacted. Thus, politics are still at work, but native social agents now negotiate the constitution of and representations
embedded in these institutions that were previously the subject of massive colonial encroachment.
Chapter 14. Civilizing Kwakiutl. A Conclusion

In this dissertation I presented an analytical framework for analyzing and understanding the historical trajectories of Kwakiutl personhood over a period of 120 years. The period analyzed spans immense historical changes: from the beginning of colonial incursion in Kwakiutl territory as one of the last “Frontiers” to the brink of a new millennium where the global village is indeed a reality. From the early contacts with the trade schooners to steamboats to the Internet, interethnic relations in Canada persist and are expressed through changing structures and forms that continuously negotiate new meanings.

In its widest sense, this dissertation sought to comprehend the development of personhood through the changes in the social, symbolic, and material world surrounding the Kwakiutl of British Columbia. In a narrower sense, the dissertation focused on the local relations of power, often formed within and conditioned by global structures where specific intentions and notions of self and other were acted upon by social agents who expressly sought to change the lives of the Kwakiutl. In the dissertation I analyzed the political relations and how they are vested in institutional sites, where such actions gained momentum in producing specific social identities. Kwakiutl actors responded to and construed new meanings and social orders to accommodate these historical conditions. In this sense, the dissertation narrates a localized expression of global domination invoked by Western agents in the 19th and 20th century.

In this chapter I summarize the findings of the dissertation and draw together the main tenets of the argument. First, I summarize the main elements of the social agents, institutions, and the historical trajectory of personhood discussed throughout the dissertation. Finally, I provide a regional perspective for the research style endorsed in this dissertation.
Social Institutions and Kwakiutl Personhood

Whilst analyzing personhood, I argued that careful attention must be paid to distinguishing between three levels of analysis: individual, self, and person. Following Ton Otto (1997), I argued that individual existence cannot be reduced to personhood. Nonetheless, I set about to study the learning of categories and practices of Kwakiutl personhood. I argued that studies of culturally encoded self-awareness remain speculative, but important, in understanding the production of meaningful action.

However, I also argued that personhood is a social product embedded in relations between knowledge and power. I argued that such notions are learned, and embodied, often in institutionalized practices. The ceremonies associated with the Kwakiutl winter dances exemplify an elaborate setting for learning competences central to being recognized as an agent-in-society. Here, names were transferred, thus marking an institutionalized transfer of one social identity to another in the social career of a particular person.

Furthermore, personhood reflects the prevailing social order with its inherent social asymmetries. Thus, 19th century Kwakiutl personhood reflected the hierarchical nature of the social structure. I showed how rank was reflected in the social differentiation of persons based on the valuation of titles names. Thus, bearers of specific names personified particular social identities as chiefs, nobles, or commoners. Souls, on the contrary, were reincarnated within the numaym, not merely within the strand of nobles. With the increased colonial presence of Euro-Canadian agents in the last quarter of the 19th century, Kwakiutl personhood was under a mounting pressure.

Social Agents

Missionaries and government agents made civilizing the Kwakiutl Indian the intentional object of their actions, as they wanted to overturn the conceptions of self, the social order, and the universe as it was
constructed by the Kwakiutl. To do so, these agents established institutional sites designed to civilize native peoples and overturn their heathen practices. Examples of such institutional measures were the church, the medical clinic, the worksite, and the school. Simultaneously, indigenous institutions were targeted to overturn Kwakiutl social, symbolic, and political structure.

Following the developments in the historical figurations, the importance of missionaries gradually diminished. Government and missionary collaborations with regard to the medical clinic and schooling ceased and native support to Christianity has steadily decreased over the past four decades. Today the Churches’ role in Kwakiutl communities is limited.

Federal government involvement also changed over the past 120 years. In the late 19th century, the government adopted an aggressive policy which targeted native institutions deemed an obstruction in the progress of the natives. Similarly, schooling for native children was implemented in the so-called Indian residential schools. The system existed well into the 1970s. Gradually, government policy shifted from forced assimilation to a more withdrawn role as a legislative and funding agency for native self-administration.

Throughout the era identities have been contested between government, missionaries, and changing factions within the Kwakiutl communities. The contestation of such identities has had many guises: through representations in media, oral tradition, performances, writings, and other forms of discourse. Notably, it has been enacted in the control over the form, content, space, and time of different institutions. Some have been endorsed as a measure of civilization, such as schooling, while others have been targeted as an obstacle to civilization, such as the potlatch. In recent years, the tables have turned, and some native agents celebrate the potlatch as a performance of native civilization. The common denominator for all the social agents engaged in this politics of identity is
that the object of politics of identity is the native body through institutionalized practices.

Thus, understanding the relations of power surrounding these institutions, and understanding the representations enacted in these institutional sites, is a powerful way to analyze the politics and particular identities embedded in the institutionalized practices – and, in the end, their impact on Kwakiutl personhood.

