

Missionization and Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh Political Economy, 1864-1923

by

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Abstract

This thesis describes the relationship between Skwxwú7mesh-speaking people of present-day North Vancouver and the Oblates of Mary Immaculate in the period between 1864 and 1923. It presents the argument that the mission that the Oblates and Skwxwú7mesh mutually founded in the Skwxwú7mesh settlement of Eslhá7an (in present-day North Vancouver) was the most significant point of cultural contact between Skwxwú7mesh and non-native people during this period. Reading Skwxwú7mesh history during this period as primarily a story of responses to colonization, it argues that some of the most important Skwxwú7mesh political and diplomatic strategies, including external strategies of resistance and accommodation as well as internal strategies of political economy, were linked to trans-cultural experiences centred at Eslhá7an. It concludes by suggesting that the emergence of Skwxwú7mesh nationalism, culminating in the establishment of the modern Squamish Nation, may have been driven by these Eslhá7an-based political strategies.

KEYWORDS: Squamish Nation; Oblates of Mary Immaculate; North Vancouver; Mission #1 Indian Reserve; Andrew Paull; Louis Miranda; Eslhá7an

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For Buddy Joseph and Janice George

Introduction

The history of Indian-white relations has not usually produced complex stories. Indians are the rock, European peoples are the sea, and history seems a constant storm. ... [But] the meeting of sea and continent, like the meeting of whites and Indians, creates as well as destroys. Contact was not a battle of primal forces in which only one could survive. Something new could appear.

Richard White, *The Middle Ground*¹

The Sea Bus, a passenger ferry route in Greater Vancouver's transit system, daily transports thousands of commuters, skiers, and other travellers from downtown Vancouver across Burrard Inlet to the public market at Lonsdale Quay. For those interested, it also provides one of the best panoramic vistas of the historical geography of the Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh² people, who have inhabited the land around Burrard Inlet, Howe Sound, and the Squamish River watershed from well before the arrival of Europeans until the present, and whose territorial claim includes all of the mountainous terrain visible through the vessel's north windows. The scene's most striking visual fact is the extent to which that claim has been ignored: from the highrises along the waterfront to the fenced-off watersheds, the entire North Shore exists as a microcosm of British Columbia's colonial present. In the

1 Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (Cambridge University Press, 1991), ix.

2 Throughout this thesis I have, wherever possible, spelled the names of Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh people and places using the orthographical system endorsed by the Squamish Nation. Readers wishing aid with pronunciation of Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh words should consult the excellent dictionary recently published through the University of Washington: Squamish Nation Education Department and University of Washington, *Skwkwu7mesh Sni̓chim Xwelif̓en Sni̓chim: Skexwts = Squamish - English Dictionary* (North Vancouver, BC : Seattle: Squamish Nation Education Department ; in association with University of Washington Press, 2011).



Map of Skwxwú7mesh Territory / Temíxw [Indication of Eslhá7an's location added]. By Khelsilem Rivers, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Squamish-Territory-Wiki-Map.svg>. Based on Squamish Nation, Xay Temíxw Land Use Plan, first draft, 2001, <http://www.squamish.net/files/PDF/XayFirstDraft.pdf>

foreground, small plots held in fee-simple title by non-natives form a tessellation stretching from West Vancouver to Deep Cove, and climbing gradually up the hillsides. The back-grounded mountains, which for generations have served the Sḵw̓x̓w̓ú7mesh as economic resources, legendary settings, and religious sites, are identified on tourist brochures by their recently granted English names. In this geography of dispossession, the Sḵw̓x̓w̓ú7mesh, though wealthy compared to most Canadian native groups, control only a few small reservations, each encircled and dwarfed by the surrounding metropolis.

Over against this general image, it is easy to miss small details. However, slightly to the left of Lonsdale Quay, two tin church-spires are just barely visible above a clutter of sailboat masts. Together, they form the steeple of Saint Paul's Indian Catholic Church, the central building of a mission that has been administered by Oblate priests for a century and a half, and which stands at the centre of the Mission #1 reserve in North Vancouver, which in turn was laid out around the Sḵw̓x̓w̓ú7mesh settlement³

3 The precise Sḵw̓x̓w̓ú7mesh word for a settlement such as Eshhá7an is *úxwimixw*. Like the English words, *town* and *village*, the definition of *úxwimixw* generally includes not only a sense of the settlement's size, but also of its form of government. Prior to the Sḵw̓x̓w̓ú7mesh amalgamation, an *úxwimixw* would generally have been governed by a male chief and a nobility which included both male and female leaders. Early Sḵw̓x̓w̓ú7mesh society was quite decentralized, but not atomistic. Most political decisions were made at the *úxwimixw* level, but inter-*úxwimixw* ties were maintained through the potlatch system and family connections. This allowed some chiefs – and their *úxwimixw* – to achieve higher levels of power and prestige than their counterparts. Based on my reading of the Victorian anthropologist Charles Hill-Tout's description of what he viewed as primordial Sḵw̓x̓w̓ú7mesh political culture, the most important *úxwimixw* of the early contact period were X̓wemelch'stn and an unidentified *úxwimixw* in the Sḵw̓x̓w̓ú7mesh Valley. One of the central arguments of this thesis is that these gradually gave way, in terms of overall political importance, to Eshhá7an. Note that Hill-Tout transcribes the word *úxwimixw* as “okwumuq.” Charles Hill-Tout, *Notes on the Cosmogony and History of the Squamish Indians of British Columbia* (S.I.: s.n., 1897); Charles Hill-Tout, *The Salish People: The Local Contribution of Charles Hill-Tout*, vol. 2: The Squamish and the Lillooet (Vancouver: Talonbooks, 1978).

of Eslhá7an.

The principal argument of this thesis is that the most important forces and counter-forces that synthesized Sḱwḱwú7mesh history, geography, and politics during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries were centred around this comparatively diminutive structure and the mission it represents.

Before and since Mary Louise Pratt coined the term, cultural historians have conceptualized frontier landscapes such as that of Victorian British Columbia, where “cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical power relations” as “contact zones.”⁴ The “zone” metaphor, however, obscures the high geographical variance in intensity of contact that characterizes most frontiers, including that between the Sḱwḱwú7mesh and newcomer worlds during the time in question. From the time the mission was established in 1864, until the political amalgamation of the Squamish Nation in 1923, Eslhá7an functioned as the point of closest contact between the Sḱwḱwú7mesh and the expanding settler society: a site of religious and linguistic exchange, a first stop-off for Indian Agents, a launching ground for Sḱwḱwú7mesh labour-market participation, a focus of government assimilation policies, a destination for salvage anthropologists, an institution of native and non-native education, a centre of anti-colonial resistance, and a cradle of post-colonial identity.⁵ In other words, the Sḱwḱwú7mesh did not experience a contact zone so much as a contact cone, in which contact forces radiated out from an apex at Eslhá7an.

Historiography

Although this thesis is structured around a Catholic mission, it is not particularly concerned with religious belief; where I do discuss religion, I am

4 M. L. Pratt, “Arts of the Contact Zone,” *Profession* (1991): 34.

mainly concerned with its role as a parameter of personal and social identity. While this approach is vulnerable to Geertzian criticisms of “trying to stage *Hamlet* without the prince,” my contention is that, as the playwright Tom Stoppard demonstrated, there are characters other than Hamlet who deserve plays of their own.⁶ In this thesis, the protagonist is the Eslhá7an mission's role as the focus of early intercultural contact and the cradle of modern Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh political economy. Nevertheless, even with theology relegated to the analytical margins, this remains a work of mission history, a large and contentious field that exists, in post-colonial Canada, at the intersection of scholarship and politics.

The historiography of British Columbia's missions began inadvertently in 1904 when Augustin Dontenwill, the third bishop of New Westminster, removed a subordinate (and perhaps insubordinate) priest from the Oblate mission in Fort Saint James.⁷ The demotee, Adrien-Gabriel Morice, had impressed the Oblate leadership early in his career by demonstrating an exceptional talent for learning native languages, producing a workable grammar quickly after being assigned to Dakelh territory. Over time,

5 In addition to being significant to the specific history of Eslhá7an, the two dates that bookend this thesis – 1864 and 1923 – also define a period which corresponds well with wider trends. The mid-1860s saw the beginning of non-native settlement in and near Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh territory with the establishment of McLeery's Farm (1862), the Moodyville Sawmill (1863), and Gastown (1867), ending a period of fleeting contact with newcomers operating out of New Westminster. From the Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh perspective, this would have been the beginning of what Robin Fisher has termed the “settlement period” of B.C. history. (I discuss Fisher's division of the colonial period into “fur trade” and “settlement” periods below). 1923, similarly, approximates the federal and provincial governments' adoption of the McKenna-McBride Commission's recommendations (1924), cementing and reaffirming the dispossession of the province's native peoples and coinciding with the marginalization of missionaries under an increasingly modernist and secular federal Indian policy.

6 Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (Basic Books, 1973); Tom Stoppard, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* (London: Faber and Faber, 1967).

however, Morice fell out of favour with Dontenwill, who considered him too lax in cultivating his relationship with the Dakelh and, perhaps more importantly, with the Hudson's Bay Company. Deeming Morice too valuable to simply dismiss, the bishop gently but firmly encouraged him to become a scholar of missionization rather than a direct participant in it.⁸ The result of this imposed career shift was a series of well-researched historical manuscripts that provide a valuable look at how the Oblates viewed themselves at the beginning of the twentieth century. They also constitute the best example of a pre-revisionist history of Western Canada's Catholic missions, and therefore a template against which to compare new histories of missionized peoples, including the Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh.

Morice shared with his fellow Oblates a firm belief in the righteousness of missionization, buttressed by a conception of social and individual morality based on rural, Catholic, French cultural norms. To Morice and his religious brothers, nothing could be farther from this ideal than the Northwest Coast cultures of the early settlement period, which he described by quoting, as evidence without need of critical commentary, a passage by Modeste Demers, the first bishop of New Westminster:

They know nothing of self-restraint, of the natural human laws of decency, of the bonds of nature or blood. They respect the sacred union of marriage less than any other nation in North America, and appear to regard promiscuity as a kind of public right ... The baseness of their actions surpasses even that of animals.⁹

Morice found the pre-missionary native cultures of the West Coast to be

7 I mean, of course, written historiography in the Western sense. From the moment that Christian missions were first established in North America, native thinkers have thoughtfully examined their political, cultural, theological, and historical implications. See, for example, James P. Ronda, "'We Are Well As We Are': An Indian Critique of Seventeenth-Century Christian Missions," *The William and Mary Quarterly* III.34, no. 1 (January 1977): 66–82.

8 David Mulhall, *Will to power the missionary career of Father Morice* (Vancouver B.C.: University of British Columbia Press, 1986), 148–174.

so depraved that he needed to invent a new category of sin to properly describe what the missionaries were up against. In addition to the “sins common to all of humanity,” he wrote, native people also exhibited what he categorized as “cultural sins,” which included a variety of sexual deviations as well as drunkenness, idolatry, and sloth.¹⁰ Morice does not seem to have realized that the majority of these “sins” were not at all unique to Northwest Coast cultures, but were in fact widespread within European and Euro-American society as well.¹¹ Paradoxically, this did not prevent him from believing, as Demers had, that interaction with lower-class white settlers had actually worsened native peoples' moral state, moving them even farther away from an ideal Christian life.¹² Having established this image of Sodom, Morice dedicated most of his book to describing, in epic, heroic terms, the Oblates' efforts to bring native people to Zoar.¹³

It is not very difficult for a modern reader to identify Morice's narrative as ethnocentric; however, his writing contains much more conceptual

9 Original text: « Ils ignorent tout frein, toute loi de décence qui semble naturelle aux humains, tout lien de la nature et du sang: les liens sacrés du mariage y sont plus relâchés que chez aucune nation de l'Amérique du Nord; la promiscuité semble une espèce de droit public ... ils dépassent les animaux mêmes par la bassesse de leurs actions. » A. G. Morice, *Histoire De L'Église Catholique Dans l'Ouest Canadien Du Lac Supérieur Au Pacifique (1659-1905)*, 4ième édition. (Saint Boniface, Man: Oblates of Mary Immaculate, 1928), 222.

10 Original text: « les vices communs á tout l'humanité. » Ibid., 227.

11 The conceptual framing of drunkenness or sloth, when exhibited by Indians, as a moral failing on the part of Indians in general as opposed to individual persons, was not unique to missionaries, nor has it been consigned to the past. For a discussion of how this framing works, and its political implications, see John Sutton Lutz, *Makúk: A New History of Aboriginal-White Relations* (UBC Press, 2008). For a similar analysis specifically focused on the portrayal of native people in health research, see Mary-Ellen Kelm, “Diagnosing the Discursive Indian: Medicine, Gender, and the ‘Dying Race’,” *Ethnohistory* 52, no. 2 (April 2005): 371–406. For an older, more journalistic account of the problem, see Hugh Brody, *Maps and Dreams: Indians and the British Columbia Frontier*, 2004 ed. (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 2004).

12 Morice, *L'Église Catholique Dans l'Ouest Canadien*, 221, 248.

13 Genesis 19.

baggage than a mere sense of cultural superiority. First of all, Morice and his missionary contemporaries understood Christianity as an either-or proposition: while there existed a continuum between good Christians and bad Christians, there was no analogous scale between Christians and non-Christians. While some native Christians shared the missionaries' opinion that embracing Christianity meant rejecting all spiritual practises identified as non-Christian, most did not, and while the Oblates interpreted their various forms of religious syncretism as fickleness, there is no compelling reason why scholars should follow their lead.¹⁴

Missionaries intensified their binary understanding of religion by tending to exaggerate the depravity of native people they considered unconverted, and to similarly exaggerate the piousness of those they considered converted. Thus they created, perhaps unconsciously but nonetheless guided by self-interest, an inflated impression of their own effectiveness, which undoubtedly pleased their audience of superior clergy and potential donors. The Oblates' reputation as "specialists in difficult missions," which the order adopted as a point of pride, was based mainly on its own self-presentation.¹⁵ This helps to explain why, for example, Morice perceived and recorded syncretism at Metlakatla, an Anglican mission, but not in any of the established Oblate missions, and also gives additional context to his derisive descriptions of native cultures.¹⁶

Another identifiable source of distortion in Morice's writing is its use of concepts from late nineteenth-century racial biology. The prominence of race in his work is somewhat surprising, given that missionization was, on a

14 Morice, *L'Église Catholique Dans l'Ouest Canadien*, 258.

15 The "specialists in difficult missions" phrase can be found in Oblate writings from the mid-1800s and is still the order's slogan. "Missions De La Congrégation Des Oblates De Marie Immaculée.", n.d. See also www.oblatemissions.org and C. L. Higham, *Noble, Wretched & Redeemable: Protestant Missionaries To the Indians in Canada and the United States, 1820-1900* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2000).

16 Morice, *L'Église Catholique Dans l'Ouest Canadien*, 267n4.

purely abstract level, antithetical to racist understandings of society. The missionaries who came to the Pacific Northwest were motivated to do so, and justified their presence there, on the premise that native people could be improved; as C.L. Higham points out, labelling native people as “wretched” was necessary but not sufficient to warrant a missionary presence; they also had to be seen as “redeemable.”¹⁷ Therefore, they could not attribute native inferiority to unchangeable biological characteristics, but instead usually blamed it on what we would now understand as culture, or on the negative influence of ungodly settlers. Nevertheless, Morice clearly believed in race. He praised Paul Durieu, for example, for basing his conversion strategy on the assumption that native people's psychology was totally different from that of European adults, more closely resembling that of European children.¹⁸ Elsewhere, he attributes the supposed resistance to missionization exhibited by the “River Babines' [Wet'suwet'en?]” to their Tsimshian blood.¹⁹ This gap between the philosophical tenets of missionization and Morice's actual quotidian thoughts can mainly be explained by his time period: outside of a small group of Boasian anthropologists, early twentieth-century thinkers simply did not share the firm intellectual separation of race and culture that mid-twentieth century scholars would make, so Morice can hardly be blamed for conflating these two supposed sources of heredity. However, it does undermine his credibility as an interpreter of events, as many natural scientists and almost all social scientists now consider Morice's idea of race as to be a pseudoscientific cultural construct, not a biological reality.²⁰

Perhaps even more striking than the way in which Morice wrote about native people is the extent to which he wrote about them; that is, hardly at all. Northwest Coast native people, as individuals, are almost entirely absent

17 Higham, *Noble, Wretched & Redeemable*.

18 Morice, *L'Église Catholique Dans l'Ouest Canadien*, 304–305.

19 *Ibid.*, 405.

from his narrative; when they do appear it is as peripheral inhabitants of “distant shores” aggregated like extras in a Hollywood epic.²¹ Rather than the conversion experiences of the missionized, Morice's focus was on the tribulations and achievements of the missionaries themselves, with the behaviour of indigenous aggregates acting as measures of Oblate success or, occasionally, of Protestant failure. The story that emerges is thus one of

20 In 1992, a team of anthropologists published the results of a survey in which they had asked members of various scientific and social-scientific professions whether they believed that biological races exist within the species *Homo Sapiens*. They found that the majority of biologists did believe that races exist, while physical and cultural anthropologists were fairly split. The same survey was repeated in 1998, with a far greater numbers of social scientists sceptical of race as a concept. Leonard Lieberman et al., “Race in Biology and Anthropology: A Study of College Texts and Professors,” *Journal of Research in Science Teaching* 29, no. 3 (March 1, 1992): 301–321. [In September of 2011, the Wikipedia article on “Race (Classification of Humans)” contained a good summary of this study]. Despite the large numbers of biologists who appear to have “believed” in race, it is unlikely that their definition of the word bears much resemblance to Morice's, especially given the overwhelming evidence that, for example, genetic variance among humans is very poorly correlated with racial markers such as skin colour. Furthermore, some scientists have argued quite adamantly that scientific studies that seem to uphold the idea of separate races are epistemologically and experimentally flawed: see, for a notable example, Stephen Jay Gould, *The Mismeasure of Man*, Rev. and expanded. (New York: Norton, 1996).

The last word on the subject should be given to the geneticist Alan R. Templeton, whose 1998 study took advantage of modern techniques of DNA analysis to show that human “races” meet neither the biological criteria used to identify subspecies of an organism nor that used to identify distinct lineages. Templeton found, furthermore, that there is far more genetic variation within supposed human races than between them. These results were strong enough to confirm what many natural and social scientists had already suspected: that the concept of race was a social construct with no scientific validity. Alan R. Templeton, “Human Races: A Genetic and Evolutionary Perspective,” *American Anthropologist* 100 (3): 632-650.

21 Original Text: « Lointaines plages. » Elsewhere, he describes the mission field as a set of « faraway countries. » These turns of phrase suggest that, although Morice was *in the* Pacific cordillera, he did consider himself to be *of the* Pacific cordillera. Morice, *L'Église Catholique Dans l'Ouest Canadien*, 205, 209.