Throughout the dissertation I investigated how institutions such as the school, the potlatch, and the extended family are pivotal in the relations of power embedded in constructing Kwakiutl personhood. Therefore, I devoted considerable attention to the workings of changes in these social institutions over the course of history, as these analyses contextualized personhood in the social settings where individuals learned particular notions of the person and social identities. In other words, analyses of these institutions, the social agents, and the capacities controlling them through techniques of power and knowledge were instrumental in understanding personhood at any point in time.

**Numaym**

In contemporary Kwakiutl society, the social unit that I coined “extended family” has replaced the numaym. Although socially and conceptually less coherent than the numaym, the ancestral prerogatives and symbolic property of the numaym can still be traced to the head of the extended family. That is, in the ritual realm of contemporary potlatching the extended family is still central to affirming and validating collective and individual identity.

Nonetheless, the social cohesion and powers associated with the high ranked persons are diminishing. The social, educational, political, and economic functions of the group have been compromised.
The extended family is no longer the household unit. Education takes places in formal institutions such as the school from age 6. The cultural program suggests elements of cultural knowledge, hitherto restricted to learning in the social setting of the extended family, now facilitated by the school. Political authority and governance in community matters and in relations to external agents belongs to the First Nation Band Council. Individuals receive income from wage labor or unemployment benefits. They are no longer dependent on harvesting resources from sites belonging to nobles.

Despite the diminishing cohesion, the extended family remains the dominant social and economic network in daily life, and competent negotiation of kinship is central to successful interaction in social life.

In the 19th century, souls were believed to be reincarnated within the numaym, and titles and important ceremonial names were transferred within numaym while other ceremonial names were transferred between numayms. In contemporary Kwakiutl society these practices persist to some extent. Furthermore, Christian names are also “recycled” within the extended family. Rules and meanings of this practice differ, but they are still central in socially integrating the lineages with fellow ancestors that together comprise the contemporary “numaym”.

**Potlatch**

Over the past 120 years, the institution currently known as potlatch has changed dramatically. The development of this institution does, not incidentally, roughly correlate with the general developments in Canadian interethic relations. That is, it has developed under conditions of cooperation, subjugation, and confrontation. Initially, the institution was enhanced and increased by prosperity and influx of material wealth from the burgeoning fur trade. Subsequently, wage labor and the population caused the institution to increase dramatically in quantity (Cf. Codere 1966). Following the 1884 anti-potlatch law, the government and missionary agents actively sought to subjugate participation in the
institutions. Conflicts within the community, conversion to Christianity, the anti-potlatch law, integration in Euro-Canadian society, and the Great Depression all contributed to the institution all but vanishing in the 1930s and 1940s. However, from the 1950s and onwards the institution has been resurgent, and an increasing number of Kwakiutl participate in potlatches in one capacity or another. In an era of confrontation, the institution remains significant as a symbol for native “culture” as well as a central institution in ordering relations within and between extended families.

The extended family continues to exercise its influence in the ritual realm, although the modes and criteria for symbolic property to be transferred seem to be changing, as the institution adapts to conditions where active participation becomes optional. In chapter 12 I investigated the changes in the potlatch at length. Despite substantial changes in form, content, and meaning, the institution remains the central occasion for transferring titles and symbolic property. The institution remains central for individual and collective identity-making in the ritual realm. Thereby the potlatch is central in reproducing the social order of the extended family and the differentiation of persons as social beings inherent in its practice.

However, the elaborate system of rank internally and externally of the numaym has declined. Today, hierarchy is far less socially significant. Similarly, the privileges, obligations, and expectations associated with specific titles are less important for the constitution of contemporary personhood. The acquisition of titles has increasingly become a means of individual and collective status rather than embodying a specific social identity. Thus, title names and ceremonial names are still central to differentiating persons. In other words, the Kwakiutl hierarchical order may be less pervasive, but the potlatch continues to reproduce notions of the persons as ranked, ordered, and possessing differentiated symbolic powers. To this day, the potlatch remains a setting of learning, performing, and negotiating notions of the person within the Kwakiutl social order.

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Schooling

As opposed to the potlatch, which is an indigenous institution, schooling was introduced as an institutional measure for civilizing native children. That was, inculcating Christianity and European manners and morality. Apart from its perceived benevolence, the school was also a colonial measure jointly operated by missionaries and government.

However, the impact of schooling is not unambiguously one of individuals internalizing a colonial state of mind. Despite chronic underfunding and lackluster content, the Alert Bay Indian Schools produced a generation of Kwakiutl leaders such as Bill Scow, Jimmy Sewid, and Moses Alfred to name but a few. They were the first to speak English relatively fluently, and read, write, and negotiate with government agents about political, economic and social affairs.

Despite attempts to ban the use of Kwak’wala in school, only few Kwakiutl individuals lost the ability to speak their native tongue. Nonetheless, it seems that in the generation reaching adulthood in the 1930s and 1940s, many refrained from speaking Kwak’wala to their children. Not incidentally, exposure to at least rudimentary schooling had become systematic by then.

The investigation of the contests and contexts involved potlatching and Christianity in the 1920s and 1930s showed that former students of the Industrial Boarding School and Girls’ Home were at the forefront of propagating Christianity. Arguably, schooling was the social institution which left the most profound impact on Kwakiutl personhood in terms of the rigorous situated learning which took place within the spatially and temporally confined setting of the school.

Similar to the potlatch, the development of this institution can be conceived of in the context of wider regional and national interethnic politics. Being introduced in an era of subjugation, schooling eventually underwent substantial changes in the era of confrontation.
Thus, the 1970s featured an ironic reversal of education. Following the intention of the government to integrate native children with Euro-Canadian youth rather than segregating them, natives gradually seized control over schooling in the 1970s. In Alert Bay, this resulted in the establishment of the T’lis’alag’i’lakw School. Now, native social actors sought to define the curriculum of teaching and the identities produced within this setting. As I mentioned, this is an ironic reversal of history as institutions such as the school and soccer, once important elements in the corporeal exercise of colonial hegemony, are today’s pillars in the definition of First Nations based identities. Thus, the institutional practices came to enunciate two different conceptions of “civilizing” the Kwakiutl.

**Historical Developments**

Gazing at the historical trajectory analyzed in the previous chapters, the complexities of changes seen in the social institutions are also reflected by Kwakiutl personhood. Using Norbert Elias’ terminology, the changes in personhood and thus self-awareness constituted no less than a socio- and psychogenesis. Arguably, the social order and the mental structure corresponding to this order have changed radically from 1880-1999. In the course of this time span conceptions of the body, public and private, the constitution of the universe, and the place of the person in the universe all changed.

When analyzing Kwakiutl personhood at two historical fix points, i.e. in the 19th century prior to extensive contact, and contemporary Kwakiutl fifteen or so decades later, the differences are immense. Conceptions of time, space, private, public, pathology, and morality to name but a few issues are radically different. Physical amenities of everyday life are radically different as well. Acts such as headhunting following bereavement, devouring slain enemies, keeping body parts, and slaying slaves for ritual purposes have ceased. Today, such practices would be regarded as utterly pathological by Kwakiutl individuals, not to mention be punished with immediate incarceration by the Canadian authorities.
These historical developments suggest that Kwakiutl personhood has changed radically with regard to the emotive, physical, social, and cognitive elements. Nonetheless, institutionalized practices, pronouns, and names can be traced to the 19th century. Thus, discontinuity of some practices is evident, but so is the continuous appropriation of indigenous institutions, names, and practices as was the case with title names, ceremonial names, potlatch, and symbols. However, continuity should not be conflated with similarity in form, content, and meaning. I sought to show how application of bodily practices, titles names, and ceremonial regalia has been actively reframed and re-appropriated to contemporary conditions. In this sense, Kwakiutl personhood is continuously produced and appropriated by social actors as new pragmatic concerns arise.

Coda

While the study of Kwakiutl may prove incisive in its own empirical right, it remains to be explored whether similar processes take place on the Northwest Coast in general. As mentioned, historical studies of personhood have not been a central part of the Northwest ethnographic oeuvre. Nevertheless, the comparison of different studies on the Tlingit suggest that political and ritual transformations intertwine and re-form meanings and institutions such as the potlatch to a new social structure (Cf. Dauenhauer & Dauenhauer n.d., Kan 1989). Among the Tlingit, it seems, the corporate structure of contemporary Tlingit is gradually reframing and appropriating ceremonial practices. This development also underpins concepts of and social identities related to clan membership.

In a different fashion, but quite similar to the developments among the Kwakiutl, are the developments among the Heiltsuks outlined by Michael Harkin (1994, 1997a, 1997b)\textsuperscript{174}. While the particular historical trajectories

\textsuperscript{174} In fact, Kwakiutl individuals have been, and are, instrumental as teachers in the revitalization of “culture” (that is dances and songs) among the
in embracing Christianity, participation in the Euro-Canadian economy, and lately, the mobilization of “culture”, may differ from one community to another, similar processes seem to be at work on the entire Coast: all communities have been subjected to colonization in various guises, and in recent years, “tradition” has seen a resurgence as a political, economic, and social practice. On the same token, indigenous institutions have been reframed and reinterpreted and have gained new meanings among contemporary practitioners. Therefore, a general inquiry of the history of personhood and the institutions that produce it may prove to be incisive to understand exactly how many communities that have managed to reproduce knowledge and practices despite more than two centuries of increasingly intense contact with European agents and institutions.

neighboring Heiltsuk (Harkin 1997b), Awikinuxw (Owekeeno), and Comox (Everson n.d.).
Appendices

Appendix A: Summary of the Dissertation
Appendix B: Kwakiutl (Kwakw̓a’kw̓a’wakw) Social Groups
Appendix C: Mergers of Kwakiutl Social Groups
Appendix D: Interview Log
Appendix E: ‘Namgis First Nation Research Guidelines
Appendix F: Time Table, 1741-1999
Appendix A: Summary of the Dissertation

In this appendix I will briefly sketch the main arguments and findings of the separate parts and chapters of the dissertation.