European religious expansion, performed *by* French and Irish missionaries *upon* native people, infused throughout with the assumption of European cultural and moral superiority. One of the aims of this thesis's first chapter is to show that, in the case of the Skwxwú7mesh and neighbouring peoples, there have existed competing, equally credible stories that give Christianity profoundly different political implications than does that told by Morice.

That Morice wrote in the way that he did is less surprising than how long his interpretation of B.C.'s mission history remained mainstream. This was partially due to the slow pace of research in an extremely provincial province: essentially no professional scholarship was completed on the province's history until 1958, when Margaret Ormsby published *British Columbia: A History*, a book which hardly mentioned missionaries, much less the Oblates, and therefore did little to challenge Morice's depiction of them.²² Kay Cronin's 1960 monograph, *Cross in the Wilderness*, made up for Ormsby's neglect of the Oblates by focusing entirely on them, but did so in a way that regurgitated Morice in facts, emplotment, and tone.²³ Neither book adequately addressed the extent to which histories like Morice's were embedded narratives that reflected the ethnocentric and racist biases of the Euro-American elite.

When a challenge to the conservative histories of British Columbia finally did emerge, it did not come from within the province's historical profession but instead was incited by four larger intellectual trends of the late 1950s through the 1960s. First was the growing academic acceptance of Boasian ideas about culture that, at least within liberal arts faculties, gradually edged out race as the most accepted way to think about societal differences. Second was the emergence of widely-read native authors, notably Vine Deloria, Jr., N. Scott Momaday, and Dee Brown, whose work

22 Margaret A Ormsby, *British Columbia: A History* (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1971).

23 Kay Cronin, *Cross in the Wilderness* (Toronto Mission Press, 1959).

expressed to a wide non-native audience the sense of cultural and geographic displacement that many native communities of the 1960s were experiencing, while simultaneously deconstructing the assumptions of native cultural inferiority that formed the intellectual basis for colonialism.²⁴ (Less overtly political native authors, including the Nuu-chah-nulth writer George Clutesi, along with non-native authors, such as British Columbia's George Ryga and, later, Margaret Craven, also contributed, in their own ways, to anti-colonialist literary discourse).²⁵ Third was the combined output of a generation of Marxist, mainly francophone scholars of decolonization including Aimé Césaire, Frantz Fanon, and Albert Memmi, who argued persuasively that colonialism was at once a political, economic, intellectual, and psychological phenomenon that deeply affected both the colonizer and the colonized.²⁶ The fourth, and possibly most important, was the quickening of native activism in the United States and Canada, which helped to make colonial historiography a political, not merely academic, exercise. In response to these various stimuli, North American historians of the 1960s and 1970s began a conscious project of re-examining their countries' colonial past, replacing a narrative of glory with one of arrogance, racism, and economic greed.²⁷

24 N. Scott Momaday, *House Made of Dawn* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968); Vine Deloria, Jr. *Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto* (London: Collier-Macmillan Limited, 1969); Dee Brown, *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1970).

25 George Ryga, *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe*, 3rd Printing. (Talonbooks, 1970); Margaret Craven, *I Heard the Owl Call My Name* (Dell, 1980); George Clutesi, *Son of Raven, Son of Deer;: Fables of the Tse-Shaht People*, 2nd ed. (Gray's Pub. Ltd, 1968).

26 Albert Memmi, *The Colonizer and the Colonized*, Expanded. (Beacon Press, 1991); Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, Revised. (Grove Press, 2008); Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (Grove Press, 2004); Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism* (Monthly Review Press, 2001).

27 For the best (and most passionate) example of the second approach, see Francis Jennings, *The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism and the Cant of Conquest*. -- (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1975).

Wilson Duff's 1965 *Indian History of British Columbia* was the first British Columbian history to challenge these trends, although it did so in a fairly apolitical way. Duff, an anthropologist, admired the societies and artwork of coastal native peoples, and his book evokes a feeling of sadness for cultures he saw as fading under the impact of white settlement. Yet it also contains a sense of inevitability that was the hallmark of pre-1960s writing about colonialism: Duff may have found it lamentable that native cultures were on the losing side of British Columbian history, but he did not seem to find it unnatural. As a result, *Indian History* features no sustained, systematic critique of the intellectual and physical processes of colonialism. It did, however, evoke many of the themes that later writers would explicitly develop, including a rejection of cultural and racial hierarchies and a recognition that native societies were capable of adapting to change.²⁸

After Wilson Duff, there is another major gap in the historiography of British Columbia – even more so that of British Columbian missions – until the late 1970s. By that time, the nascent field of critical North American colonial history had grown large enough to have internal disputes, including a vigorous debate over which was a more suitable focus for historians: the expansion of Euro-American control, or native responses to it.²⁹ The former was best represented by Francis Jennings's *The Invasion of America*, a

28 Wilson Duff, *The Indian History of British Columbia*, New ed. (Victoria: Royal British Columbia Museum, 1997). Duff, with Bill Reid, was instrumental in acquiring the UBC museum of anthropology's collection of Haida totem poles, an event which was dramatized in the recent musical, *Beyond Eden*. Bruce Ruddell, *Beyond Eden*, 2010.

29 Although works of native history had begun to appear in the 1970s, mainstream histories of Canada remained extremely Eurocentric. In 1971, the historian James Walker complained that "the Indian is considered totally peripheral to the study of Canada." Eleven years later, according to Robin Fisher, little had changed. James Walker, "The Indian in Canadian Historical Writing," *Historical Papers* (1971): 22–27 quoted in J. R. Miller, "Aboriginal Peoples in the Academy," in *Reflections on Native-newcomer Relations* (University of Toronto Press, 2004), 286; Robin Fisher, "Historical Writing on Native People in Canada," *History and Social Science Teacher* 17, no. 2 (January 1, 1982): 65–72.

provocatively-entitled polemic that presented colonial expansion as a ruthless millennial blitzkrieg fuelled by mistaken notions of cultural superiority.³⁰ A good prototype of the latter was Arthur J. Ray's *Indians in the Fur Trade*, which showed native groups and individuals adapting to, and to a certain extent benefiting from, the presence of commercially-oriented non-natives.³¹ Much of the historiography on British Columbia's colonial period from the late 1970s to the early 1990s can be understood as a contest between these two different approaches: one focused on oppression, the other on agency.

It is appropriate, then, that the book that is widely considered to have begun modern scholarship on Northwest Coast history, Robin Fisher's *Contact and Conflict*, was explicitly structured around these two opposing forces of colonial encounter. For Fisher, the division was chronological: cordilleran peoples had held their own and even benefited from the fur trade frontier of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century, but had suffered under the settlement frontier of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century.³² The cause of the shift was economic: as colonial systems of production required progressively less native labour and more native land, native people faced, respectively, fewer opportunities and greater threats to their political integrity. Ideology followed economics, as white missionaries with "deliberately and consciously thought out plans of acculturation" swept

30 Jennings, *The Invasion of America*.

31 Arthur Ray, *Indians in the Fur Trade: Their Roles as Trappers, Hunters, and Middlemen in the Lands Southwest of Hudson Bay, 1660-1870*, Revised. (University of Toronto Press, 1998). Of course, Jennings and Ray were writing about very different historical situations: one in which settlers arrived in droves and settled on farms, and another in which non-natives were economically important but demographically insignificant. However, when read in light of newer works, particularly those which I address in this section, it is apparent that the differences between Jennings's and Ray's work are not merely empirical but also reflect different historiographical philosophies.

32 Robin Fisher, *Contact and Conflict: Indian-European Relations in British Columbia, 1774-1890*, 2nd ed. (Vancouver, B.C: University of British Columbia, 1992), 1, 4-7, 12, 21-29, 41-47, 210.

across British Columbia, seizing upon the disruption of native cultures as an opportunity to make converts. Missionaries were thus both a cause of and evidence for native peoples' loss of control over their own cultural destiny during the settlement period.³³

Not all of Fisher's contemporaries evaluated missionization, or colonization in general, in quite the same terms. In an influential essay published in 1982, the American historian James Axtell took issue with some of the basic anthropological premises that motivated Fisher's and others' work. Cultural change, argued Axtell, was itself a cultural process, and thus needed to be understood from the perspective of the missionized, not the missionary. Rather than "equating courage with mortal resistance to the forces of change," and, by implication, equating Christianization to defeat, researchers needed to ask if native people were successful in "adopting or adapting" Christianity to their own purposes. In other words, while cultural change might be influenced by political power relations, it was not isomorphic to them.³⁴

Much of British Columbia's historiography since *Contact and Conflict* was published has been essentially a protracted argument about Fisher's dichotomy between oppression and agency, with Axtell's assertion that politics and culture constitute non-analogous fields of struggle being a thread common to many of the critics. Almost immediately after *Contact and Conflict* was published, Rolf Knight argued that Fisher had vastly

³³ Ibid., 14-17, 34-40, 96, 103-125, 144-145, 173.

³⁴ Axtell's essay, "Some thoughts on the ethnohistory of missions," was republished in James Axtell, *Beyond 1492: Encounters in Colonial North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992). The quotes above are from pages 48-52. For a critique of Axtell's position, see Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993).

capitulation” to the missionaries because their ability to retain their traditional customs had been destroyed by settlement. Instead, Bolt portrayed them as curious religious and cultural innovators.³⁸ Harkin, who studied the Hieltsuk, also saw them as enthusiastic theological borrowers for whom missionaries were “neither unforeseen nor unwelcome.”³⁹ In effect, Miller, Loo, Bolt, and Harkin argued, merely because the provincial and federal governments had hoped and attempted to control native individuals and societies, and merely because missionaries had attempted to orchestrate the native cultural response to colonialism, did not mean that they had succeeded.

Adopting the opposite stance was Cole Harris, a historical geographer who argued that Fisher had in fact *underestimated* the level of oppression that native communities suffered during the fur trade period. Harris argued that the new industrial technologies of the early 1800s allowed the Hudson's Bay Company to dominate native communities through the strategic use of deadly, terrifying, and pinpointed violence. Therefore, even with only a skeletal array of coercive options, and in a position of economic dependence on native labour, the Company was able to maintain its mercantile and political hegemony through a form of oppression that foreshadowed that of the later state.⁴⁰

In 1994⁴¹, one of the tenuous moments in the last twenty years of Canadian historiography erupted when Robin Brownlie and Mary-ellen Kelm, both doctoral students at the University of Toronto, published an essay

38 Clarence Bolt, *Thomas Crosby and the Tsimshian: Small Shoes for Feet Too Large* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1992), xii, 39, 49–50.

39 Michael Harkin, “Power and Progress: The Evangelic Dialogue Among the Heiltsuk,” *Ethnohistory* 40, no. 1 (Winter 1993): 1–33. Bolt's and, even more so, Harkin's arguments would have a strong influence on Susan Neylan's later work (see below).

40 R. Cole Harris, *The Resettlement of British Columbia: Essays on Colonialism and Geographical Change* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997), 31–67.

accusing Miller and Loo of “[using] evidence of Native resilience and strength to soften, and at times to deny, the impact of colonialism, and thus, implicitly, to absolve its perpetrators.”⁴² Framing their criticisms within the context of the 1991 *Delgamuukw* decision, in which the provincial government successfully used historians' testimony to build a legal case against Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en land claims, they argued that historians of native peoples, through their work, have both the ability and the responsibility to participate in “redressing past injuries,” and that by focusing on native agency at the expense of colonial oppression, Miller and Loo were hindering rather than helping that effort.⁴³ In a short and determinedly courteous response, Miller

41 The astute reader will notice that I am jumping around a bit here: Harris's *Resettlement of British Columbia* was published in 1997, three years after Kelm and Brownlie's “Desperately Seeking Absolution.” This nonlinearity deserves an explanation, and mine is that I see Harris's work as primarily a (very elegant and important) refutation of a part of the Fisher thesis, while I see the majority of the field's influential works published after the “Desperately Seeking Absolution” debate, some of which I discuss on the following pages, as participating in new debates that are less centred on Fisher's intellectual legacy. In fact, it rarely occurs in an academic discipline that, after a longstanding debate comes to a head and synthesis is formed, the two strands of the old debate completely disappear. Nor should Harris be regarded as some kind of historiographical dinosaur: top-down analyses that focused on colonial power did not suddenly become incorrect in the mid-1990s, they merely became unfashionable and, for certain descriptive ends, comparatively less useful.

42 R. Brownlie and M.E. Kelm, “Desperately Seeking Absolution: Native Agency as Colonialist Alibi?,” *Canadian Historical Review* 75, no. 4 (1994): 554. Brownlie and Kelm also targeted Douglas Cole and Ira Chaikin's *An Iron Hand Upon the People*: see previous note. They also likely would have included Bruce Stadfeld's MA thesis in their criticisms if it had been more influential: Bruce Colin Stadfeld, “Manifestations of Power : Native Response to Settlement in Nineteenth Century British Columbia,” Thesis, 1993, <http://summit.sfu.ca.proxy.lib.sfu.ca/item/5736>.

43 Brownlie and Kelm, “Desperately Seeking Absolution,” 556. For the role, and treatments of, historians and oral historians in *Delgamuukw v. British Columbia* (1991), see: Patricia Dawn Mills, *For Future Generations: Reconciling Git_xsan and Canadian Law*, Purich's Aboriginal Issues Series (Saskatoon: Purich Pub, 2008); J.R. Fortune, “Construing *Delgamuukw*: Legal Arguments, Historical Argumentation, and the Philosophy of History,”

argued that Kelm and Brownlie had mistaken his argument that post-confederation Indian policy had limits and occasionally unexpected results as an assertion that it had been without effect, and that their criticism of his work was therefore unfair. Nevertheless, he credited his critics with helping to instigate an overdue analysis of the “victim/agent dichotomy” in which aboriginal historiography had seemed to be mired since Fisher.⁴⁴

There is a definite Hegelian flavour to the intellectual history described over the previous few paragraphs, and, in hindsight, what was eventually accepted as the necessary synthesis should have been obvious: scholars needed to recognize victimhood and agency not as dichotomous properties to be championed by one or the other historiographical school, but as complementary aspects of aboriginal people's fundamental position as both colonized and human. Bottom-up investigations of native resistance or adaptation to colonialism needed to be blended with top-down analyses of the structures, actions, and ideologies that they were resisting or adapting to. At the time Kelm and Miller wrote, models of such an approach were beginning to appear, but one generally had to look outside North American historiography to find most of them.⁴⁵ One notable exception was Richard White's influential 1991 monograph, *The Middle Ground*, which took its title from his appraisal of the relationship between French settlers and the native

University of Toronto Faculty of Law Review 51 (1993): 80; A.D. Palmer, “Evidence Not in a Form Familiar to Common Law Courts: Assessing Oral Histories in Land Claims Testimony After *Delgamuukw V. BC*,” *Alberta Law Review* 38 (2000): 10–40; J. Cruikshank, “Invention of Anthropology in British Columbia’s Supreme Court: Oral Tradition as Evidence in *Delgamuukw V. BC*,” *BC Studies: The British Columbian Quarterly*, no. 95 (1992): 25–42; R. Fisher, “Judging History: Reflections on Reasons for Judgment in *Delgamuukw V. BC*,” *BC Studies: The British Columbian Quarterly*, no. 95 (1992): 43–54.

44 D. Cole, JR Miller, and M.E. Kelm, “Desperately Seeking Absolution: Responses and a Reply,” *Canadian Historical Review* 76, no. 4 (1995): 634–636.

45 See, for example, Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, Reprint. (University of California Press, 1991); Jean Comaroff and John L. Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution, Volume 1: Christianity, Colonialism, and Consciousness in South Africa*, 1st ed. (University Of Chicago Press, 1991).

peoples of the Great Lakes region as one characterized by necessary, if not egalitarian, cultural compromise. While White did not outrightly reject the more radical position of Marxist historians who emphasized the colonies' role in building an oppressive, capitalist "world system" at the expense of the indigenous inhabitants of the periphery, he insisted that New France featured "an *odd* imperialism and a *complicated* world system [emphasis mine]" that only loosely fit the Marxist model.⁴⁶ By focusing on these oddities and complications, White argued, historians could move beyond the overarching questions of exploitation, dependency, and resistance to examine such nuanced and stochastic themes as identity, the construction of meaning, and the culture of cultural exchange, without losing their focus on the violence and repression endemic to the colonial setting.

It is arguably in the field of mission history that this synthesis has caused the greatest shift in focus and thus created the most analytical opportunities. As early as 1999, Nicholas Griffiths was able to concisely and accurately state the guiding ideology of the new mission histories, taking it as given, while introducing a volume of comparative essays, that "reciprocal, albeit asymmetrical, exchange" was the agreed-upon characterization of missionization among the book's contributors.⁴⁷ Grounding their analysis in this broad consensus, twenty-first century scholars of mission history have been free to parse "reciprocal, albeit asymmetrical" in increasingly specific ways, and to explore the implications of this type of relationship on native

46 White, *The Middle Ground*, xi. The principal proponent of the "world system" metaphor was, of course, Immanuel Wallerstein. For Wallerstein's analysis of the role of seventeenth-century colonialism in creating the capitalist world system, see Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-system II: Mercantilism and the Consolidation of the European World-economy, 1600-1750* (Academic Press, 1980.). For a more general treatment of Wallerstein's thesis, see Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Capitalist World-economy: Essays* (Cambridge University Press, 1979).

47 Nicholas Griffiths and Fernando Cervantes, *Spiritual Encounters: Interactions Between Christianity and Native Religions in Colonial America* (University of Nebraska Press, 1999), 1.

people's interactions with each other as well as with the colonists.

The two relatively recent historians of Northwest Coast missions who have been the most successful at leveraging Griffith's consensus to produce insightful historical work are Sergei Kan and Susan Neylan. Kan's 1999 study of "Tlingit Orthodoxy" focuses on inculturation – the modification of Christianity to fit into a given native society – as a significant driver of native religious history, and even of native identity. (One of Kan's most interesting findings is that, among contemporary Tlingit people in Alaska, membership in the Orthodox church is often articulated as a marker not of acculturation but, quite the opposite, of traditionalism).⁴⁸ In parallel fashion to Kan, Neylan's 2005 monograph, *The Heavens are Changing*, is mainly notable for identifying "Tsimshian Christianity" as a distinct cultural phenomenon comprehensible in the context of Tsimshian religious culture, thus challenging the viewpoint that Christian ideas travelled unidirectionally from colonizer to colonized.⁴⁹ Finally, both Kan and Neylan sustained an intensive analysis of the ways in which the power and expectations of the colonizers were nevertheless present in the lived experience of the native Christians they studied. However, in line with Griffith's formula, they presented native cultural agency as operating within, rather than against, the asymmetry of power in which they lived.⁵⁰

48 Sergei Kan, *Memory Eternal: Tlingit Culture and Russian Orthodox Christianity Through Two Centuries* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1999).

49 Susan Neylan, *The Heavens Are Changing: Nineteenth-Century Protestant Missions and Tsimshian Christianity* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003).