Summary of Part One

The first part of the dissertation served as a digression that made explicit the theoretical and methodological bases of the dissertation. These reflections not only governed the dissertation’s content, but also its form. This clarification of the tenet was informed by a methodological point, as I argued that its underlying propositions could be critically examined with explicit regard to the written account.

The objective of the dissertation was to conduct an analysis of the relations between various social agents, institutionalized practices, politics of identity, and Kwakiutl conceptions of the person under shifting structural conditions in the period 1880-1999. Given the temporal scope of the dissertation spanning several generations of individuals, I did not seek to comprehend personhood through the intricacies of everyday meaning by any one individual. Arguably, such an approach would imply inferences with uncertain inductive grounds. Thus, I did not intend to focus on individual motivations. Rather than that, I sought to construe collective categories of the person that govern self-awareness and action in the social world.

While proposing that personhood reflects a given social order, I investigated the relations between the social structure, its institutionalized sites of social production, and personhood at two different historical fix points: prior to extensive colonial contact in the 19th century, and at the

175 The biographies of chiefs James Sewid (Spradley 1969), Charley Nowell (Ford 1941), and Billy Assu (Assu & Inglis 1989) are hardly representative accounts, although they are informative on several aspects of learning, social transfer, and local politics and meanings.
end of the 20th century. These fix points also structured the dissertation insofar as I sketched the macrolevels of analysis of Kwakiutl social order in chapters 5 and 6. And I sketched the microlevel of analysis of personhood in chapters 8 and 13. Needless to say, microlevel of analysis does not mean the miniscule daily practices of any one individual, but the cognitive, emotional, social, and physical aspects of personhood as it was embodied by the collectivity at any given point in history. In this sense, personhood and individual social actors must not be confused. Therefore, I proposed to analyze social practices of varying social agents in and through a number of social institutions that negotiated and construed personhood. I argued that the social institutions, the social agents involved, and the politics of identity inscribed in institutionalized practices were subject to changes over the span of history analyzed. One example is education. Schooling was an institutional pillar in colonial encroachment, and today it is a social institution in a different location, administrated by a new political body and designed to spearhead Kwakiutl cultural renewal. In other words, I sought to understand personhood through its institutionalized contexts and contests, where relations of power and knowledge were enacted and negotiated by social agents such as factions of the Kwakiutl, missionaries, and government agencies.

In chapter 2 I outlined the theoretical model to elicit and analyze personhood in a dynamic framework of relations of power, learning, and structural constraints. I proposed that personhood had to be comprehended through social practice, but suggested that a comprehensive analysis of notions of the person had to include physical, social, cognitive, and emotive aspects of the total social person.

Furthermore, I distinguished between three different aspects of analysis: the individual, the self, and the person. The latter, following Grace Harris, could be elicited by understanding structural and processual social identities. However, I also proposed that a theory of the self was needed to understand the importation of these identities through learning in social practice. Using concepts by Norbert Elias, Michel Foucault, George
Herbert Mead, and Jean Lave, I sought to construe an analytical framework that addressed both micro and macrolevels of analysis as well as short term and long-term continuities and discontinuities of social formations.

I argued that such identities were situated, learned through social practice with institutional sites as a central link between personhood and a specific social order. Social practices of these institutional sites are central to the construction of social identities.

In chapter 3 I sketched methodological tenets and research practice informing the investigation. I made explicit and transparent the interconnections between theory, method, data, and analysis in the ethnographic research practice and suggested the influence on the form and content of this inquiry. I proposed that the term practice was inherent in both the negotiated nature of producing fieldwork data and as a methodological concept; for social actors are learners of practices and meanings, and this must be guiding ethnographic research as well. However, I insisted on the importance of systematic data collection using a multiplicity of sources as the basis for inferences.

**Summary of Part Two**

Chapter 4 – 6 provided a context to the investigation of personhood. Chapter 4 outlined the general history of interethnic relations in the historical figuration. In the chapter I sought to provide a historical and regional background for the local events in Kwakiutl territory in general, and in Alert Bay in particular. In particular, I suggested that utopian notions of society guided missionary and government policy towards the natives. These ideas were not merely imaginations, they informed institutional action by the missionaries and the government towards native people. The utopias of missionaries and government officials concurred on the subject of “Christianity” and “Civilization” as being inseparable parts of “progress” for indigenous people. The collaboration was not unproblematic. The government wished “Indians” to become self-
sustainable individuals and Canadian citizens, whereas the Church wanted them to become self-sustainable communities. On the issue of education as an instrument for progress and destroying native culture and belief, their utopias coincided and they commenced their collaboration by forming residential schools, which formed an institutional enactment of their utopian visions for the native people.

As suggested above, chapter 5 and 6 provided descriptions of 19th century and contemporary Kwakiutl social order. Again, focus was on Alert Bay where my fieldwork was principally conducted. The two chapters also provided macrolevel of analysis fix points for the analysis of personhood in the subsequent chapters. If anything, this context turned attention to the flux of social power, social agents, and policies and institutionalized resources throughout two centuries of interethic relations. Central to social reproduction were, and are, the social institutions of the extended family and the potlatch. It is an institutional site where particular notions of the person are interpreted, contested, and affirmed. The conspicuous ritual performances and their central social significance made the institutions a focal object for the colonial incursion of missionaries and government.

Summary of Part Three

In Part Three, the analysis of Kwakiutl commenced with chapter 7 that delineated anthropological analyses of Kwakiutl personhood. In the study I outlined the contributions by several different scholars while concluding that Marie Mauzé’s recent study of Kwakiutl personhood offered a suggestive approach that influenced the analytical approach in chapter 8. Here, I showed that the social and symbolic importance of names and acts of naming was crucial for constituting Kwakiutl cosmological, social, and political order as personhood. Persons embodied title names which connected past generations with present and future generations. This class of names also differentiated the social significance of persons as embodied repositories of mytho-social power. On the contrary, souls were reincarnated within the numaym, but not through a line of primogeniture.
The regeneration of souls was instrumental for social integration of the numaym. In public discourse, the de-emphasis of the self was a guide for moral action as well constituent in a different emotional order.

While chapter 8 provided a fix point of 19th century Kwakiutl personhood, the second part of this century also witnessed the rise of colonial governance in Kwakiutl territory. Two groups of social agents: the government and the missionaries set out with an explicit agenda to change native identity altogether in an attempt to “civilize” the indigenous peoples of North America.

**Summary of Part Four**

In chapter 9 I showed how missionaries and government established heterotopian sites, contingent in space and continuous in time, concordant with their conception of native life and future. The most important of these sites was the school. At this site the situated practice of learning was thoroughly dominated by the representations and practices of the missionaries throughout the children’s school age. I argued that the importance of schooling should not only be seen as institutionalized repression. It produced knowledge and practices at the expense of social and cultural knowledge and practices enacted in native communities. The importance of schooling to Kwakiutl personhood lay as much in establishing the school as an institutional site of learning in lieu of or rivaling the extended family. Thus, it disintegrated the continuity of the native educational complex.

While I analyzed the practices of the school within its institutional confinement in chapter 9, the next chapter placed the school and its former students within the local context of Alert Bay. Here I analyzed how Christianity gradually gained a foothold among former students of the Indian School. In the 1920s, a number of Christian practices had been adopted by the younger generations, and the potlatch had become subject to fierce symbolic struggles between factions within the native community, culminating in jail sentences for several Kwakiutl chiefs. Based on
institutional pillars such as the medical clinic, the church, the worksite, and the school, the politics of identity was an attempted colonization of consciousness where social and cultural processes were negotiated, enhanced and formed in different ways by Kwakiutl persons. In the late 1930s to 1940s, a number of the institutional and symbolic pillars of colonization had been integrated in daily life and perpetuated by the Kwakiutl themselves. Increasingly, the dominant language of public discourse was English, individuals interpellated each other by Christian names, almost all native children went to school, and in the community there was a diminishing support to native ceremonials and practices. However, the changes were never unambiguous as several meaningful strategies were pursued. In such practices, members of the community syncretized native and Christian beliefs and practices to varying extents.

Using George Herbert Mead’s concept of the social self, I argued that different social identities were learned during this period. As opposed to previous historical events these new identities did not reflect Kwakiutl social order. Here, the identities were construed as meaningful, yet differing, mediating strategies to the sharp juxtaposition, communicated by Christians and “traditionalists”, between Christian and native beliefs and practices.

Summary of Part Five

The last part of the dissertation is concerned with contemporary issues pertaining to personhood. Part Five focuses on the institutional changes and developments that occurred since the era of intense colonial encroachment. Three different institutions remained at the core of the analysis: the school, the potlatch, and soccer. In the chapters, I showed how these institutions negotiate and mediate different social identities, while different social agents organize them.

In chapter 11, I analyzed contemporary politics of education while focusing on the establishment of the T'lis̓al̓a̓l̓a̓g̓l̓akw School at Alert Bay which
sought to realign the relations of power inherent in education. The new politics of identity was exemplified by the school’s cultural program.