50 Another major work written in the modern asymmetrical-reciprocity framework is John Lutz's *Makúk: A New History of Aboriginal-White Relations*. While Lutz had little to say about missions and religions (his main objective was to rehabilitate Rolf Knight's argument that native labour was essential to the economic development of British Columbia during the "settler period"), his work bears mentioning both because it is excellent and because it was clearly written from the same intellectual vantage point as Neylan and Kan's work. Lutz, *Makúk*.

By ending my discussion of this field's development with Kan and Neylan, I do not mean to suggest, teleologically, that these two authors occupy the pinnacle of a terminated dialectical process. In fact, there does exist today a powerful antithesis to their work and that of others working within Griffith's consensus, but it does not contest the content of their analyses so much as it does the politics of their production. Beginning even in the early 1990s, a growing community of scholars, most of whom identify as native themselves, have been challenging the very process of research in which predominantly white, middle-class researchers make a living by telling the stories of the peoples their own society continues to oppress.⁵¹ While most contemporary researchers (myself included) are sympathetic to this line of reasoning, and dedicate earnest paragraphs to analyzing their privileged role within an academic system of discourse, these "declarations of whiteness" have done little to change the overall direction of research.⁵² This will almost certainly change over the coming decades, especially as more

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- 51 Some of the most notable examples include Julia V. Emberley, "A Gift for Languages': Native Women and the Textual Economy of the Colonial Archive," *Cultural Critique*, no. 17 (December 1, 1990): 21–50; Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (Zed Books, 1999); Georges E Sioui, *For an Amerindian Autohistory: An Essay on the Foundations of a Social Ethic* (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992); Devon Abbott Mihesuah and Angela Cavender Wilson, eds., *Indigenizing the Academy: Transforming Scholarship and Empowering Communities* (Bison Books, 2004); Florencia E. Mallon, *Decolonizing Native Histories: Collaboration, Knowledge, and Language in the Americas* (Duke University Press Books, 2011). For a critique of white scholars' confessional approach to their racial privileges, see Sara Ahmed, "Declarations of Whiteness: The Non-Performativity of Anti-Racism," *Borderlands E-journal* 3, no. 2 (2004). For a more universalist vision, see Gayatri Spivak, "Questions of Multiculturalism," in Gayatri Spivak, *The Post-Colonial Critic: Interviews, Strategies, Dialogues* (Routledge, 1990), 62–63.
- 52 For example, the research that is taken seriously in academia is still almost without exception produced by non-native university faculty, in written form, and the books that are chosen to be published are chosen based on standards to which native communities do not have input. See Sara Ahmed, "Declarations of Whiteness: The Non-Performativity of Anti-Racism."

people who self-identify as aboriginal become professional historians. With this change will come new analytic priorities, new possibilities for creative interpretation of the past, and perhaps new consensuses.

Programme

This thesis aims to make three related arguments about the role of Catholicism in Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh political history. In the first chapter, I argue that the political leaders of Eslhá7an Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh thought of their embrace of Catholicism in starkly different terms than did the Oblates: where the missionaries saw the inevitable rejection of an inferior way of life in favour of a superior import, the Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh saw an indigenous spiritual movement with pre-contact roots. In the second chapter, I relate religious change and missionary power to wider processes of colonial coercion and resistance, using a Gramscian model to understand the careers of some of the major Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh political leaders who lived in Eslhá7an. In the third chapter, I argue that the same mission-driven process that brought native Christian activists to the forefront of anti-colonial dissent also led to the formation of the Squamish Nation, both as a political organization and as a deeply-held post-colonial identity. All three chapters share a single theme: that changes in Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh political economy, and the relationship between Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh people and Oblate missionaries, were driven primarily by Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh responses to state policy.

The research I conducted in writing this thesis was, somewhat unusually for a twenty-first century study of native history, entirely archival and bibliographic; in particular, I did not conduct oral interviews with

contemporary Sḵw̓x̓w̓ú7mesh people.⁵³ My reason for avoiding oral history as a source was not because I wished to return to a more epistemologically conservative approach to native history. Quite the opposite, I was reacting to a body of literature that cast ethical doubts onto the process of academic writers building arguments – and careers – out of the freely offered intellectual labour of economically marginalized informants.⁵⁴ I also wanted to challenge the notion that the label “subaltern studies” automatically applied to my work merely because its subjects were native people. Since I was interested in studying those Sḵw̓x̓w̓ú7mesh people who had attempted to bridge the cultural gap between themselves and their colonizers, it made sense to focus on those materials that they produced in dialogue with non-native people, rather than searching for what James C. Scott would call the “hidden transcripts” of counter-hegemonic Sḵw̓x̓w̓ú7mesh dissent.⁵⁵ I therefore made, with my supervisor's somewhat bemused acquiescence, the decision to base my research entirely on pre-existing documentary sources, (some of which were the result of previously conducted oral histories).

In hindsight, I believe that my thesis is poorer for the lack of contemporary Sḵw̓x̓w̓ú7mesh voices.⁵⁶ As Andrew Paull, one of the Eslhá7an residents who figures largely in this thesis, wrote during a mid-century dispute with the City of Vancouver's chief archivist: “many of the Indians now gone to their eternal rest ... knew the history of the Indians better than your Cheechako historians.”⁵⁷ The contemporary Sḵw̓x̓w̓ú7mesh archaeologist Rudy Reimer/Yumḵs offers an even more specific warning to researchers whose studies of native history are overly reliant on historiographical theory,

53 I did, however, receive encouragement to undertake the project from Janice George and Buddy Joseph, an inspiring Sḵw̓x̓w̓ú7mesh couple who have, among other projects, spearheaded a renaissance in Sḵw̓x̓w̓ú7mesh woven arts.

54 An article that had a large influence on me during the time I began my thesis research was Emberley, “A Gift for Languages.” There are a number of other works that make similar critiques of the practise of natives studies research; see my note on the previous page for a partial list of these.

arguing that “no one in an Indigenous community is eager to hear that their perspective is like a Marxist, gendered, processual or post-processual paradigm; what they want to hear is their story, not someone else’s story.”⁵⁸ However, I take comfort in the certain knowledge that the Sḵw̱x̱wú7mesh people who read this thesis will have no trouble filling in its gaps and correcting its flaws. I also have the luxury of knowing that the most influential scholars of Sḵw̱x̱wú7mesh history are Sḵw̱x̱wú7mesh people themselves, whose strategies of historiographical dissemination include oral

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- 55 James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (Yale University Press, 1992). The scholars of subaltern studies during the 1990s also shared a frustrating similarity with the mathematicians of the 1930s: their most important results concerned the limitations of their own field. See Dipesh Chakrabarty, “Minority Histories, Subaltern Pasts,” *Postcolonial Studies* 1, no. 1 (April 1998): 15–29. or Rosalind C. Morris, *Can the Subaltern Speak?: Reflections on the History of an Idea* (Columbia University Press, 2010), a book containing the original text and criticism of Gayatri Spivak's article by the same name. For the mathematical articles I refer to, see Kurt Gödel, “Über Formal Unentscheidbare Sätze Der Principia Mathematica Und Verwandter Systeme, I [On Formally Undecidable Propositions of Principia Mathematica and Related Systems, I],” *Monatshefte Für Mathematik Und Physik* 38 (1931): 173–198; Alonzo Church, “An Unsolvable Problem of Elementary Number Theory,” *American Journal of Mathematics* 58 (1938): 345–363; Alfred Tarski, “Der Wahrheitsbegriff in Den Formalisierten Sprachen [The Concept of Truth in Formal Languages],” *Studia Philosophica* 1 (1936): 261–405. For a more accessible introduction to these authors' ideas, see Douglas R. Hofstadter, *Gödel, Escher, Bach: An Eternal Golden Braid* (Basic Books, 1999).
- 56 There are two exceptions to my exclusion of contemporary Sḵw̱x̱wú7mesh sources. I have drawn upon the published work of Sḵw̱x̱wú7mesh-Kwak'waka'wakw activist and historian Khelsilem Rivers. And I have made some final changes on the advice of Vanessa Campbell, a member of the Squamish Language Program and Education Department.
- 57 Andrew Paull, “Lake Memorial for Noted Chief?” [Letter to the Editor, signed by Andy Paull], Vancouver Province, 21 February 1955., quoted in Brendan F.R. Edwards, “‘I Have Lots of Help Behind Me, Lots of Books, to Convince You’: Andrew Paull and the Value of Literacy in English.,” *BC Studies*, no. 164 (Winter 2009): 7–30.
- 58 Rudy Reimer/Yumḵs, “The Mountains and Rocks Are Forever: Lithics and Landscapes of Sḵw̱x̱wú7mesh Uxwumixw” (PhD. Dissertation, McMaster University, 2012), 25.

storytelling, academic research, and Wikipedia articles.⁵⁹ It is my hope that some of them will find this thesis useful as they discuss their history, and that they may, in Sergei Kan's words, "recognize themselves" in it, regardless of whether or not they agree with its conclusions.⁶⁰

59 Reimer/Yumks, "The Mountains and Rocks Are Forever." Wikipedia.org, "User:OldManRivers," <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/User:OldManRivers>, Accessed 17 August 2012.

60 Kan, *Memory Eternal*.

Chapter 1

The Origins of a S̄kw̄wú7mesh Christian Community

What a change the Catholic faith has wrought in these poor Indians!

Claude Bellot, O.M.I., 1937¹

I won't say the priests brought Christianity. They brought *religion*...but before contact, we people had the *true* Christian feeling.

Louis Miranda, 1979²

The Historian

In the summer of 1896, the anthropologist Charles Hill-tout arrived by boat at the settlement of Eshá7an³, eager to record the ancient legends of the S̄kw̄wú7mesh people. It was, by some standards, a strange destination for a salvage ethnographer. Rather than an exotic locale capable of inspiring desire or derision in Hill-Tout's upper-class British and Canadian readership, Eshá7an was, at least in the eyes of the leaders of British Columbian settler society, a well-ordered Christian parish that embodied their dreams of creating a quiescent, acculturated native population. In a report written

1 Claude Bellot, "First St. Paul's Church," Oblate House

2 "Louis Miranda Interviews, 1979," Tape 4356:0002, British Columbia Archives.

3 Today, Eshá7an is often referred to by the name of the Indian Reserve associated with it: Mission #1. It is located near Lonsdale Quay in North Vancouver; see the introduction for a more detailed geographical description.



Esłhá7an, circa 1886

Photograph by Norman Caple. City Archives of Vancouver, SGN 1460.

three years earlier, Frank Devlin, the Indian Agent for New Westminster, had praised its residents for being “one of the most progressive and also the most advanced band of Indians in the agency,” admiring their industriousness both in the labour market and in maintaining houses in which they lived “as comfortably as most white people do.”⁴ Archibald McKinlay, another Department of Indian Affairs functionary, wrote that he had “never in all my intercourse with Indians met a better behaved race.”⁵ The Oblate missionary A.G. Morice, during a visit in 1889, had described the settlement as

4 Frank Devlin, “Report for the Fraser River Agency, 1893,” Library and Archives Canada, *Indian Affairs Annual Reports, 1864-1990*, 1893, page 120.
<http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/databases/indianaffairs/index-e.html>

“exclusively Christian, totally practising and, I might add, exceptionally pious”; in his later scholarly work he would triumphantly brandish quotes from two Protestant authors, Stuart Cumberland and the Duchess of Somerset, who expressed similar sentiments.⁶ Even Franz Boas, who normally preferred his Indians to be exotic, adopted an optimistic view of Sḵw̓x̓wú7mesh acculturation, writing in 1886 that “the mission seems to have really improved the condition of the Indians.”⁷ In the context of these appreciative statements by white men who, with the exception of Boas, were attempting to reform native cultures to more closely resemble the Victorian ideal of civilization, Hill-Tout's search for authentic oral literature at Eshhá7an seems quixotic in retrospect.

Nevertheless, he left satisfied he had found what he was looking for:

Through the kindness of the Roman Catholic bishop of the district, Bishop Durieu, I received a cordial reception at the hands of the chief men of the tribe, and on learning what I wanted they brought out of his retirement the old historian of the tribe ... whose existence till then had been unknown to the good bishop who himself has this tribe in charge.⁸

The historian, a “decrepit creature, stone-blind from old age,” whose name Hill-Tout transcribed as Mulks, but later Sḵw̓x̓wú7mesh historian Louis

5 Archibald McKinlay, “Diary of Archibald McKinlay, 1876-77,” 28 November 1876, p. 28. Cited in William John Zaharoff, *Success in Struggle: The Squamish People and Kitsilano Indian Reserve No. 6* (s.l., 1978), 131.

6 A. G. Morice, *Histoire De L'Église Catholique Dans l'Ouest Canadien Du Lac Supérieur Au Pacifique (1659-1905)*, 4ième édition. (Saint Boniface, Man: Oblates of Mary Immaculate, 1928), 339–343.

7 Boas, Franz, *Diary*, Victoria, December 16th, 1886, translated by his daughter, Helene Boas Yampolsky. For a description of Boas's construction of Northwest Coast aboriginal cultures as exotic, see Paige Raibmon, *Authentic Indians: Episodes of Encounter from the Late-Nineteenth-Century Northwest Coast* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), 15–73.

8 Charles Hill-Tout, *Notes on the Cosmogony and History of the Squamish Indians of British Columbia* (S.l.: s.n., 1897).

Miranda wrote as Melk'ws, lived behind St. Paul's church in a house that predated the mission.⁹ Much to Hill-Tout's delight, he agreed to recite the history of the S̄kw̄wú7mesh. After having a set of mnemonic devices prepared, he told Hill-Tout, through an interpreter, of how the Great Spirit had created mountains, lakes, rivers, animals, and the first man, to whom he gave "the three things an Indian cannot do without, viz., a wife, a chisel or adze, and a salmon trap." Melkw's continued, relating that, over time, the people "had become wicked and vexed the Great Spirit," who punished them by sending a flood that drowned everyone except for the first man's son and his wife, who survived by floating on top of the rising waters in a canoe, and who "repeopled the land again with their offspring." The S̄kw̄wú7mesh would still yet face two major punishments from the Great Spirit: a period of starvation and extreme cold, and "a dreadful skin disease, loathsome to look upon," from which they "died in agony by hundreds, so that when the spring arrived and fresh food was procurable, there was scarcely a person left of all their numbers to get it." After describing this last cataclysm, Melkw's spoke of S̄kw̄wú7mesh post-contact history, but Hill-Tout was looking for legends and did not publish any more of what he heard.¹⁰

It is not immediately obvious what should be made of this story. Few scholars today would give Hill-Tout - or any other turn-of-the-century anthropologist - as much credit as Ralph Maud, who edited the modern edition of Hill-Tout's works and praised him for having produced a "panoramic view of pre-white civilization" that combined "scientific objectivity" with "lofty sentiment."¹¹ In fact, even when compared to his early-twentieth-century contemporaries, Hill-Tout was *declassé*, an autodidact gentleman-scholar working at a time when social-scientific research was increasingly becoming a professional endeavour, and a cultural evolutionist at the time when

9 Ibid.; Thomas Lascelle's Research Notes, Oblate House, Box 47.

10 Ibid.

11 Ibid.

another Northwest Coast ethnographer, Franz Boas, had already begun to show the logical flaws in such orthogenetic understandings of human societies. But the biggest interpretive problems with Hill-Tout's work are found not in his differences from his more mainstream colleagues, but in his similarities to them. Like Boas and Edward Curtis, the salvage ethnographer whose photographs of Kwak'wakw'aka and Nuu-chah-nulth peoples constitute a large portion of First Peoples display at the Royal British Columbia museum, Hill-Tout was not particularly interested in studying native cultures as he found them. Instead, for scientific and aesthetic reasons, he wished to re-create how they had ostensibly existed before contact with non-native peoples; hence his lack of interest in what Melk'ws had to say about the period after George Vancouver's arrival in Burrard Inlet. His essay, therefore, constructed an imagined past for the Skwxwú7mesh, rather than exploring the social realities of a dynamic people that had been in close contact with Christian missionaries for over two decades and were active participants in the industrialization of Vancouver.¹²

While Hill-Tout's visit to Eslhá7an may not have produced good anthropology, it does provide today's historians with a counterpoint to the voices of those of his contemporaries who perceived and celebrated Skwxwú7mesh assimilation. The fact that he was able to find a traditionalist elder "whose existence till then had been unknown to the good bishop [Durieu]" demonstrates the incompleteness of missionary control at Eslhá7an.¹³ Furthermore, Hill-Tout's report that the Skwxwú7mesh members of Melk'ws's audience, all residents of Eslhá7an and parishioners of Saint Paul's Indian Church, had "listened in rapt attention as [Mulk'ws] described the plight of their ancestors" challenges the pretensions of church and state

12 Chris Roine, *The Squamish Aboriginal Economy, 1860-1940* (Simon Fraser University M.A. Thesis, 1996); Rolf Knight, *Indians at Work: An Informal History of Native Labour in British Columbia, 1848-1930* (New Star Books, 1996); John Sutton Lutz, *Makúk: A New History of Aboriginal-White Relations* (UBC Press, 2008).

officials who believed that the Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh had abandoned their culture and embraced that of the colonists.¹⁴

At the same time, the similarities between Mulk'ws's account and the biblical book of Genesis are unmistakable. It is possible that these similarities were entirely coincidental: flood stories are certainly not unique to the Bible, and the Great Spirit's third punishment rather transparently describes a smallpox outbreak, of which the Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh suffered several during the first few decades after 1798.¹⁵ It is also possible that Mulk'ws extraordinarily employed Christian metaphors as a courtesy to Hill-Tout. Nevertheless, a comparison of Mulk'ws origin story to that presented to the Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh by the Oblates suggests that turn-of-the-century Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh historians were able to conceptualize their people's past using idioms common in their missionary guests' legendary histories, as well as those that Hill-Tout would have identified as "aboriginal."

Hill-Tout was interested in Mulk'ws's oral recitation because, at the time he wrote, it was an anthropological truism that a culture's origin story described how its members viewed its past, its essential attributes, and its purpose. Contemporary ethnographers have abandoned such an earnestly straightforward use of origin stories in favour of analyzing how such stories

13 Ann Laura Stoler, in her analysis of Dutch colonial record-keeping, has argued that historians should not confuse colonial states' self-representation as omniscient with reality: "Our readings are blunted by what often has been parsed as the seemingly panoptic glare of a vacuous, stylized official gaze. But in these archives the panoptic is a frail conceit." This argument is certainly transferable to late nineteenth-century Western Canada. Ann Laura Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense* (Princeton University Press, 2010), 23.

14 Hill-Tout, *Cosmogony and History of the Squamish Indians*; Charles Hill-Tout, *The Salish People: The Local Contribution of Charles Hill-Tout*, vol. 2: The Squamish and the Lillooet (Vancouver: Talonbooks, 1978).

15 Mary-Ellen Kelm, *Colonizing Bodies: Aboriginal Health and Healing in British Columbia, 1900-50* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1998), 3-18.

are constructed as well as problematizing the political “work” they perform.¹⁶ This has not, however, made origin stories any less important to current historical scholarship; it merely means that cultural historians now focus less on their content than on who is telling them, how, and why. Both the telling and the content of Mulk'ws's history, as noted above, complicate settlers' descriptions of late-nineteenth-century Eslhá7an as a paragon of assimilation. Yet there remain still more complications, for Mulk'ws's was not the community of Eslhá7an's only origin story: it existed in competition with at least two others, each developed in different contexts and serving different social and political ends.