The program negotiated native identity in the complex interrelationship between the political and ritual realms defined by the extended family and the First Nation Band Council. I argued that the school was gradually taking control of a curriculum of teaching hitherto confined to the extended families. Therefore, the program highlighted the structural problem of exclusive ownership and democratic access to cultural symbols. The cultural program is but one of the ways that this structural problem is mediated. The band thus sponsors events that are ritually framed as “culture” and “traditional,” but are publicly accessible such as the canoe journeys and cultural celebrations. The institution of schooling features an ironic reversal from forced “Canadianization” of the indigenous through institutional means to an “indigenization” of the Canadian.

In the next chapter, the structural tension between exclusive ownership and popular mobilization finds different institutional solutions. These institutions exemplify how politics of identity operate at several levels of dialogue: between the Kwakiutl and the Euro-Canadian agents such as the government, between the various First Nations, between extended families, and between individuals.

The two institutions that exemplify these mediations of identities are the potlatch and soccer. Potlatch was and is the ultimate point of reference for ritual authority and collective identity-making, perpetuating the extended family as a social and symbolic point of reference. Soccer, on the contrary, represents a popular institution loaded with symbolism and social boundary maintenance where ownership of symbols is not exclusive. This institution is another example of indigenization of the Canadian, as the institution is interpreted in local contexts. However, the institutions negotiate and produce identities at different levels. The potlatch negotiated individual and family identities, while soccer negotiated First
Nations identities. Both institutions are continually constituted based on a similar dialectic that integrated and differentiated the collective.

In chapter 13, I investigated contemporary Kwakiutl personhood by investigating the changing meaning of Christian names, title, and ceremonial names. I argued that title and ceremonial names lost their spatial importance and are symbolic objects rather than personifying social standing. Seemingly emblematic for colonial subjectification and Christianization, Christian names carry “hidden” meanings as they reproduce social integration within the numaym.

In the late modern society, social identities are increasingly diverse and become object for construction and negotiation by individual social actors. To exemplify this diversity, personhood is construed in and through practices such as consumption and inscriptions on the body. Different levels of identity, whether individual, extended family, or tribal, are increasingly subject to construction, and thus Kwakiutl personhood is increasingly diversified and follows individual social careers as the range and combinations of social identities multiply in and outside local contexts. Thus, Kwakiutl personhood is still related to the local social order, but increasingly regional, national, and global practices and meaning diversify personhood.
## Appendix B. Kwakiutl (Kwakwaka'wakw) Social Groups

(Adapted from Galois 1994: vii-ix. Barred L replaced with L)

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| Nimpkish peoples | ‘Namgis       |
| Nimpkish        |               |
| Ninelkaynuk     | ‘Nlalkinuxw    |

| Northern peoples | Gwa'sala       |
| Gwasilla        |               |
| Nakwoktak       | ‘Nak’waxda’xw  |

| Quatsino Sound peoples | Gop’inuxw |
| Giopino, Koprino      |          |
| Hoyalas              | Huyalas   |
| Klaskino             | T’lashinuxw|
| Koskimo              | Gusgimaxw |
| Quatsino             | Gwat’inuxw |
Appendix C. Mergers of Kwakiutl Social Groups

(Codere 1990: 361)
Appendix D. Interview Log

During my fieldwork I conducted or collected the following formal interviews. Informal dialogues are not recorded below as interviews.

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<td>Museum of Campbell River</td>
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<td>Hunt, Lorraine</td>
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Appendix E: ‘Namgis First Nation Research Guidelines

‘Namgis First Nation

Guidelines for Visiting Researchers/Access to Information

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‘NAMGIS FIRST NATION

Guidelines for Visiting Researchers/Access to Information

Not only in Alert Bay but also on many other British Columbia Indian Reserves, visiting researchers are welcome provided that they commit themselves to observing certain ‘Rules of Conduct’. Those for the ‘Namgis First Nation have been developed at the direction and request of our Council, Advisors and the Keepers of our Culture.

These rules are not meant to make life difficult for the researcher; on the contrary, they are meant to ensure clarity and fairness in the relationship between, on the one hand, the visiting researcher and his/her supporting institution and possible funding sources, and on the other, the hosting Indian Band, its research and development objectives, and the Band Members serving as institution and staff of the Band.

In exchange for accepting and abiding by the rules, the Band will support the researcher with, firstly, permission to conduct research on the Reserve, and secondly with what pertinent resources it can offer.

Briefly stated the rules and guidelines listed below are intended to ensure that the following basic concerns of the Band are met:

a) that the research be of benefit to the Band, both in its intent and its outcome;
b) that it be conducted according to professional standards and ethics;

With regards to the latter, prospective researchers and supporting institutions are referred to section 8 of “Ethical Guidelines for Research with Human Subjects”, adopted March 1979 by the SSHRC re: individual and collective rights. Two principles basic to all ethical guidelines are:
1) no harm, and;
2) informed consent.

c) that the interests of the Band and the confidentiality of informants be protected with regard to the dissemination of original research data to any third party (that is to persons or institutions other than the researcher).

Note:
"The interests of the Band...etc." are to be determined in consultation with the Band and are not to be a matter of unilateral assumption on the part of the researcher or his/her supporting institution.

d) The Band welcomes projects leading to the dissemination of accurate and respectful descriptions of its heritage and culture, especially when native perspectives and interpretations are included in the presentation.

The Band may wish, however, to retain copyright of both the research data and any publications (including papers presented in a public or professional forum) arising from the outcome of the research project. This consideration would depend upon the nature of the proposed project, the degree of professional assistance provided by the Band, or local concepts of ownership of certain kinds of cultural knowledge.

The matter of copyright and of any restrictions the Band may wish to place on either the dissemination of research data or interpretations derived there fore, should be discussed or negotiated at the outset of the project. Likewise, any conflict between conditions set by the Band on the one hand, and commitments required of the researcher by any other institution or funding source, on the other hand, should be made known to the Band and resolved at the outset.

The RULES and PROCEDURES for visiting researchers wishing to conduct research on the reserve are as follows:
1) Prior to consent being given to conduct research, a written proposal must be submitted to the Band for its consideration.

The proposal should be sent to the attention of the Band Manager, 'Namgis First Nation, P.O. Box 210, Alert Bay, B.C. V0N 1AO Telephone (250) 974-5556; FAX (250) 974-5900.

2) The proposal should provide the following information:
   a) Name, address, telephone number of the prospective researcher.
   b) Title of research project.
   c) Detailed project description, to be based on the principle of "full disclosure" and to include:
      i) statement of research objectives;
      ii) proposed manner in which research will be carried out, including project phases and research methodology;
      iii) purpose of the research;
      iv) intended/proposed application of research results.
   d) Name of sponsoring agency.
   e) Name of funding agency or agencies.
   f) Names and addresses of three references (or letters of reference).
   g) Anticipated date of completion of project.
   h) Include also: curriculum vita of applicant researcher.

3) The review and approval process is as follows:
   a) Assessment by the staff of the 'Namgis First Nation, or other designate of Council, for compliance with Band information requirements, including references check;
b) Presentation of project proposal or request for information and all details relating to (2) to Chiefs and Council;
c) Presentation to ‘Namgis First Nation of all commentary and recommendations from staff and Cultural Advisors for final decision.

4) Upon approval by the Band of the proposed research project, the next step is the formalization of mutually agreed upon conditions governing the following:

a) conduct of research in the community;
b) disposition and ownership of research data;
c) copyright of resulting reports and publications.

There are usually set out in the form of a signed contract between the researcher and the Band.

A sample contract is attached. It should be noted that the Band generally requires:

a) that originals of all tape recordings and copies of all field notes remain with or be provided to the Band;
b) that copies of original research data not be disseminated to any third party (person or institution) without prior knowledge and consent of the Band, and;
c) that the Band be consulted prior to the publication or public presentation of any outcomes of the research project.
I ________________________________, have read and understand the terms and conditions in the document titled ‘Namgis First Nation Guidelines for Visiting Researchers/Access to Information’ and hereby agree to abide by the ‘Terms and Conditions’ contained therein.

Date Signed: _________________________, 20 _____
Signature ____________________________________
‘Namgis First Nation ___________________________________

Start Date: _______________________________
End Date: ________________________________

Please return this contract to: ‘Namgis First Nation

Attention: Lawrence Ambers

P.O. Box 210

Alert Bay, B.C.