The Bishop

If Hill-Tout had spoken with Bishop Durieu instead of Melk'ws, he could have recorded a very different origin story, with a prologue set in early nineteenth-century southern France. After withstanding hostility from the secular revolutionary state and, later, reorganization into a national church under Napoleon, ultramontane¹⁷ Catholics had begun to reassert themselves as an important cultural force by the 1810s, exhibiting what historian Robert Choquette has described as “a new mood in Catholicism, a new militancy, a

16 See for example, Trevor Pinch, “Telling tales about how concepts develop: stories from ethnographic encounters with the Moog synthesizer” in William Shaffir, *Ethnographies Revisited: Constructing Theory in the Field* (Taylor & Francis, 2009), 182–183. “Culture” here need not be understood narrowly. Aikido practitioners share a culture, as do automobile company executives and Linux users. Members of each of these example cultures have constructed their own origin stories, and, for each, it is not difficult to imagine political implications.

17 Ultramontanism was a theological movement within nineteenth-century French Catholicism whose adherents were in favour of closer ties with the Papacy. The word comes from the Latin phrase for “over the mountains,” which, for someone in France, is where Rome is located.

new urge to conquer the world for Christ and his Church.”¹⁸ One of these reformers was Eugene de Mazenod, a charismatic aristocrat who began his missionary career preaching original sin, suffering, and vengeful God to the rural Provencal poor. Only months after Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo, de Mazenod took advantage of the emperor's exile to organize a missionary society that, in 1826, would be renamed the Oblates of Mary Immaculate.¹⁹

While the Oblates' original mandate was to perform evangelical work within France, they began in the 1830s to send missionaries abroad. The first Oblates arrived on North America's North Pacific Coast in 1847, ten years behind the first Catholic priests, but with far greater consequences for native people. After their initial efforts to establish a presence in the Columbia Basin were jeopardized by competing religious groups and the distrust of American Protestant settlers, they relocated northwards to British-claimed territory.²⁰ Once there, they quickly acquired important positions within the skeletal Catholic Church hierarchy. While some Oblates administered mainly to the local settler population, many turned their attention to the larger native populations, travelling in concentric circles of increasing radii centred at Victoria and New Westminster.²¹

The Oblates' first encounters with Skwxwú7mesh-speaking people were outside of Skwxwú7mesh territory, at the Saint-Charles mission in New

18 Robert Choquette, *The Oblate Assault on Canada's Northwest*, vol. no. 3., Religions and Beliefs Series (University of Ottawa Press, 1995), 2. Ultramonism was a branch of post-Reformation French Catholicism that emphasized obedience to the Pope, in contrast to Gallicanism, whose adherents advocated a more “French” church.

19 Vincent J. McNally, *The Lord's Distant Vineyard: A History of the Oblates and the Catholic Community in British Columbia* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2000), xxii. The word *oblate* comes from Middle French and originally meant “a lay person living in a religious house,” though its associations with laity gradually disappeared over the seventeenth- and eighteenth-centuries. “oblate, n.1 and adj.2”. OED Online. December 2011. Oxford University Press.

20 Ibid., 9–17.

21 Ibid., 41–52.

Westminster. According to Oblate historian Thomas Lascelles, the Oblates found their Skwxwú7mesh visitors extremely interested in the Christian Gospel. As a result, the priests began to make sporadic journeys to Skwxwú7mesh territory. While the early Vancouver historian J.S. Matthews implied in a research note that Fouquet had travelled up the Squamish River as early as 1855, Lascelles's reading of Oblate correspondence suggests that missionary activity in Skwxwú7mesh territory was quite limited until 1864. In that year, Bishop Demers sent Durieu, our imagined narrator, on a tour of the Skwxwú7mesh settlements in the Squamish River watershed.²²

The son of a rural, petit-bourgeois, pro-clerical family, Durieu had developed an interest in North American missions while attending seminary in Auvergne. In 1854, he was ordained a priest by Bishop de Mazenod, and left France for the Columbia Basin. Along with the rest of the Oblates, he fled American-claimed territory in the late 1850s, but not before spending some time at a modified Jesuit *reduccione* near Fort Colville, from where he drew the inspiration for his eponymous – and historiographically controversial – system of missionization, which I discuss in the next chapter of this thesis. By the time he travelled to Skwxwú7mesh territory in 1866, he had been working with Coast Salish peoples for thirteen years, and therefore we might expect him to have developed a realistic attitude towards the people with whom he worked.²³

To the contrary, Durieu's report on his visit to the Skwxwú7mesh contained all of the stereotypical tropes of an idealized narrative of religious conquest set in what Kim Greenwell has identified as “the always dark, but

22 Thomas A Lascelles, *Mission on the Inlet: St. Paul's Indian Catholic Church, North Vancouver, B.C., 1863-1984* ([Vancouver: St. Paul's Province, Order of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate], 1984), 5. J.S. Matthews, quoted in Bellot, “History of St. Paul's Church,” Oblate House, Box 46.

23 Jacqueline Gresko, “Paul Durieu” in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, http://www.biographi.ca/009004-119.01-e.php?&id_nbr=6080, Accessed 15 July 2012.

soon to be illuminated, mission field.”²⁴ After undergoing personal hardship so great that an explorer he chanced upon remarked that he must have “supernatural motives” to endure it, Durieu was rewarded with seeing, before his eyes, the wholesale conversion of the bulk of the S̄kw̄x̄w̄ú7mesh linguistic group to Christianity. “All have embraced with joy the practices of our holy religion,” he enthused. “They have learned to pray, and the inhabitants of each hamlet now congregate each morning and evening in the main cabin to recite prayers...The denizens of Heaven are doubtless rejoicing at the transformation of these *sauvages*, only recently children of darkness, into children of light.” Because of this success, he described his trip to S̄kw̄x̄w̄ú7mesh territory as “a month of ineffable consolation, a month of triumph.”²⁵

Durieu made it clear in his report that his “triumph” over “darkness” involved more on the S̄kw̄x̄w̄ú7mesh's part than merely embracing Christian ideas and practises: they had also rejected their former religious beliefs. As a synecdoche of this rejection, he provided the following anecdote:

In one hamlet [to which I travelled] there lived one of these famous medicine men. When he learned that a priest was coming...[h]e gathered his wife and three children and escaped into the woods. He ran to hide in the mountains, because the sight of the priest would kill him and his family. “The moment the priest's eyes rest on you,” he told his spouse, “you will die instantly.” When I arrived in the settlement, they were already far away. I was informed of all this by a young man, who added, “O, sir, have pity on my uncle!” “Yes,” I exclaimed, “let us save him, for he is a poor pitiable blind man; the demon wishes to lead him to Hell, but will we allow him to perish? No, a thousand times no...go, young ones, search the woods and bring back this unfortunate man and his children.”

24 Kim Greenwell, “Picturing ‘civilization’: Missionary Narratives and the Margins of Mimicry,” *BC Studies*, no. 135 (Autumn 2002): 7.

25 Paul Durieu to Louis-Joseph d'Herbomez, 1 April 1865 (Excerpt), *Missions* 6, No. 21 (March 1867), 32.

Six hunters went into the mountains. They went far and called him for a long time, and eventually found the wife and children huddling in a tree hollow, but they could not find the warlock's track. This woman quickly disposed of any fear she had of Black Robes [missionaries]; and offered me her children to reform them [into Christians]. [After that, she was] the first to arrive at services, and the last to leave; she could not stop laughing at her husband's foolish fright, and she promised to make every effort to lead him from error to religion.²⁶

Durieu's ideas about religion, civilization, gender, and the missionization process were metaphorically encoded within his telling of this story. As one of "only three people" who resisted Durieu's message, the shaman stood as a synecdoche for pre-Christian Skwxwú7mesh religion, embodying the cosmological and ethical understandings that the missionary must overcome. His resistance, however, is ephemeral; his theology, childish; his flight to the hills, cowardly. Durieu is ultimately unconcerned with him; he focuses instead on the shaman's wife, whose decision to use her reproductive labour in the service of the missionaries' theology confirms the ineluctable direction of history.²⁷ While it is not difficult to interpret this woman's actions as creative manifestations of her religious agency, Durieu would not have viewed them in this way. Instead, most Oblates tended to associated "cultural sins" with native men, while blaming native women only for domestic or sexual sins.²⁸ For women such as the "shaman's" wife, the missionaries presumed to offer an escape route from the immoral cultural life

26 Ibid, 33.

27 The Oblate missionaries who worked on the Northwest Coast brought with them many predetermined ideas about gender and gender relations, which affected how Durieu positioned the medicine man's wife in his account. In the next chapter of this thesis, I will discuss the ways in which Oblate and Skwxwú7mesh ideas about gender affected quotidian life at the Eshá7an mission, and how these ideas interacted and modified power relationships between Skwxwú7mesh people.

28 Morice, *L'Église Catholique Dans l'Ouest Canadien*, 227.

of their husbands. As such, they cast themselves in the role of “white men...saving brown women from brown men.”²⁹ Their confidence that this rescue mission would succeed stemmed from their assumption that non-Christian native religions held no special attraction to their adherents over against the self-evident virtue of Christianity.

Durieu's belief in his own success at dramatically shifting Skwxwú7mesh religious consciousness was so strong that he could scarcely describe the event without slipping into magical realism. “As [the *sauvage*] listens to us,” he explained, “the poor ignorant man emerges as if from a deep sleep and cries, *Surgam et ibo ad patrem muem* [I will arise and go to my Father]. Soon enough he renounces the wicked customs of his ancestors and wishes to go to heaven.”³⁰ In sum, the Skwxwú7mesh were ripe for conversion. All the Oblates needed to do was to establish a mission; the success of their effort to change Skwxwú7mesh religious culture was guaranteed by the self-evident truth of the doctrine they preached. Thus, according to Durieu, the origin of the Eslhá7an mission was the intersection of the Skwxwú7mesh's recognition of their own cultural failings with the Oblates' fortuitous arrival bearing a progressive alternative.

The Broker

Eslhá7an has another origin story, rooted in the economic and political struggles of the mid-nineteenth-century Skwxwú7mesh people. As Vancouver became an increasingly important economic centre, many Skwxwú7mesh families moved to Burrard Inlet in order to take advantage of the opportunities for wage labour in canneries, sawmills, farms, and other

29 Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, “Can the Subaltern Speak?” in Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg, eds., *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture* (University of Illinois Press, 1988), 296.

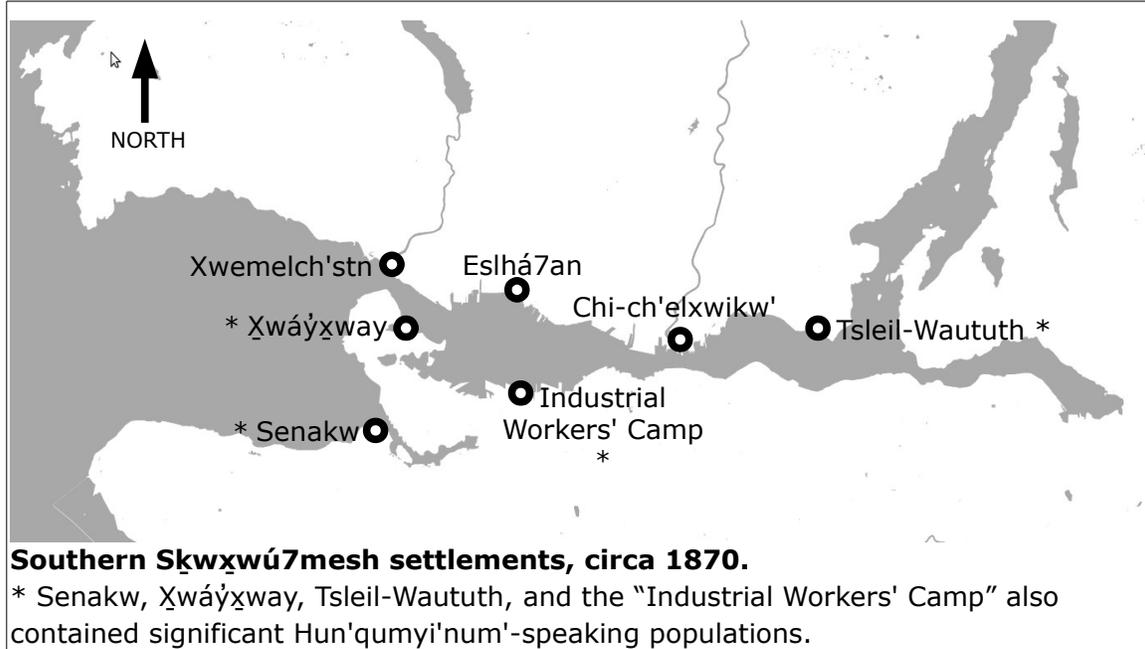
30 Paul Durieu to Louis-Joseph d'Herbomez, 1 April 1865 (Excerpt), *Missions* 6, No. 21 (March 1867), 32-34.

primary industries, shifting the demographic centre of Sḵw̱w̱ú7mesh territory southward from its eighteenth-century location in the Squamish Valley to five major settlements on Burrard Inlet.³¹ Sḵw̱w̱ú7mesh workers incorporated wage labour into their seasonal round; newly constructed wooden homes intermingled with hunter's cabins, and the income earned from industrial work enriched traditional Sḵw̱w̱ú7mesh ceremonial and material culture.³²

While the settlement frontier provided opportunities, it was also a site of violence, performed within the context of an increasingly aggressive government that was becoming more and more interested in native land and less and less so in the native people themselves.³³ While violence was committed by both sides, that committed by native people was disproportionately vulnerable to punishment which, following Hudson's Bay Company precedent, tended to be carried out against entire communities

31 Roine, *The Squamish Aboriginal Economy*, 9. Certain parts of the Lower Mainland are claimed by as many as four different First Nations governments, and nothing in this thesis should be construed as evidence supporting the claims of one at the expense of any others. It is my firm belief that aboriginal land claims should be the greatest ethical priority for anyone involved in British Columbian politics. However, the differences between traditional aboriginal forms of political organization and the Western-derived assumptions of postwar nation-based self-determination pose difficulties of application. Furthermore, as Alexandra Harmon, a historian and former attorney, has argued, the physical and abstract boundaries between Coast Salish groups, and even the existence of certain groups, have changed, out of both necessity and opportunity, in response to over two-hundred years of religious, economic, intellectual, military, and sexual interactions with non-native peoples. While these changes, and the resultant overlapping claims, do not detract from aboriginal peoples' moral entitlement to self-determination and redress for the illegal dispossession of their land, they tend to complicate the treaty-making process. Alexandra Harmon, *Indians in the Making: Ethnic Relations and Indian Identities Around Puget Sound* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

32 Roine, *The Squamish Aboriginal Economy*, 26–27.



rather than individuals.³⁴ After a series of white and Chinese people were murdered on Burrard Inlet in the early 1860s, Richard Moody, the Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia, accused the Skwxwú7mesh of harbouring the murderers and began to threaten such a reprisal.³⁵

33 Robin Fisher, *Contact and Conflict: Indian-European Relations in British Columbia, 1774-1890*, 2nd ed. (Vancouver, B.C: University of British Columbia, 1992). In the introduction to this thesis, I explored some weaknesses of the Fisher thesis, upon which my last statement was based. On balance, however, I believe that Fisher's errors consisted more of underestimating native agency than mischaracterizing the colonists' economic priorities. While native people were certainly involved in the industrial economy of the late-nineteenth and early twentieth-century, and were often among the most efficient industrial workers, the economic value of land increased so rapidly during the industrial period that it eventually eclipsed, in the eyes of the colonists, the contributions of Skwxwú7mesh labour to the economy.

34 R. Cole Harris, *The Resettlement of British Columbia: Essays on Colonialism and Geographical Change* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997).

35 Louis Miranda, Tape 4356:14, British Columbia Archives.
 Notes on the map on the previous page: My source for the spellings of the settlement names is a table compiled by Skwxwú7mesh historian Khelsilem Rivers and posted on the Wikipedia article, "Squamish People," accessed on 7 March 2012. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Squamish_people.

This was the set-up for what E. Palmer Patterson has called the “semi-legendary account” of the founding of the Oblate mission at Eshá7an.³⁶ The Skwxwú7mesh Catholic activist Andrew Paull related the story to Claude Bellot, the resident priest at Eshá7an from 1921 to 1937. The Oblates' post-war historiographical champion, Kay Cronin, popularized it in the 1950s, and another Oblate historian, Thomas Lascelles, recorded it in his 1980s study of the Eshá7an mission.³⁷ As such, it occupies a somewhat ambiguous position within the hierarchy of colonial discourse. Orally transmitted stories have generally been disadvantaged by a public and, until only very recently, scholarly community that have been sceptical of an oral account's ability to genuinely reflect the past in the same way as a written one.³⁸ This particular story should have been particularly vulnerable to criticisms on these grounds, as there is no written documentary evidence for even its most basic assertions.³⁹ Ironically, it is exactly this unjustified bias of European textual culture which has allowed this origin story to gain prominence among understandings of Skwxwú7mesh history. After Bellot, each subsequent author drew confidence in the story from the fact that it was featured in previous written works. At the same time, Skwxwú7mesh people continue to tell the story orally, using the written versions as source material. Thus,

The geographical data I used to construct this map are from <http://www.openstreetmap.org>. I formatted the map using the tools available at <http://maps.cloudmade.com/>. (My template, named “coleharris” in honour of the British Columbian historical geographer, is freely available for use at that website).

- 36 E. Palmer Patterson, *Andrew Paull and Canadian Indian Resurgence* (University of Washington Ph.D. Thesis, 1962), 17.
- 37 Claude Bellot, “First St. Paul's Church,” 1936-1937, Oblate House, Box 46; Kay Cronin, *Cross in the Wilderness* (Toronto Mission Press, 1959); Lascelles, *Mission on the Inlet*, 8.
- 38 Alistair Thomson, “Four Paradigm Transformations in Oral History,” *Oral History Review* 34, no. 1 (January 1, 2007): 49–70.
- 39 For example, the inciting event in the story is Colonel Moody's threat to exterminate the Skwxwú7mesh; yet there is no record of Moody ever having made any orders or recommendations to this effect (see below).

through the work of three Oblate historians: Bellot, Cronin, and Lascelles, this particular oral history has been elevated from a subaltern to an official narrative, and now dangles awkwardly between them. It must therefore be considered not only as an oral-historical text, but also as a work of Oblate written historiography.