VON 1AO

Phone: (250) 974-5556
Fax: (250) 974-5900
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>New Big House at Alert Bay established.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Supreme Court of Canada overrules decision in Delgamuukw vs. the Queen trial on aboriginal title. Big House in Alert Bay burned down by arsonist. Royal Commission of Aboriginal People Report published.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>Gitksan and Wetsuwet’en claim on aboriginal title dismissed by B.C. Supreme Court.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>Bill C-31 Non-status native women and children defined as “natives” by Canadian Government.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>U’mista Cultural Centre established at Alert Bay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>Kwagiulth Museum established at Cape Mudge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>Tlisala’gilakw School established at Alert Bay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>St. Michael’s Residential School at Alert Bay is closed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>Musqueam First Nation vs. the Queen. UBC Golf Course Trial.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>Natives granted right to vote at federal elections. Granted right to purchase liquor and frequent bars.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>Native Brotherhood of B.C. held Land Conference.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>Band Council elections.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>Potlatch and winter dance ban omitted from Indian Act.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>Natives granted right to vote at provincial election.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>Revision of Indian Act.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>The first publication of <em>Native Voice</em> appeared.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>Native Brotherhood established.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td>Decade long economic recession commenced.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927</td>
<td>Parliamentary hearing on Land title question. $100,000 compensation given. Allied Tribes dissolved.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year</td>
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<tr>
<td>1848</td>
<td>Measles epidemic widespread.</td>
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<td>1849</td>
<td>The colony of Vancouver Island established. Hudson Bay Company established trading post at Fort Rupert in Kwakiutl territory.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1850</td>
<td>The four Kwakiutl tribes moved to Fort Rupert. First land treaty between native tribe and H.B.C.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1858</td>
<td>Gold found in Fraser Valley and Cariboo region. New Caledonia became the Colony of British Columbia. Immigration rush from USA and Europe</td>
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<tr>
<td>1862</td>
<td>Smallpox epidemic</td>
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<tr>
<td>1863</td>
<td>Catholic mission established in Fort Rupert.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1865</td>
<td>Intertribal warfare ended.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1866</td>
<td>Catholic Mission relocated on Harbledown Island.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1867</td>
<td>The Colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia merged.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1868</td>
<td>Influenza epidemic.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1871</td>
<td>The Colony of British Columbia joined Confederation. Native peoples of B.C. became federal responsibility.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1874</td>
<td>Catholic Mission withdrawn from Kwakiutl territory.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1876</td>
<td>Indian Reserve Commission commenced allotment of native reserves Indian Act passed in Government</td>
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<tr>
<td>1878</td>
<td>Anglican Church erected mission in Fort Rupert.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>Anglican Church mission relocated to Alert Bay. Sawmill established at Alert Bay</td>
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<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>Missionary day school established at Alert Bay. Kwawkewlth Agency established under the federal Department of Indian Affairs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1884</td>
<td>The outlawing of potlatches and winter dances added to the Indian Act.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1889</td>
<td>Second major Fishery strike</td>
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<tr>
<td>1892</td>
<td>First major Fishery strike.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1899</td>
<td>McKenna-McBride Agreement on allotment of reserves</td>
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<tr>
<td>1912</td>
<td>Kwakiutl minority in own territory</td>
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<tr>
<td>1914</td>
<td>Allied Tribes of the Province of B.C. was formed</td>
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<tr>
<td>1916</td>
<td>Dan Cranmer's Potlatch</td>
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<td>1921</td>
<td>&quot;Final settlement&quot; on reserve land by McKenna-McBride Royal Commission. Participants in Cranmer's potlatch arrested and convicted. Regalia confiscated. St. Michael's Residential School at Alert Bay established</td>
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<tr>
<td>1871</td>
<td>Catholic Mission withdrawn from Kwakiutl territory.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1874</td>
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<td>1847</td>
<td>Lekwiltok assumed control over Quadra Island</td>
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<td>1843</td>
<td>Fort Victoria established</td>
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<tr>
<td>1835</td>
<td>Smallpox epidemic.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1833</td>
<td>Fort Simpson restablished on Tsimshian Peninsula. Fort MacLoughlin founded at Milbanke Sound.</td>
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<td>1831</td>
<td>Fort Simpson established at Nass River.</td>
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<td>1827</td>
<td>Fort Langley established by Hudson Bay Company.</td>
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<td>1821</td>
<td>North West Company and Hudson Bay Company merged. First systematic land based fur trade.</td>
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<td>1805</td>
<td>North West Company established trade post at McLeod Lake.</td>
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<td>1792</td>
<td>Maritime fur trade escalated. George Vancouver met Kwakiutl people at Nimpkish River.</td>
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<td>1784</td>
<td>Report of enormous profits on sea otter furs in China.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1782</td>
<td>Smallpox epidemic on west coast of Vancouver Island.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1778</td>
<td>James Cook arrived at Nootka Sound</td>
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<td>1774</td>
<td>Juan de Pérez visited Langara Island in Haida territory</td>
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<td>1741</td>
<td>Vitus Bering arrived at the Aleutians</td>
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## References

### Primary Sources

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<td>Annual Letters 1878-1913, Church Missionary Society</td>
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<td>1860</td>
<td>Columbia Mission, Occasional Paper, Hodges, Smith &amp; Co., Dublin</td>
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<td>Columbia Mission Precis Book, 1881-1892 (P 1, located at Special Collections, University of Birmingham Library)</td>
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<td>Columbia Mission Precis Book, 1892-1922 (P 2, located at Special Collections, University of Birmingham Library)</td>
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<td><strong>Cuhane Dara &amp; Daniel Clark</strong></td>
<td><strong>“Old School/New School”, unpublished manuscript</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Culhane, Dara</strong> 1997</td>
<td><strong>“T’lisalagi’lakw School – 20 Years and More”. Produced by Dara Culhane and Daniel Clark 1997, Simon Fraser University Instructional Media Centre (1 hr 35 min)</strong></td>
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