The content of the story, as related by Cronin, is as follows. The mid-nineteenth-century Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh were an “unmanageable” nation of brutal warriors whose interactions with lower-class settlers and abuse of alcohol forced Moody to threaten “to wipe out the entire tribe with gunfire.” Fortunately, Cronin went on, “there was among their tribe a fine and noble chieftain, Chief Snatt, who was determined to save his people from annihilation.” Snatt⁴⁰ sought out the assistance of Leon Fouquet, an Oblate priest he knew from the New Westminster mission, who agreed to petition the colonial government on Snatt's behalf provided that the Oblates be allowed to establish a mission in Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh territory. All those who “wished to reject their evil ways and become civilized Christians” would be protected there from Moody's army. According to Bellot, Snatt found the major Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh settlements on Burrard Inlet (Senakw, X̓wáy̓x̓way, Xwemelch'stn, and Chi-ch'elxwikw') already occupied, and therefore chose Eslhá7an, a temporary hunting encampment, as the location for the mission, and “all those members of the Squamish [Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh] tribe who wanted to follow the teachings of Christianity and live a good and useful life” gathered there under Snatt's temporal and Fouquet's spiritual leadership.⁴¹ In Louis Miranda's words,

40 “Snatt” was a shortened, Anglicized version of this Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh diplomat's name. His name appears, still Anglicized, but in full, as “Snat Stroutan” in a letter written by R.C. Moody. *Papers Connected with the Indian Land Question, 1850-1875 : British Columbia : Free Download & Streaming : Internet Archive*, n.d., 23, <http://www.archive.org/details/papersconnectedw00britiala>. I have so far been unable to find the correct Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh spelling of his name.

41 Cronin, *Cross in the Wilderness*, 123–124.; Claude Bellot, “First St. Paul's Church,” 1936-1937, Oblate House, Box 46.

Father Fouquet went over and he interceded on behalf of the Indians, and begged and pleaded for the Governor to give him a town to speak to the Indians first. So the Governor said, "Alright"; he gave us so many days: "Convert them, or get them out of there, that's the main thing! Otherwise we're gonna ... come over there and wipe them all out! [...]The Father spoke to the Chief Skwatatxwamkin] and the people, and so the Chief Skwatatwamkin says, "Well," he says, "why not?" ... So the people moved over at that time with the understanding that this place would be a Catholic mission, and everyone had to be converted and become a Catholic.⁴²

To summarize: in the origin story favoured by the Oblate priests, the settlement of Eslhá7an was founded on unoccupied land as an intentional Christian community. Its twin purposes were to protect the S̓k̓w̓x̓w̓ú7mesh from state violence and to exorcise the social pathologies which had brought about the threat of it. Both would be achieved by the Eslhá7an S̓k̓w̓x̓w̓ú7mesh's willing rejection of their "traditional" culture and embracing Christianity.

However, the utility of this version of the founding of Eslhá7an is compromised not only by its ethnocentrism but also by the inaccuracies contained within them. To begin with, Snatt was not yet a chief at the time in question. Rather, he was the nephew of Skwatatxwamkin, the chief of the pre-mission Eslhá7an, which, according to an interview given by S̓k̓w̓x̓w̓ú7mesh historian Louis Miranda in 1979, was, in fact, a year-round S̓k̓w̓x̓w̓ú7mesh settlement before the mission was founded, although it may not have been so for very long.⁴³ Furthermore, there is archaeological evidence that the S̓k̓w̓x̓w̓ú7mesh had consistently occupied the Eslhá7an site as a seasonal camp for thousands of years prior to contact.⁴⁴ (In the traditional Coast Salish seasonal round, seasonal camps were sites of extensive, long-term occupation during the summer months, not merely of

42 Louis Miranda, 1979 Interview, Tape 4356:14, British Columbia Archives.

sporadic visits by hunting parties).⁴⁵

In addition, Bellot's description of Snatt's quest for a suitable location is self-contradictory: had Snatt been searching for unoccupied land, he would hardly have started by travelling to all of the pre-existing Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh settlements. More likely, he had hoped to establish the mission – which, recall, was established partially for defensive purposes – in a major Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh population centre, but was rebuffed by the chiefs of the politically important settlements. Skwatatxwamkin, the chief of a relatively minor settlement, may have seen a greater opportunity than his peers in working with the Oblates, and a greater risk in refusing to do so.

In addition, there is no corroboratory evidence that Moody did in fact threaten the Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh with extermination.⁴⁶ Certainly such an action – if perhaps not such a threat – would have been out of the ordinary, as state

43 Louis Miranda, 1979 Interview, Tape 4356:14, British Columbia Archives. Another Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh leader, August Jack Khatsalano, was of the opposite opinion that Eslhá7an had not in fact been occupied prior to the founding of the mission. However, Khatsalano's wording, that there were only "two old peoples making canoe there," so closely matches the official story ("they found only a few hunters roasting ducks") that it seems to have been derived from it. J.S. Matthews, *Conversations with Khatsalano, 1932-1954* (Vancouver: Vancouver City Archives, 1969), 66. It would not have been unheard of for a Coast Salish people to create a new settlement as a missionary centre; the Shishalh, for example, built the settlement of Ch'at-lich for that purpose. (See Rodney A. Fowler, *The Oblate System at the Sechelt Mission, 1862-1899*, 1987, 33.) Certainly, Eslhá7an became much more important relative to other Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh settlements after the Oblates established a mission. However, I am inclined to believe Miranda when he says there was a chief at Eslhá7an before it became a mission.

44 Rudy Reimer/Yum̓s, "The Mountains and Rocks Are Forever: Lithics and Landscapes of Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh Uxwumixw" (PhD. Dissertation, McMaster University, 2012), 53, 111, 234–235.

45 Wayne Suttles, *Coast Salish Essays*; Rudy Reimer/Yum̓s, *The Mountains and Rocks are Forever: Lithics and Landscapes of Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh Uxwumixw* (McMaster University Ph.D. Dissertation): 171. See, for comparison. Keith Thor Carlson (editor), *A Stó:lō Coast Salish Historical Atlas* (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 2001): 64-65.

46 Lascelles, *Mission on the Inlet*, 8.

violence against native people in nineteenth-century British Columbia did not tend to feature the type of military genocide the story asserts; rather, it consisted of more pinpointed raids, bombardments, and executions.⁴⁷ There is also a significant level of confusion between the sources as to whether Moody was responding to internecine violence, warfare against the Laich-kwil-tach, or violence against non-native people. According to Miranda, the third possibility is the most likely; nevertheless, Bellot and Cronin represented Moody as an honest policeman attempting to save the S̓k̓w̓x̓w̓ú7mesh from themselves. This characterization echoes Morice's representation of native societies as fundamentally unstable. Miranda suggests much more plausibly that Moody was reacting to S̓k̓w̓x̓w̓ú7mesh violence against colonists, instigated by gold-rush era territorial conflicts.⁴⁸

Regardless of the problems with this third origin story of Eshlá7an, it has endured, mainly because Oblate historians have been attracted to a narrative that shows them as protectors of native people against the coercive power of the state.⁴⁹ (The story's positive effect on their relationship with the S̓k̓w̓x̓w̓ú7mesh people was confirmed in 1959 when a group of Eshlá7an S̓k̓w̓x̓w̓ú7mesh and Tseil-Waututh Catholics, led by Andrew Paull, referenced it in a memorandum inviting the Oblates to continue operating at Eshlá7an).⁵⁰ The story also echoes the arguments of two major historians from the 1980s, John Webster Grant and James Axtell. Grant's *Moon of*

47 Lynn A. Blake, "Pastoral Power, Governmentality and Cultures of Order in Nineteenth-Century British Columbia," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 24, no. 1, New Series (1999): 79–93; Harris, *The Resettlement of British Columbia*; Keith D. Smith, *Liberalism, Surveillance and Resistance: Indigenous Communities in Western Canada, 1877-1927* (Edmonton: AU Press, 2009).

48 Louis Miranda, 1979 Interview, Tape 4356:14, British Columbia Archives.

49 A mid-century Oblate historian, who recognized the story's propaganda value, tried without success to find evidence in support of it, writing in his research notes that the church "would do well to find evidence" that the Oblates had sheltered the S̓k̓w̓x̓w̓ú7mesh from a colonial attack. Thomas Lascelle's notes, Oblate House.

Wintertime argues that native people turned to Christianity in an attempt to solve the internal and external problems they faced as a result of colonization, and which their prior religions seemed incapable of dealing with.⁵¹ Axtell, similarly, saw missionaries as offering native people “a colonial Marshall plan ... for their moral rearmament, social reconstruction, and religious revitalization.”⁵² Yet accepting a position within the Oblate sphere of influence, as I will show in the next chapter, was not a trivial decision; it placed significant limits on the personal freedoms of the Eshá7an Sḵwḵwú7mesh. Why some Sḵwḵwú7mesh people preferred negotiating with the church rather than the state demands explanation.⁵³

The Sḵwḵwú7mesh Christians

The testimonies of Andrew Paull and Louis Miranda, two Sḵwḵwú7mesh Catholics whose work with non-native scholars has given them a disproportionately large role in defining Sḵwḵwú7mesh culture to non-native

50 Petition of the Indians of St. Pauls Church, Mission No. 1 Indian Reserve, Squamish Indian & Church of the Child Jesus of Prague, Inlailwatash [Tsleil-Waututh] Band, to His Excellency RT Archbishop William Mark Duke, D.D., 12 April 1959. Oblate House, Box 46.

51 John Webster Grant, *Moon of Wintertime: Missionaries and the Indians of Canada in Encounter Since 1534* (University of Toronto Press, 1984). The title “Moon of Wintertime” is a reference to the lyrics of the Huron Carol, in which Christian angels appear to native people as representatives of native deities. Contrary to popular belief, the Huron Carol was not used by Jesuit missionaries in New France; in fact it was written in the twentieth-century by an Anglo-Canadian musicologist. The original Wendat lyrics written by Jean de Brébeuf are quite different. John Steckley, “The Huron Carol,” Unpublished Manuscript.

52 James Axtell, *After Columbus: Essays in the Ethnohistory of Colonial North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 45.

53 In the next chapter of this thesis, I discuss in much more detail the relations of power between the Eshá7an Sḵwḵwú7mesh, the provincial government, and the Oblates during the first few decades of the mission's existence. Here, however, I am focusing on origin stories that have attempted to explain these relationships, not the relationships themselves.

society, provide a possible answer, embedded in a fourth origin story of Eslhá7an. In this version, the development of Elsha7an as a Sḵw̱wú7mesh Christian community is presented as, to quote historian Brett Christopher, “a chapter in indigenous religious history” rather than an imposed conversion experience.⁵⁴

In an unpublished manuscript on the history of St. Paul's church, Paull asserted that as “a matter of fact ... the Indians were only too glad to be made acquainted with the true church of Christ, as their belief in a Supreme being was already paramount.”⁵⁵ Miranda's understanding of his people's past was even more far-reaching:

I won't say that the priests brought Christianity. They brought *religion* ... but before contact, we people had the *true* Christian feeling: the love and respect for each and every one.⁵⁶

Miranda's statement was probably more accurate than the Oblates would have liked to admit. In a way similar to early anthropologists, early Christian missionaries in British Columbia imagined themselves as interacting with ancient and static native cultures; the main difference was that missionaries, unlike their scholarly compatriots, aimed to change rather than merely describe these cultures. Both groups underestimated the degree to which native cultures had already changed by the mid-nineteenth-century in response to both direct and indirect contact with Europeans.

On the Northwest Coast, even before the arrival of Europeans, European biological, material, and intellectual novelties were being transmitted along

54 Christopher Brett, *Positioning the Missionary: John Booth Good and the Colonial Confluence of Cultures*, New ed. (University of British Columbia Press, 1999), 117–118.

55 Andrew Paull, “History of St. Paul's Church,” Oblate House, Box 46. In the original manuscript, “belief” appeared as “beliefs.” I prefer to correct spelling errors in my primary sources rather than call attention to them through the use of “[sic].”

56 Louis Miranda, Tape 4356:0002, British Columbia Archives.

aboriginal trade routes. The most significant pre-contact effect of contact was the introduction of smallpox, which had arrived in the southern half of Sḵw̓x̓wú7mesh territory by 1782. Over the next century, virgin-soil epidemics caused by exposure to European diseases drastically reduced the Sḵw̓x̓wú7mesh population.⁵⁷ When European fur traders did arrive in the early 1800s, the Sḵw̓x̓wú7mesh and other Coast Salish groups participated in the thriving trade, exchanging the pelts of sea otters, beaver, and other mammals for manufactured goods such as copper kettles, iron tools, and machine-woven blankets.⁵⁸ By the 1850s, Coast Salish people were growing potatoes, a European import whose cultivation they incorporated into their seasonal round.⁵⁹ At the same time, they had experienced decades of living under the Hudson's Bay Company's "proto-colonial presence" upheld through a combination of diplomacy and violence.⁶⁰ All of these changes occurred with only very sporadic contact with actual European people.

The social effects of indirect European contact were not limited to the material and the political; European ideas also preceded their official bearers, and not least among these were the ethical and theological tenets of the Europeans' religion. While British Columbia's three major Oblate historians, Morice, Cronin, and Lascelles, saw the early Spanish explorers as the forefathers of Northwest Coast Catholicism, Coast Salish peoples' most meaningful exposure to Christianity was from Metis and Iroquoian fur-traders whose ancestors had become Catholics generations earlier on the other side of the continent.⁶¹ According to Wayne Suttles, the first post-war anthropologist to study the Coast Salish, a complex of religious dances

57 Kelm, *Colonizing Bodies*, 3–18.

58 Fisher, *Contact and Conflict*, 1–48.

59 Wayne P Suttles, *Coast Salish Essays*, ed. Ralph Maud (Vancouver: Talonbooks, 1987).

60 Harris, *The Resettlement of British Columbia*.

61 Suttles, *Coast Salish Essays*; Morice, *L'Église Catholique Dans l'Ouest Canadien*, 206–207; Cronin, *Cross in the Wilderness*; Lascelles, *Mission on the Inlet*.

foretelling a great religious change emerged in the 1820s, and by the 1830s these dances had incorporated definitive Christian elements.⁶² During the following decades, a series of prophets emerged in the Columbia Basin who created new, syncretic religions that paradoxically blended Christianity with nativism.⁶³

Even when the spread of Christian ideas was driven by missionaries working on the Northwest Coast, they could not keep pace with their own Gospel. Because of the incredible linguistic diversity on the Northwest Coast, the Oblates typically began missions by preaching in Chinook, a trade language spoken throughout the Northwest Coast. Besides allowing the Oblates to establish missions with less initial investment in learning local languages, this strategy also allowed native people to easily transmit prayers throughout the region. Thus, the hymns and devotions that Modeste Demers taught to Coast Salish people in Puget Sound quickly reached Georgia Strait, and contributed to the general religious and intellectual ferment there.⁶⁴

According to Suttles, Christianity was grafted by these early-contact religious innovators onto pre-existing religious concepts. The Transformer, for example, acquired new characteristics, and became the subject of worship where it had previously only been the subject of belief. Similarly, a Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh prophet modified Lacombe's ladder, an Oblate tool for teaching Biblical history, into a geographical (rather than temporal) map that

62 Suttles, *Coast Salish Essays*, 153–154. Intriguingly, Suttles notes that Hill-Tout did not record any evidence of a prophet cult among the Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh, whereas Louis Miranda and Dominic Charlie (two Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh cultural leaders) both did. This is further evidence of Hill-Tout's tendency to let the aesthetic priorities of salvage anthropology outweigh the lived experience of his subjects.

63 Robert H Ruby, *Dreamer-Prophets of the Columbia Plateau: Smohalla and Skolaskin* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1989); Erik Anderson, "Ready for the Religious Relationship": *Carrier Negotiations with Christianity Through Fur Traders, Prophets, and Missionaries to 1885* (Prince George: University of Northern British Columbia, 1996).

64 Suttles, *Coast Salish Essays*.

evoked the traditional Skwxwú7mesh association of certain physical locations with supernatural phenonemen.⁶⁵

This kind of syncretism, in which Christian symbols perform aboriginal spiritual functions, and vice versa, has often been identified by anthropologists and historians of the colonial Americas. The most famous example is the Virgin of Guadeloupe, an image of Jesus's mother with Nahautl features, who is extremely popular among Mestizo people in contemporary Mexico.⁶⁶ More locally, Laura Peers found that Coast Salish Catholics have historically endowed Mary with syncretic characteristics based on their pre-Christian religious practises.⁶⁷ Many authors are sceptical of such a straightforwardly homomorphic approach to studying religious change: Charles Stewart and Rosalind Shaw, for example, argue in their volume on syncretism that religious "equivalencies" do not facilitate conversion unless they are identified and articulated as such by participants.⁶⁸ However, the evidence gathered by Suttles suggests that functional syncretism was, in fact, taking place in mid-eighteenth-century Skwxwú7mesh religion, *before* the establishment of the Eslhá7an mission.

These historical realities lend credence to Miranda's and Paull's statements. By making Skwxwú7mesh religious innovators the protagonists in Eslhá7an's origin story, they reject the assumptions of native cultural inferiority that characterized missionary work. At the same time, they challenge the attitude, common among liberal Euro-Americans since Ruth Benedict, that changes in native cultures are by definition undesirable.⁶⁹ Thus, it becomes possible to think of nineteenth-century Skwxwú7mesh

65 Miranda, quoted in Ibid.

66 Eric R. Wolf, "The Virgin of Guadalupe: A Mexican National Symbol," *The Journal of American Folklore* 71, no. 279 (January 1, 1958): 34–39.

67 Laura Peers, "The Guardian of All: Jesuit Missionary and Salish Perceptions of the Virgin Mary," in Jennifer S. H. Brown and Elizabeth Vibert, *Reading Beyond Words: Contexts for Native History* (Broadview Press, 2003).

68 Charles Stewart and Rosalind Shaw, eds., *Syncretism/Anti-Syncretism: The Politics of Religious Synthesis* (London: Routledge, 1994).

Catholics – and their contemporary descendents – not as victims of imposed mental colonization but as creators of their own religious destiny.

Conclusion

The Indian historian Dipesh Chakrabarty famously argued that it is impossible to genuinely express the historical experience of a group lacking access to the cultural tools of the powerful as a single “minority history” that follows the narrative conventions of the mainstream historical narrative.⁷⁰ Eslhá7an's competing origin stories would have been an excellent case study for him: they are so contradictory in tone and event that they defy synthesis. Nevertheless, by comparing all of the competing narratives of the foundation of Sḱwḱwú7mesh Christianity, it is possible to achieve a sufficiently vivid impressionistic account to critique individual portions of each strand. Such a comparison also helps us to clarify the cultural aspects of Eslh7an that Charles Hill-Tout's cognitive dissonance obscured.

As Hill-Tout walked past St. Paul's church to Melkw's's cabin, he imagined himself shedding over a century of history. Accordingly, he produced, alongside Melkw's's cosmogonic narrative, yet another origin story for the Sḱwḱwú7mesh that imagined them as inheritors of a past constructed in the ethnographic present tense. Yet Melkw's, as much as Bishop Durieu or the Sḱwḱwú7mesh Christians who had greeted Hill-Tout at the shore, lived in the late-nineteenth, not the late-eighteenth, century. Conversely, those Sḱwḱwú7mesh people who attended St. Paul's, for whom, according to Hill-Tout, contact with missionaries had “broken down and thrust aside many of

69 Kerwin Lee Klein, *Frontiers of Historical Imagination: Narrating the European Conquest of Native America, 1890-1990* (University of California Press, 1999), 154–161; Ruth Benedict, *Patterns of Culture* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1961), 8.

70 Dipesh Chakrabarty, “Minority Histories, Subaltern Pasts,” *Postcolonial Studies* 1, no. 1 (April 1998): 15–29.

their old pagan beliefs," were, like Melkw's, participants in the dynamic society of a S̄kw̄wú7mesh settlement, in which pre-contact forms of consciousness and Christianity coexisted along with the origin stories that attempted to explain them.

Chapter 2

Hegemony and Diplomacy

RITA: My uncle was Dan Joe ... He was dyin' and he said to me, 'Long ago the white man come with Bibles to talk to my people, who had the land. They talk for hundred years ... then we had all the Bibles, an' the white man had our land.

George Ryga, *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe*¹

The church in the colonies is a white man's Church, a foreigner's Church. It does not call the colonized to the ways of God, but to the ways of the white man, to the ways of the master, the oppressor.

Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*²

Ambassadors

As he testified before a special committee of the Canadian House of Commons in 1946, Andrew Paull, secretary of the Squamish Nation Council of Chiefs and president of the North American Indian Brotherhood, digressed briefly from his immediate political arguments in order to present a theory of colonialism. The “peaceful encroachment” of Canadian settlers onto native land west of the Rockies, he argued, had been made possible by the work of Christian missionaries. “Your ancestors,” he accused the Members of Parliament, “came here and you penetrated into the country, and you sent as your ambassadors people with the Bible, with the Book. Now, I am a Christian man and I have no kick against any religion, but that is the way

1 George Ryga, *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe*, 3rd Printing. (Talonbooks, 1970).

2 Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (Grove Press, 2004), 7.

you got in.”³

Paull's indictment was far deeper than the charges of “cultural imperialism” held against missionaries in popular liberal understandings of Canadian history.⁴ By describing missionaries as “ambassadors” of the colonial state and facilitators of native dispossession, Paull drew an explicit link between the ideological and material elements of European expansion. By implication, the missionaries' spiritual intentions were not only marred by ethnocentrism, but fully contaminated by their complicity in the worldly machinations of colonial administration; to quote the Martiniquan anti-colonial philosopher Frantz Fanon, they had “aided and abetted ... the pacification of the colonized.”⁵

On this point, Paull's frequent political adversaries, the colonial bureaucrats of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century, tended to agree with him. In the annual reports of the federal Department of Indian Affairs it is not difficult to find passages applauding, as one writer expressed it, the “efforts put forth by the English [Anglican], Wesleyan [Methodist], and Roman Catholic churches to civilize, by means of Christianity, the aborigines of the Dominion.”⁶ For the Department of Indian Affairs and the intellectuals who supported it, missionaries were a cheap and reliable provider of three important services. As cultural allies of the state, missionaries aided, by default, in the distribution of Eurocentric points of view. As members of the professional class whose vows of poverty and access to funding from European donors allowed them to be distributed more widely than the

3 Andrew Paull quoted in Brendan F.R. Edwards, “‘I Have Lots of Help Behind Me, Lots of Books, to Convince You’: Andrew Paull and the Value of Literacy in English,” *BC Studies*, no. 164 (Winter 2009): 7–30.

4 Ryan Dunch, “Beyond Cultural Imperialism: Cultural Theory, Christian Missions, and Global Modernity,” *History and Theory* 41, no. 3 (October 2002): 301–325.

5 Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 7.

6 Frank Devlin, “Report for the Fraser River Agency, 1893,” Library and Archives Canada, *Indian Affairs Annual Reports, 1864-1990*, 1893, page 120.

<http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/databases/indianaffairs/index-e.html>

government could have afforded to place its employees, they delivered social programs, especially in education. Finally, they also performed surveillance functions by reporting regularly on the social and material conditions of reserves.⁷

Paull had excellent first-hand experience of this mutualistic relationship between missionaries and the state, as he had lived most of his life in the Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh Catholic community of Eslhá7an, or, as it was referred to in colonial correspondence, the Mission #1 reserve in North Vancouver. At Eslhá7an, the Oblate missionaries and their female counterpart, the Sisters of St. Ann, were heavily involved in all of the roles mentioned above, for which they often received praise from state officials. The federal government funded the school the Oblates built at Eslhá7an, at which they taught both academic and religious subjects.⁸ One Indian Agent complimented the “nice white clean houses,” work ethic, and “morality” of the Eslhá7an Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh under “the strict religious care of his Lordship Bishop [Durieu].”⁹ Another expressed his “most sincere thanks” for the assistance of the “devoted and zealous missionaries” who had aided him in completing his “official duties amongst the Indians.”¹⁰

It is, of course, no great historical secret that the separation of church and state in Canada did not in general apply to Indian reserves. Critical post-war scholars of colonial history tended, as Paull did, to see a connection

7 Library and Archives Canada, *Indian Affairs Annual Reports, 1864-1990*, 1875, page 45. For missionaries' role as surveillants, see Keith D. Smith, *Liberalism, Surveillance and Resistance: Indigenous Communities in Western Canada, 1877-1927* (Edmonton: AU Press, 2009).

8 Library and Archives Canada, *Indian Affairs Annual Reports, 1864-1990*, 1899, page 244.

9 Library and Archives Canada, *Indian Affairs Annual Reports, 1864-1990* 1888, page 106, quoted in Thomas A Lascelles, *Mission on the Inlet: St. Paul's Indian Catholic Church, North Vancouver, B.C., 1863-1984* ([Vancouver: St. Paul's Province, Order of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate], 1984), 29.

10 R.C. MacDonald, “Report” in Library and Archives Canada, *Indian Affairs Annual Reports, 1864-1990*, 1907, page 215

between missionary activities and colonial control. For Fanon, missionaries' main role had been to encourage native peoples to assume a mental hierarchy of cultures in which they were positioned as inferior, thus internalizing the fundamental axioms of colonialism.¹¹ The American historian Francis Jennings argued that missionaries were important contributors to the taxonomy of "civilization and savagery" that justified violence against native people.¹² More locally, Robin Fisher portrayed Christian missionaries as the most aggressive wedge of British Columbia's settlement frontier.¹³ Taken together, these arguments constitute an argument which I will call the complicity thesis, in which missionaries are seen as crucial ideological supporters and abettors of political colonization. Today, the complicity thesis is an important part of many socially progressive native and non-native Canadians' view of their country's past.

Yet Paull's own biography somewhat destabilizes this interpretation of mission history, for he was, in addition to a major native activist, also a leading member of the Esłhá7an Catholic church. As one of the first students to attend the Mission reserve's boarding school, an officer in the mission's militaristic system of governance, and an active participant in parochial community functions, Paull had developed and maintained a mutually supportive relationship with the Oblates and the Sisters of Saint Anne even as he consistently railed against government-perpetrated injustices.¹⁴ Furthermore, as an articulate English-speaking legal professional, businessman and bureaucrat who wore Western-style clothing and headed a

11 Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 51.

12 Francis Jennings, *The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism and the Cant of Conquest*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1975).

13 Robin Fisher, *Contact and Conflict: Indian-European Relations in British Columbia, 1774-1890*, 2nd ed. (Vancouver, B.C: University of British Columbia, 1992), 119-145.

14 E. Palmer Patterson, *Andrew Paull and Canadian Indian Resurgence* (University of Washington Ph.D. Thesis, 1962); Brendan F.R. Edwards, "I Have Lots of Help Behind Me, Lots of Books, to Convince You."

nuclear family, he was not merely, as he said, “a Christian man,” but in fact an exemplar of precisely the kind of human being the Oblates had hoped their missions would create. If the effect of Christian missions had been one of straightforward pacification, it is difficult to imagine how such an enthusiastic participant in cultural change could have been, as the editor of *Oblate Missions* described him in 1951, “agin the government so long he has been suspected have having a dash of Irish blood in his veins.”¹⁵

To some extent, therefore, Paull was a counterexample to his own argument. In this, he was not a solitary case. A disproportionate number of the major mid-twentieth-century native activists in British Columbia were also devout Christians who had adopted many of the Euro-American cultural attitudes that missionaries espoused. I have already mentioned Peter Kelly.¹⁶ Frank Calder, the first native person in British Columbia to be elected as a Member of the Legislative Assembly, and the originator of one of the most important aboriginal title cases in Canadian legal history, was a Nisga'a Anglican.¹⁷ Dan George, a Catholic and one-time resident of Esłhá7an, enjoyed a successful acting career and became one of Hollywood's first celebrity activists, using his fame and oratorical skills to draw attention to native social issues.¹⁸ Other Christian native leaders who were important in twentieth-century British Columbia include the Nisga'a activists Bert McKay and James Gosnell.¹⁹

15 *Oblate Missions*, No. 21 (December-March 1950/1951), page 1, Oblate House, Box 46.

16 Paul Tennant, *Aboriginal Peoples and Politics: The Indian Land Question in British Columbia, 1849-1989* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1990), 94.

17 *Ibid.*, 122.

18 Dan (Chief) George, *My Spirit Soars*. (Surrey, B.C., 1982); Dan George, *My Heart Soars* (Saanichton: Hancock House, 1974); Helmut Hirschall and Dan George, *The Best of Chief Dan George* (Hancock House, 2004).

19 Alex Rose, *Spirit Dance at Meziadin: Chief Joseph Gosnell and the Nisga'a Treaty* (Harbour, 2001); Hugh Brody, *Time Immemorial*, Documentary (Icarus Films, 1991).

This chapter aims to both explain and problematize the apparent tendency of Northwest Coast missions, particularly the Eslhá7an mission, to produce native activists. Drawing upon the ideas of Antonio Gramsci and Michel Foucault, as well as the more contemporary scholars whom they have influenced, I characterize Paull and other Eslhá7an Christian leaders as “conservative native activists” whose agitation, because it was performed in ways that colonial officials could understand and did not fundamentally challenge the existence of the state, enjoyed greater acceptance, greater success, and a larger place in colonial archives than other more radical forms of resistance. Furthermore, I argue that the mission the Oblates maintained at Eslhá7an was an excellent training grounds for conservative native activists, as it provided both Western-style educational services and an intimate, day-to-day experience of interacting with a specific kind of authoritarian, Euro-Canadian power.

Philosophers

That the careers of native leaders such as Paull complicates the complicity thesis has not been lost on apologist historians aiming to rehabilitate the missionaries' reputation in Canadian historical discourse. Thomas Lascelles, an Oblate historian and archivist active in the 1980s and 1990s, made numerous references to Paull in his study of church-run residential schools, emphasizing Paull's fond memories of his education at Eslhá7an.²⁰ In fact, Lascelles argued, since church leaders cultivated leaders like Paull, and sometimes directly lobbied the government on behalf

20 Thomas A Lascelles, *Roman Catholic Indian Residential Schools in British Columbia* (Vancouver: Order of OMI in B.C, 1990). His positioning of Paull as counter-evidence was aided by the fact that the mid-twentieth-century liberal historian E. Palmer Patterson, who wrote the most extensive biography of Paull, did not see any contradiction in Paull's being for the church but “agin” the state. Patterson, *Andrew Paull and Canadian Indian Resurgence*.

of native people, perhaps missionaries could be considered a gentle counterweight to the racist, aggressive procedures of the state.²¹

Today's academic historians are nearly unanimous in their rejection of such a simplistic and sympathetic view of missionaries' position within colonialism. However, a return to Fanon's stark determinism is equally unsatisfying, as it ignores both the ways in which colonized peoples resisted and refashioned Christian ideologies, and the contributions of indigenous Christians to the discourse and practise of anti-colonialism. In his popular history of Canadian missions, John Webster Grant summarized the difficulty of reconciling these two viewpoints into an intellectually satisfying synthesis:

Estimates of the effects of Christian missions on Indian life are likely to depend, in the final analysis, on whether they are distinguished from the total impact of the European presence or included as an integral part of it. If reckoned as a distinct entity, they may well be seen as mitigating some of its harmful effects. If lumped in, they will almost certainly be condemned for their complicity in undermining the bases of Indian society. Since the missionaries were at once emissaries of Christ and associates of Caesar, there is no basis on which one can make an unambiguous judgement between these alternatives.²²

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- 21 Lascelles, *Mission on the Inlet*; Lascelles, *Roman Catholic Indian Residential Schools in British Columbia*; Thomas A. Lascelles, "Leon Fouquet and the Kootenay Indians, 1874-1887," Thesis, 1986, <http://summit.sfu.ca/item/6232>. The secular historian JR Miller also argued that residential schools contributed to creating a generation of native activists. The difference between Miller's work and Lascelles' was that Miller dedicated much more textual space to describing the ways in which the residential school system was oppressive. J. R. Miller, *Shingwauk's Vision: A History of Native Residential Schools* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 343.
- 22 John Webster Grant, *Moon of Wintertime: Missionaries and the Indians of Canada in Encounter Since 1534* (University of Toronto Press, 1984), 258. J.R. Miller explored a similar theme in his history of residential schools: "within the relationship of throne and alter there were both tensions and differences of emphasis that produced some interesting side effects." Miller, *Shingwauk's Vision*, 193.

Historians have progressed beyond the impasse Grant described to the extent that they have adopted more sophisticated models of how power functions within a society, in which the relationship between individuals and organizations need not lie at some specific point on a continuum between independence and alliance. To do this, they have drawn upon the work of social theorists writing outside the discipline of history, of which two have been particularly influential on scholars of mission history over the past twenty years.

The first is the mid-twentieth-century Italian Communist philosopher Antonio Gramsci, whose most famous arguments extended Marx's contention that "the ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas."²³ For Gramsci, "ruling" was an adjective, not a gerund: he believed that intellectual culture, dominated by the bourgeoisie, privileged a set of attitudes and assumptions that reinforced bourgeois dominance.²⁴ Even more importantly for future scholars, he developed a theory of "passive revolution" in which the liberal state allows certain forms of dissent and makes certain concessions in order to increase the long-term sustainability of its rule.²⁵ Gramsci's ideas have been used extensively by some of the past two decades' foremost scholars of colonial culture, including Jean and John Comaroff, ethnohistorians of colonial and apartheid South Africa. In the Comaroff's formulation, missionaries *are* in fact ambassadors, not of colonial policy, but of colonial ways of being. They perform their work with the permission of the colonial state, which ultimately benefits from their relationship with the native people. At the same time, their presence may contribute to actions that could be classified as passively revolutionary in

23 Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The German Ideology* (International Publishers Co, 1970), 64.

24 Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, ed. Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (International Publishers Co, 1971).

25 Adam Morton, *Unravelling Gramsci: Hegemony and Passive Revolution in the Global Economy* (Pluto Press, 2007).

nature.²⁶

The second major influence on mission history was the French philosopher Michel Foucault, who argued against boolean, instrumentalist understandings of power as an entity that can be held by an individual or group. Instead, Foucault favoured a view in which power is “a set of relations” taking numerous qualitatively different forms and circulating stochastically within a society.²⁷ It was Foucault, more than any other writer, who contributed to solving the agency/oppression dichotomy I discussed in the introduction to this thesis. Rather than seeing agency and oppression as a binary, dichotomous pair, Foucault recharacterized them as dialectically related exercises of different kinds of power.²⁸ In models of colonization inspired by Foucault, native agency is not subsumed by, and does not subsume, imperial oppression, but instead coexists with it.

The historian who has most explicitly applied Foucault's ideas to the study of Northwest Coast missionization is Lynn Blake. Blake has characterized the conflict, to the extent that it existed, between missionaries and the state as resulting from “two radically different forms of imperial imagination,” which she describes using Foucault's taxonomy of power. Missionaries, Blake argued, approached native people within the context of

26 John L Comaroff and Jean Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution, Volume 2: The Dialectics of Modernity on a South African Frontier* (University of Chicago Press, 1997); Jean Comaroff and John L. Comaroff, *Of Revelation and Revolution, Volume 1: Christianity, Colonialism, and Consciousness in South Africa*, 1st ed. (University Of Chicago Press, 1991), 7.

27 Michel Foucault, Interview with Micahel Bess, *History of the Present* 4 (Spring 1988), 1-2. Michel Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège De France 1977--1978* (Picador, 2009); Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: The Will to Knowledge* (Penguin Group, 2008). Foucault had a strong influence on the anthropologist of religion Talal Asad, whose insistence that scholars not try to treat power and religion as unrelated forces is widely accepted among scholars working today. Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), 28.

28 Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*.

what Foucault would term pastoral power, in which the priests exchanged spiritual and material care for obedience. Their authority came from cooperation with leaders (such as Paull) within their congregations and from excluding transgressors from community benefits such as the Eucharist. State officials, by contrast, operated within a paradigm of disciplinary power, in which illicit actions were punishable through physical coercion and violence.²⁹ Disagreements between church and state, then, were not over the fundamental project of creating a Eurocentric society in the colony, but merely about which methods should be used to do so. This cultural gap, though narrow, was wide enough to create an arena for native people to exercise agency.³⁰

While Gramsci and the later authors he inspired help to explain why the federal and provincial governments were willing to tolerate Andrew Paull, it is the Foucauldian approach that best explains how native activists like him emerged. As I demonstrated in the first chapter of this thesis, one account of the Eslhá7an mission's foundation emphasizes that the S̓kw̓x̓wú7mesh had originally contracted the Oblates to help ward off an attack by the British provincial government in New Westminster. Whether or not the specific threat identified in the story did indeed occur, it is true that individual S̓kw̓x̓wú7mesh leaders were being forced to make difficult choices in the 1860s about which type of power relationship they wished to share with non-native settlers; although these decisions reflected their personal agency, they were made from a position of weakness constructed by the state's ability to act punitively. It was under these circumstances that the Eslhá7an S̓kw̓x̓wú7mesh entered into an authoritarian social contract centred around

29 While violence was certainly a part of the Oblate administration of Eslhá7an, it was qualitatively different from the form of violence practised by the state: more medieval charivari than modern panopticon.

30 Lynn A. Blake, "Pastoral Power, Governmentality and Cultures of Order in Nineteenth-Century British Columbia," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 24, no. 1, New Series (1999): 79–93.

the mission church. The re-foundation of Eslhá7an as a Catholic parish, then, can be seen as an act of native agency that took advantage of the cultural gap between church and state that Blake described.

Because Oblate missionaries believed in the inherent redeemability of the native people they worked with, they were inclined, as I will show below, to assist those of their parishioners whom they identified as good or potentially good Christians in their attempts to secure economic concessions from the Crown. By providing this useful but contingent support, the Eslhá7an Oblates created a matrix of political payoffs that favoured activists who fought passionately against the material deprivations of colonization, but tacitly accepted – or were, at the very least, generally quiet about – the intellectual foundations of colonialism. In this thesis, I have used the term “conservative anti-colonial activists” to refer to Sk̄wx̄wú7mesh individuals who, to varying extents, share this trait. All of them worked within the “narrow world, strewn with prohibitions” that non-native settlement imposed on the Sk̄wx̄wú7mesh, and all drew their effectiveness from ongoing cultural negotiations based at Eslhá7an.³¹

31 The quote “narrow world, strewn with prohibitions” is from Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 37.

During my thesis defence, Rudy Reimer/Yum̄ks asked whether “conservative” is an adjective that can genuinely be applied to individual activists, or whether it would be more appropriate to apply it to specific *acts* of anti-colonial activism. By implication, had my “conservative activists” also engaged in acts I would describe as radical? While I have little empirical evidence with which to answer this question (other than Louis Miranda's membership in the radical Shaker church), I think Reimer/Yum̄ks's suggestion probably provides a better way of looking at the problem. In Trouillot's, Scott's and Stoler's ethnographies of colonial archives, all three emphasize that they are constructed so as to systemically exclude certain types of actions, not certain people. In the specific case of the Sk̄wx̄wú7mesh, it is certainly possible that some of the individuals I discuss below were also engaged in counter-hegemonic forms of dissent that were not recorded in written archives.

Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past* (Beacon Press, 1997); James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (Yale University Press, 1992); Ann Laura Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense* (Princeton University Press, 2010).

Acolytes

The specific set of compromises that the Eshá7an S̓k̓w̓x̓w̓ú7mesh made in their relationship with the Oblates is generally referred to in historical literature as the “Durieu System,” though some writers have argued that this nomenclature gives Paul Durieu too much credit, and propose “Oblate System” instead.³² The Oblate System, according to the mid-twentieth-century human behaviour theorist Edwin Lemert, was the primary governance structure of several Coast Salish settlements, including Eshá7an and the Shishalh Christian community of Ch’at-lich, from the 1860s until the 1890s.

The “System,” as described by Lemert, was an adaptation of the style of mission that the Jesuits ran in Paraguay, designed on the Oblates' assumption that native people were psychologically juvenile. “Indians are only big children,” Durieu wrote while working at the Shishalh mission, “[They are] weak in heart and mind ... and must be ... protected against [themselves].”³³ To do so, Durieu and his Oblate brothers set up settlement-level “tribal theocracies” that were strictly governed by church law and policed by native men designated by the priests. With the help of these native leaders, they strictly forbade any religious action they considered pre-Christian, including spirit dancing, the “potlatch”³⁴ and “patronage of the *shaman*.” Gambling and the consumption of alcoholic beverages were also

32 Rodney A. Fowler, *The Oblate System at the Sechelt Mission, 1862-1899*, 1987, 34.

33 Paul Durieu, quoted in Edwin Lemert, “The Life and Death of an Indian State,” *Human Organization* 13, no. 3 (1954): 24. The Oblate historian A.G. Morice, writing several decades later, had much the same opinion, describing the Coast Salish native as “A degraded creature, more child than adult, lacking both the innocence of the former and the self-control of the latter, the redskin must be treated with the firmness, prudence and foresight required for the administration of adolescents.” A. G. Morice, *Histoire De L’Église Catholique Dans l’Ouest Canadien Du Lac Supérieur Au Pacifique (1659-1905)*, 4ième édition. (Saint Boniface, Man: Oblates of Mary Immaculate, 1928), 304.

outlawed. In an effort to fill the psychological void they assumed these prohibitions would create in their childlike converts, the Oblates regularly held spectacular religious gatherings which native Christians would sometimes travel multiple days by canoe to attend. The total effect of the Oblate System, again according to Lemert, was “the almost complete sloughing-off at a relatively early contact period of their [native parishioners'] ceremonial culture” and “the relatively complete Catholicization of the tribes within a very short period of time.”³⁵

While Lemert's research on the Oblate System was widely cited in British Columbia historiography throughout the twentieth-century, it came under severe criticism in the late 1980s when Rodney Fowler, an honours student at Simon Fraser University, published a pair of essays questioning Lemert's methods and conclusions.³⁶ Lemert, Fowler argued, had overused Oblate-produced hagiographies and underused oral testimony, and had misread primary documents and anthropological studies.³⁷ As a result, he had greatly overestimated the extent of cultural change produced by the Oblate System. By re-examining the historical and anthropological evidence on Ch'at-lich, the mission town on which Lemert had based his study, Fowler was able to conclude that missionaries had caused little “disruption” of the

34 Sk̓w̓x̓w̓ú7mesh ceremonial gatherings (and those of other Coast Salish groups) differed in important ways from the potlatches of the Haida, Kwakwaka'wakw, and Nuu-chah-nulth, and it is therefore not technically accurate to classify them as “potlatches.” However, nineteenth-century missionaries and state officials used the word more generally, and Sk̓w̓x̓w̓ú7mesh ceremonies were restricted by the potlatch ban. Vanessa Campbell, Personal Communication, 24 January 2013.

For a description of the state's struggle to define a “potlatch” during the era of the potlatch ban; see Tina Loo, “Dan Cranmer’s Potlatch: Law as Coercion, Symbol, and Rhetoric in British Columbia, 1884-1951,” *Canadian Historical Review* 73, no. 2 (June 1, 1992): 125–165, doi:10.3138/CHR-073-02-01.

35 Lemert, “The Life and Death of an Indian State.”

36 Fowler, *The Oblate System at the Sechelt Mission*; Rodney Fowler, “The Lemert Thesis and the Sechelt Mission,” *CCHA Historical Studies* 57 (1990): 51–64.

37 Fowler, “The Lemert Thesis and the Sechelt Mission,” 56–61.

Shishalh way of life prior to 1872, after which they were only sporadically present for the next two decades. The “Government agents, Commissions of Inquiry, lumber barons, timber cruisers, loggers, tradespeople, and white settlers” that the Shishalh saw regularly through those decades, Fowler argued, surely had a greater social effect than the occasional visit of an Oblate or the “priest and a few French-Canadian nuns” who arrived in 1904 to re-establish a permanent missionary presence.³⁸

In Lemert's defence, Fowler makes one important and potentially incorrect assumption: that the Oblate System was inherently an *Oblate* institution that required active involvement from non-native missionaries to be effective.³⁹ Lemert, by contrast, described the Oblate system as an “Indian state” that, though designed by missionaries, could conceivably be self-sustaining with only periodic visits from them.⁴⁰ Fowler was certainly not unaware that Coast Salish cultures were capable of changing themselves: in fact, one of his main criticisms of Lemert's work was that it gave too much agency to Durieu and not enough to the Shishalh.⁴¹ However, he seems to have, in the tradition of Robin Fisher and the American anthropologist Ralph Linton, separated cultural change into “directed” and “non-directed” varieties, and only counted directed cultural change as “disruption.”⁴² Since I am arguing that native cultural and political actions during the colonial period were at once both directed *and* non-directed, I do not find this approach particularly useful. Furthermore, since both Lemert and Fowler focused on Ch’at-lich and neither performed extensive comparative research on other Oblate missions, it is difficult to determine the extent to which their

38 Fowler, *The Oblate System at the Sechelt Mission*, 10–13; Fowler, “The Lemert Thesis and the Sechelt Mission,” 62–63.

39 Fowler, “The Lemert Thesis and the Sechelt Mission,” 61–62.

40 Lemert, “The Life and Death of an Indian State.”

41 Fowler, *The Oblate System at the Sechelt Mission*, 34.

42 Fisher, *Contact and Conflict*; Ralph Linton, *Acculturation in Seven American Indian Tribes*. (Gloucester, Mass: Peter Smith, 1963).

conclusions can be applied to Eslhá7an. For this reason, I hesitate to endorse either Lemert's or Fowler's appraisal of the Oblate System. Instead, the following description of political and religious life at Eslhá7an in the 1880s and 1890s relies mainly on primary documents produced by some of the settlement's native and non-native residents, read in the context of Lemert's and Fowler's arguments.

The author of the most vivid accounts of life at Eslhá7an under the Oblate system was the Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh historian Louis Miranda (Sxaaltxw). Miranda was born in 1892 to a Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh mother, whose English name was Cecilia, and a Chilean father, "Frank" Miranda; the two met while the latter was working at the Moodyville Sawmill, near Eslhá7an. When Louis was twelve years old, Frank died, and the Chilean government offered to transport him to Chile to live with the surviving members of the Miranda family. His mother, however, refused, and raised him, in the Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh language, at Eslh7an.⁴³ Miranda enjoyed a distinguished career as an industrial worker, linguist, anthropological informant, and ultimately Chief of the Squamish Nation. In 1981, he was awarded an honorary doctorate from the University of British Columbia "for his work in language development and cultural contributions."⁴⁴ Of all the twentieth-century Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh leaders I discuss in this thesis, "Uncle Louie" seems to be the most universally admired among contemporary Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh people.

Miranda's religious biography is complex. Although his father was Chilean (and therefore presumably Catholic) and his mother lived at Eslhá7an, for much of Miranda's life his membership in the Catholic church was sporadic; his relationship with it, uneasy. In his conversations with anthropologists in the 1970s, he gave one reason why: he felt that the Oblates, and Durieu in particular, were responsible for "killing"

43 Bernardo Berdichewsky, *Latin Americans Integration Into Canadian Society in B.C* (Self-Published, 2007), 32–35.

44 Patricia Richardson Logie, "'Uncle' Louis Miranda," *Chronicles of Pride Collection*, n.d., <http://site2.ewart.library.ubc.ca/node/35>.

Sḵw̓xw̓ú7mesh culture and thereby damaging the collective pride of the Sḵw̓xw̓ú7mesh community.⁴⁵ Miranda did not have to look far from home for evidence to support this claim: his niece, Jessica Miranda, had been disciplined at Eslhá7an for participating in a spirit dancing ceremony.⁴⁶ Because he felt culturally repressed by the Oblate church, the young Louis sought religious experience elsewhere, and joined the Shaker church, a nativist religious organization that blended “traditional” Salish theology with Christianity and that asserted an explicitly anti-colonial political message.⁴⁷ Unlike the Oblate church, in which Sḵw̓xw̓ú7mesh adherents could achieve significance but the ability to perform sacred rites was restricted to the Euro-Canadian priests, the Shaker church offered Miranda a position of religious authority, which he accepted with enthusiasm.⁴⁸

Miranda did, eventually, join the Eslhá7an church, but not until the late twentieth-century, when the Oblates had adopted a more ecumenical attitude toward native cultures (in 1987, he and Jessica were made honorary Oblates).⁴⁹ Membership in the Catholic church did not change his critical stance on that church's history; to the contrary, it increased his

45 Louis Miranda, interviewed by Reuben Ware, 1979, B.C. Provincial Archives, Tape 4256:0014.

46 William C. Sturtevant, *Handbook of North American Indians: Northwest Coast* (Government Printing Office, 1990), 480.

47 Robert H Ruby, *John Slocum and the Indian Shaker Church* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996); Thomas Buckley, “The Shaker Church and the Indian Way in Native Northwestern California,” *American Indian Quarterly* 21, no. 1 (Winter 1997): 1.

48 Sturtevant, *Handbook of North American Indians*, 480.

49 Beginning in the 1950s, there is evidence that the Eslhá7an Oblates, in particular, had made attempts to honour Sḵw̓xw̓ú7mesh culture within the church. For example, one priest commissioned plans for a totemic Madonna-and-Child to be carved out of cedar using traditional Coast Salish designs and motifs. (As far as I can tell the pole never got off the drawing board). It is worth noting that, by this time, the Oblate personnel had almost entirely switched from European francophones to Euro-Canadian anglophones, and that also the church had lost, relative to the state, much of its political significance. Oblate House, Box 46.

preoccupation with what he viewed as its authoritarian past. In the 1970s, in conversation with one of Eslhá7an resident priests, Father Irving, he challenged the scriptural legitimacy of the potlatch ban, which the Oblates had helped to enforce. In response, Irving felt compelled to admit that the Bible held no special commandments against traditional Coast Salish culture, and that Eslhá7an potlatch ban “was not God's law; that was mankind's law.” Irving posited that Durieu may have felt the ban was necessary to avoid religious dimorphism – the alternating practise of multiple religions by the same individual – at the mission, but Miranda was unimpressed with this line of special-pleading.⁵⁰ Conversations such as this one, which Miranda quoted in an interview with the ethnohistorian Reuben Ware, formed a part of the historiographical case against the early Oblates that Miranda built even as he frequented the church they had founded.

An even more important part of Miranda's case consisted of the stories his mother passed on to him about turn-of-the-century life at Eslhá7an, and which he recounted to Ware and to Thomas Lascelles, who was the resident priest at Eslhá7an in 1983 and 1984. Of these, two describe the exploits of Charlie Mosquito, a “watchman” in the Oblate System. Watchmen, both Lemert and Fowler agree, were native officials appointed by the Oblates to uphold church rules within the settlement-based societies in which Oblate churches operated.⁵¹ Both authors also agree that, generally, watchmen were chosen from the highest ranks⁵² of traditional Salish societies, although each has his own interpretation of this fact's significance. For Lemert, the selection of high-ranking individuals was evidence that the Oblates had successfully co-opted the Coast Salish toward their goal of cultural assimilation; for Fowler, it meant that pre-missionary Coast Salish structures of power endured under the Oblate System, and pre-missionary culture along

50 Louis Miranda, Interviewed by Reuben Ware, 1979, British Columbia Archives, Tape 4356:0014.

51 Lemert, “The Life and Death of an Indian State”; Fowler, *The Oblate System at the Sechelt Mission*.

with them.⁵³

One characteristic of watchman selection strongly challenges Fowler's argument: although Coast Salish societies were traditionally bilateral, with men and women occupying different but equally powerful roles, watchmen were *watchmen*.⁵⁴ The Oblates, therefore, created a new category of political power in Coast Salish societies which was inaccessible to women, thereby shifting the sexual balance of power toward men. This is one of the strongest examples of a recursive trend in Eslhá7an's history that closely fits the Gramscian thesis: that, as the Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh took political and cultural actions within the context of colonialism, those same actions tended to favour specific groups within Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh society, who would then have a greater role than others in determining future actions. If the initial Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh compromise with the Oblates raised the comparative social

52 According to Wayne Suttles, a twentieth-century anthropologist who studied the Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh and neighbouring native groups, nineteenth-century Central Coast Salish societies were divided into three broad classes of people: worthy people (*siyám̓*), "worthless people" (≈ commoners), and slaves. However, Suttles argued that the population distribution of these classes did not resemble the European pyramid-style hierarchy but instead was shaped like an "inverted pear"; that is, there were a large number of *siyám̓s*, a small number of commoners, and even fewer slaves. Typically, every family had at least one *siyám̓*, and leaders emerged and were chosen from among this fairly large pool. Therefore it is less notable that Eslhá7an bell-ringers were *siyám̓s* than it would have been if, for example, the Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh ran a mission in England in which the "converts" who were most involved in its governance were all barons.

Wayne Suttles, "Private Knowledge, Morality, and Social Classes among the Coast Salish," in *Coast Salish Essays* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1987): 6-12.

See also Rudy Reimer/Yum̓ks, "The Mountains and Rocks Are Forever: Lithics and Landscapes of Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh Uxwumixw" (PhD. Dissertation, McMaster University, 2012): 13-14, and William Elmendorf, "Coast Salish Status Ranking and Intergroup Ties," *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology* 27 (1970): 353-380.

53 Lemert, "The Life and Death of an Indian State"; Fowler, "The Lemert Thesis and the Sechelt Mission"; Fowler, *The Oblate System at the Sechelt Mission*.

54 At Eslhá7an, the set of watchmen and "bellringers" - a similar position - included (in addition to Charlie Mosquito) Old Daniel, Tommy Findlay, Henry Jack, Tommy Moses, Harold Nahanee, Dennis Paull, Andrew Paull, Big William, Thomas Joe, Lackit Joe, and Billy Newman. This list is not intended to be comprehensive, but consists only of those watchmen mentioned in the following two sources: Louis Miranda, *Referring Mostly to a Boy's Upbringing, but It Also Includes a Girl's* (Squamish Indian Band, 1972); Lascelles, *Mission on the Inlet*, 44-45.

status of men in general, we shall see that later developments at Eslhá7an favoured a specific group of men who most closely resembled (at least in certain highly visible ways) the colonists.

The regulations that watchmen were expected and empowered to enforce included restrictions against working on Sunday, "talking of [or practising] Indian culture," and keeping an untidy house. The militaristic application of this last regulation demonstrates the extent to which the Oblate System was a gendered system that placed unequal responsibilities on women and granted extraordinary freedom of action to men. Once per week, a team of four watchmen would perform a surprise inspection of every house in Eslhá7an, verifying that it met the settlement's standards of cleanliness. The penalties for poor housekeeping were public humiliation and financial sanctions:

If a bed [...] had a dirty sheet or pillow slip, the soiled articles [would be] removed from the bed and brought to the chief's house where [they would be] kept until the Bishop arrived, and the first Sunday of the arrival of the Bishop all the soiled articles [would be] piled up on the floor. Then the bishop [would be] given the name of the owners, and he would call them up one at a time, and give them a lecture and a fine: the first offence would be [\$2.50], the second offence, [\$5], the third offence, [\$7.50] and etc. When the bedroom had been taken care of, then the kitchen [was] gone over, every pot, pan, plate, saucer and cups [was] checked, and every pot must be hung up on a hanger; every plate, saucer and cup must be neatly put away in its proper place on the cupboard should any of these articles were found slightly unclean or not in its proper place, it would be removed from the house and left at the chiefs home until a Sunday when the bishop could be present to try the accused. [...]

It was not long then [that] every one of the women got the knack of doing things and always had their homes nice and clean.⁵⁵

Although Eslhá7an men were no doubt embarrassed to see their wives accused of untidiness, they were not themselves accused; the entire responsibility for meeting the Oblate System's high standards of cleanliness rested exclusively on Sk̄wx̄wú7mesh women.

Many rules, of course, applied to men as well as women. One of Miranda's stories describes what happened when Louis Julian, a Sk̄wx̄wú7mesh resident of Eslhá7an, cut another man's hair on a Sunday, violating the church's strictly enforced observance of the Sabbath. Charlie Mosquito reported Julian to Durieu, and, under the bishop's supervision, the accused was tied to a flagpole near St. Paul's church and allowed to eat only bread and water for several days.⁵⁶

The prohibition against participation in "Indian culture" was applied very broadly. Once, Charlie Mosquito caught Miranda's mother, Cecilia, singing a Sk̄wx̄wú7mesh lullaby to her children. The watchman considered her music to be in contravention of Eslhá7an's policies against non-Christian

55 Louis Miranda to Thomas Lascelles, 3 July 1973, Oblate House, Box 46. According to the Bank of Canada, the Consumer Price Index rose by almost 2000% from 1914 (the first year the Bank has accurate enough records) to 2012. Therefore, to convert these fines into approximately equivalent 2012 values, multiply by 20. These figures still underestimate the severity of the fines, however, because Canada's early-twentieth-century real gross domestic product per capita was only about one sixth as much as it is today. To reflect the proportion of the average Canadian's annual income that these fines represented, multiply by 120. Bank of Canada, "Inflation Calculator", n.d., <http://www.bankofcanada.ca>.

56 Thomas Lascelles, notes from an interview with Louis Miranda, Oblate House, Box 46. Infuriated by this treatment, Julian threatened to kill Charlie Mosquito, but Julian's father delayed him long enough that the watchman was able to leave safely leave Eslhá7an. According to Miranda, Charlie Mosquito never returned to the settlement. For a long time after the incident, Julian did not attend church, although the rest of his family did.

ceremonies, and reported her to Bishop Durieu, who agreed, despite Cecilia's insistence that it had not been a sinful "Indian song" that she was singing but rather "just a little humming noise."⁵⁷ In punishment, Durieu fined Cecilia \$2.50. Over the next few months, Cecilia continued to sing lullabies and was fined weekly in amounts that increased by increments of \$2.50 until the total had reached "way over into the hundreds!"⁵⁸ At this point, Miranda relates, "the poor old gentleman [Durieu] ... thought he'd made enough out of her" and ceased exacting fines, effectively allowing her to sing to her children with impunity.⁵⁹ Others might not have been so lucky.

While the forms of culture that were not considered acceptable at Eslhá7an under the Oblate System were identified by prohibitions, delimited by fines and the threat of public humiliation, and policed by watchmen, those that were encouraged were ritualized in spectacular religious festivals, called *réunions*, held on Christian holidays. A typical *réunion* during this period would be held at Qiqayt (New Westminster), Pekw'Xe:yles (Mission), Eslhá7an, or Ch'at-lich (Sechelt), and would involve hundreds or even thousands of Tla'Amin, Shishalh, Sḵw̓xwú7mesh, and Halkomelem speakers. Visiting peoples would travel by canoe, for as long as two days, to attend. The following description of a *réunion* held at Eslhá7an in 1882, written by the Oblate missionary Eugene-Casimir Chirouse, is typical of the way Oblates

57 Charlie Mosquito seems to have been somewhat of a puritain: when he made his report to Durieu, he apparently pretended not to even know the song Cecilia was singing, to avoid any chance of incriminating himself.

58 Based on Bank of Canada data, these figures should be multiplied by 20 to adjust for inflation, or by 120 to reflect the portion of an average Canadian's salary that they represented (see note on previous page). Therefore, a figure "way into the hundreds" would be equivalent to at least \$2,000, and proportionally equivalent to at least \$12,000. Bank of Canada, "Inflation Calculator."

Real-world math problem: what is the minimum number of times that Cecilia was caught singing a lullabye?

59 Louis Miranda, British Columbia Archives, Tape 4356:0002; Miranda, *Referring Mostly to a Boy's Upbringing, but It Also Includes a Girl's*.

described the *réunions* that were held at Coast Salish settlements governed by the Oblate System. I quote it at length, rather than paraphrasing it, to make transparent the fact that my image of Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh *réunions* is, out of necessity, based exclusively on documents written by Oblates.

Beginning early in the morning, our Indians [the Eslhá7an Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh] kept watch over [Burrard Inlet], in anticipation of the Bishops' arrival. The chiefs' banners were raised up their poles; two relatively powerful cannons, which had been bought from a warship, would perform the salute.

At two o'clock in the afternoon a cry went up : There they were! ... Instantly the settlement bell was swung, the cannons thundered, our Indians shivered with joy. As the [Bishops'] canoe advanced majestically across the quiet waters of the bay, the Indian people formed a single line. The moment the canoe touched ground, they shouted three wonderful Hourrahs: this was their welcome. Then their ranks contracted into the shape of a crown and all these dear neophytes fell to their knees to receive the benediction of our Lords the Bishops. [...] After which one of the Indian chiefs stepped forward and, speaking for all of the Indians present, gave a speech in his language to our Lords the Bishops and the missionaries; everything was capped off by an indispensable ceremony of handshakes; each Indian came in his turn. The remainder of the day was dedicated to hearing confessions... When the temperature started to become more tolerable, we gave the signal to begin the procession of the Fête-Dieu. Soon, all were perfectly aligned and ordered. We went forward singing, each tribe in its own language. The flower-carriers and the censer-carriers, all Indians, formed gracious figures before the Holy Sacrament, in similar fashion to how this solemn festival is practiced in France. The Holy Sacrament was carried by the Reverend Father Martinet, who brought up the rear; our two Lords the Bishops followed, and then all of the tribal chiefs. It was truly an imposing and innovative procession. Two cannon shots honored the Holy Sacrament. There was no disorder for the duration of the procession, all was done with an admirable calm. We arrived at the repository which our Indians had erected; it was decorated primarily with foliage and flowers. The singing and praying

redoubled as if to solicit an abundant blessing from Our Lord. A moment later all heads were bowed as our Lord Bishop poured out his heart to this multitude. The return to the church occurred with the same order. The day was finished.⁶⁰

While Chirouse and other missionary observers saw these *réunions* as pageants of religious conversion, the celebrations did not exhibit the type or degree of cultural assimilation that the federal government had already begun to espouse by the 1880s. Besides their principal role (from the point of view of the Oblates, and perhaps many of the native participants) as Christian religious ceremonies, *réunions* also provided the Skwxwú7mesh with an opportunity to hold family *réunions*, to maintain diplomatic ties with nearby native groups, and to put on canoe races and other entertainments; in short, to engage in many of the major functions of pre-Oblate Coast Salish social life. (Some early-twentieth century local Protestant newspapers seized upon the similarities between the *réunions* and traditional Coast Salish functions as a way to criticize the Catholic Oblates, derisively terming the events “Christian potlatches.”)⁶¹ Thus, during the late-nineteenth-century, even as the Oblates stringently regulated certain elements of traditional Skwxwú7mesh life at Eshá7an, they were also indifferent toward, or even supportive of, others that they did not identify as barriers to Christianization.

This tolerance on the Oblates' part for what they viewed as non-religious aspects of Coast Salish culture contrasted with the more broadly assimilative policies of the federal government. According to Lynn Blake, this discrepancy – which was not limited to Eshá7an but was common to most West Coast missions – reflected the difference in strategies of power

60 Eugène-Casimir Chirouse to an [unidentified] lay priest of Montréal, 7 July 1882, *Missions de la Congregation des Oblats de Marie Immaculee*, 21, No. 81 (March 1883), 17-19.

61 JR Miller, *Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens: A History of Indian-White Relations in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000).

between the two colonizing organizations.⁶² The power of the Oblates and S̓k̓w̓x̓w̓ú7mesh watchmen derived not, as did the state's, from the threat of deadly violence, but from social incentives, including protection from state power and access to the Eucharist. This does not imply that Oblate policies were more lenient than state policies; to the contrary, under state law neither Celia Miranda's nor Louis Julian's actions were punishable. However, there were two aspects of Oblate "law" that likely made it more appealing to the Eshhá7an S̓k̓w̓x̓w̓ú7mesh than state law. First, as opposed to the British common-law tradition that emphasized consistency, the Oblate system emphasized priestly discretion and institutionalized mercy, both through the sacrament of Confession and through more secular actions such as Durieu forgiving Celia Miranda's fines. Second, the Oblates, as mentioned above, had a less holistic view of culture than did the state. As a result, the elements of S̓k̓w̓x̓w̓ú7mesh life that the Oblates tried to regulate were generally unrelated to economic production, whereas the government attempted to restrict both the base of resources the S̓k̓w̓x̓w̓ú7mesh had access to and the types of economic activities they could engage in.⁶³ As I argued in the first chapter of this thesis, many S̓k̓w̓x̓w̓ú7mesh people were amenable to religious change; it needs hardly be said that they were likely less open-minded about economic deprivation. Given what seemed, during the 1860s and 1870s, to be a choice between two sets of demanding foreigners, it is not surprising that the Eshhá7an S̓k̓w̓x̓w̓ú7mesh chose those that threatened their economic well-being the least.

The Oblate mission's role as an authoritarian shield from state power,

62 Blake, "Pastoral Power, Governmentality and Cultures of Order in Nineteenth-Century British Columbia."

63 R. Cole Harris, *Making Native Space: Colonialism, Resistance, and Reserves in British Columbia*, Brenda and David McLean Canadian Studies Series (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2002); John Sutton Lutz, *Makúk: A New History of Aboriginal-White Relations* (UBC Press, 2008).

however, was short-lived.⁶⁴ Between the 1890s and 1910s, the federal Department of Indian Affairs gradually supplanted St. Paul's Church as the most important non-native institution in Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh territory, replacing the Eshhá7an's theocratic government with a more holistic agenda of assimilation, the "policy of the Bible and the plough," in which agriculture and English-language communication joined Christianity as the forms of civilization that native people were expected to display.⁶⁵ In 1889, the Indian Agents of the Lower Fraser Agency began to make nearly yearly reports on the progress of Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh agriculture, a form of economic activity that the Department advocated despite complaints of southern Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh people that their small, steep, densely forested, oceanfront reserves were poorly suited to it.⁶⁶ However, the most significant effect of new government policy at Eshhá7an came in 1898 with the building of a new educational

64 In 2000, the Marxist historian Ian McKay argued that the history of modern Canada should be understood using the theme of aggressively expanding liberal capitalism. While Canadian historians are still fiercely debating the finer points of MacKay's thesis, his overall effort to portray Canada as "a project of rule" is, in my opinion, very useful, especially for the study of native peoples' history in the post-Confederation period. The increasing exercise of federal power on Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh territory, and the corresponding reduction in the Oblates' influence, closely fits MacKay's thesis. Ian McKay, "The Liberal Order Framework: A Prospectus for a Reconnaissance of Canadian History," *Canadian Historical Review* 81, no. 4 (December 1, 2000): 616–678; Michel Ducharme and Jean-François Constant, *Liberalism and Hegemony* (University of Toronto Press, 2009).

For a similar argument (specific to Oblate missions in British Columbia) made long before MacKay's writing, see Lemert, "The Life and Death of an Indian State," which is discussed in Patterson, *Andrew Paull and Canadian Indian Resurgence*, 27–28.

For a more recent application of MacKay's thesis to British Columbia, see J. I. Little, "Advancing the Liberal Order in British Columbia: The Role Played by Lieutenant-Governor Sir Hector-Gustave Joly De Lotbinière, 1900–1906," *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 19, no. 1 (n.d.): 83–113.

65 James Rodger Miller, *Sweet Promises: A Reader on Indian-White Relations in Canada* (University of Toronto Press, 1991), 309; J. R. Miller, "Owen Glendower, Hotspur, and Canadian Indian Policy," *Ethnohistory* 37, no. 4 (Autumn 1990): 386–415.

institution: the residential school.⁶⁷

Though it drew most of its funding from the federal government, the Squamish Boarding School was founded and staffed entirely by members of a Catholic religious order, the Sisters of Saint Anne.⁶⁸ In order to save Sḵw̓xwú7mesh children from, in Durieu's words, "the state of ignorance in which they are now growing up," the Sisters provided a fairly typical late-Victorian curriculum divided into twelve subjects: reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic, history, geography, grammar, dictation, Bible history, catechism, and vocal and instrumental music.⁶⁹ In addition to these academic subjects, students took "industrial education," a course which differed greatly depending on the gender of the student: boys were trained in carpentry,

66 P. McTiernan to Edgar Dewdney, 1889, Library and Archives Canada, *Indian Affairs Annual Reports, 1864-1990*, 1899, pp 146-147; P. McTiernan to Edgar Dewdney, 12 October 1890, Library and Archives Canada, *Indian Affairs Annual Reports, 1864-1990*, 1889, page 128; Frank Devlin to Clifford Sifton, 25 August 1898, Library and Archives Canada, *Indian Affairs Annual Reports, 1864-1990*, 1898, page 217; Frank Devlin to Clifford Sifton, 1899, Library and Archives Canada, *Indian Affairs Annual Reports, 1864-1990*, 1899, page 223; Frank Devlin to Clifford Sifton, 24 July 1900, Library and Archives Canada, *Indian Affairs Annual Reports, 1864-1990*, 1890, page 244; Frank Devlin to Clifford Sifton, 2 August 1902, Library and Archives Canada, *Indian Affairs Annual Reports, 1864-1990*, 1902, page 236; Peter Byrne, "Report on the New Westminster Agency, 1915, Library and Archives Canada, *Indian Affairs Annual Reports, 1864-1990*, 1915, page II.96; William John Zaharoff, *Success in Struggle: The Squamish People and Kitsilano Indian Reserve No. 6* (University of British Columbia MA Thesis, 1978), 54-55, 65.

According to environmental historian Sarah Carter, native people did not generally object to engaging in agriculture in places where the land was well suited to it. The federal government's vision for native agriculture, however, was limited to a sustenance activity that would decrease native people's financial dependence on the Crown. When some native individuals and groups seemed to be developing an industrial, market-oriented form of agriculture that could compete with non-native farmers, the government actively discouraged them. Sarah A. Carter, *Lost Harvests: Prairie Indian Reserve Farmers and Government Policy* (McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993).

67 Frank Devlin, "Report on the Fraser River Agency," 16 July 1899, Library and Archives Canada, *Indian Affairs Annual Reports, 1864-1990*, 1899, page 223.

agriculture, and shoe repair, while girls were “taught all kinds of housework, also knitting, mending, darning, embroidery, crochet-work, real lace, and flower-making.”⁷⁰ Students lived on-site in gender-segregated dormitories, and provided much of the labour that maintained the school.⁷¹ The total effect of these curricular choices was to prepare Skwxwú7mesh boys to be low-skilled industrial labourers and Skwxwú7mesh girls to be housewives or domestic servants in settler homes – goals dictated by Anglo-Canadian ideas about gender, class, and race.

Federal school inspectors approved greatly of the Squamish Boarding School. Occasionally they praised its academic program; more often, its role in “civilizing” Skwxwú7mesh youth.⁷² To some extent, these opinions echo the government's earlier praise of Oblate work among the Skwxwú7mesh; the difference was that now the federal bureaucracy was not just reporting on an Eshá7an institution, it was also funding it. “Those [native people] who have been educated and who have taken up housekeeping show a marked

68 Paul Durieu to A.W. Vowell, Undated, Oblate House, Box 46, photocopy from the Archivum Generale O.M.I. In Rome, Italy.

Founded in Quebec in 1850, the Sisters focused their missionary work on the religious education of both native and non-native Catholics, and had been working in British Columbia alongside the Oblates since 1858. Jacqueline Gresko, “Gender and mission : the founding generations of the Sisters of Saint Ann and the Oblates of Mary Immaculate in British Columbia, 1858-1914” (1999): 57–59, <https://circle.ubc.ca/handle/2429/9973>.

69 Paul Durieu to A.W. Vowell, Undated, Oblate House, Box 46, photocopy from the Archivum Generale O.M.I. In Rome, Italy.

70 Sister Mary Amy to Clifford Sifton, 30 June 1901, Library and Archives Canada, *Indian Affairs Annual Reports, 1864-1990*, 1901, pp 411-412; A.E. Green, “Report on British Columbia Indian Schools,” 1907, Library and Archives Canada, *Indian Affairs Annual Reports, 1864-1990*, 1907, page 434.

71 A.E. Green, “Report on British Columbia Indian Schools,” 1907, Library and Archives Canada, *Indian Affairs Annual Reports, 1864-1990*, 1907, page 434; A.W. Vowell to Clifford Sifton, 1903, Library and Archives Canada, *Indian Affairs Annual Reports, 1864-1990*, 1903, page 420. The girls' wing was built in 1903.

72 Peter Byrne, “Report for the New Westminster Agency,” 1915, Library and Archives Canada, *Indian Affairs Annual Reports, 1864-1990*, 1915, II.205

improvement in their homes as compared with those of their less fortunate neighbours who have never received any education,” wrote Frank Devlin while visiting the school, affirming one of the goals of the new federal Indian policy.⁷³ Another Indian Agent, R.C. Macdonald, similarly identified “progress” in Sḵw̓x̓wú7mesh domestic culture and clothing as a major achievement of the school.⁷⁴

“Progress,” of course, meant decreasing their cultural difference from Anglo-Canadians along dimensions that the Department of Indian Affairs deemed important. The Department's emphasis on one dimension in particular, that of language, would have a significant and long-term deleterious effect on Sḵw̓x̓wú7mesh society. Instruction at the Squamish Boarding School was exclusively in English, and students were discouraged from speaking Sḵw̓x̓wú7mesh even in their private conversations. As early as 1905, the school's principal, Sister Mary Amy, was able to proudly report to the Deputy Superintendent-General of Indian Affairs that “the Indian language [had] been eradicated, and English [was] spoken by all the children in the school.”⁷⁵ While she meant that the Sḵw̓x̓wú7mesh language had been “eradicated” only among the students of her school, the implication for the wider Sḵw̓x̓wú7mesh society was clear, and prescient: by the end of the twentieth-century less than a dozen Sḵw̓x̓wú7mesh people spoke their native language fluently.⁷⁶ Much of this decrease in linguistic ability can be attributed to the work the school began in the late 1890s. In less than twenty-five years, Eslhá7an had been transformed from a site at which Catholic missionaries preached in the Sḵw̓x̓wú7mesh language to one at

73 Frank Devlin, “Report on the Fraser River Agency,” 24 July 1900, Library and Archives Canada, *Indian Affairs Annual Reports, 1864-1990*, 1900, page 244.

74 R.C. Macdonald to Clifford Sifton, 26 July 1904, Library and Archives Canada, *Indian Affairs Annual Reports, 1864-1990*, 1904 page 236.

75 Sister Mary Amy to Frank Pedley, 21 September 1905, Library and Archives Canada, *Indian Affairs Annual Reports, 1864-1990*, 1905 page 362.

which Catholic schoolteachers prohibited it.⁷⁷

Contemporary activists and historians have identified language loss driven by residential schools as one of the most damaging results of early twentieth-century Indian policy, largely because it created a linguistic barrier between generations of native people, but also because the schools' language policies, like their whole philosophical foundation, were based on implicit assumptions of Euro-Canadian linguistic superiority.⁷⁸ However, during the early twentieth-century, not all students, nor their parents, condemned the Squamish Boarding School as a tool of cultural genocide via the psychological manipulation of children. At least one major Skwxwú7mesh leader, Andrew Paull, was proud of the education he had received there, and of the political uses he was able to put it to. At the same time, he rejected the other institutions and policies that, from a historical viewpoint, were connected to the residential school system: the restriction of native people's usufructory rights to their traditional territory, federal interference in internal native politics, an economic system based on

76 According to the First Peoples Heritage, Language, and Culture Council, a B.C. crown corporation with the mandate to "preserve, restore and revitalize First Nations heritage, language, arts and culture," there were only 10 fluent Skwxwú7mesh speakers in the year 2010: few enough to declare the language "nearly extinct." There are, however, a number of dedicated Skwxwú7mesh people who are working to revitalize the language. To find information on one such group, visit www.squamishlanguage.com. See also Squamish Nation Education Department and University of Washington, *Skwkwu7mesh Sničhim Xweličen Sničhim: Skexwts = Squamish - English Dictionary* (North Vancouver, BC : Seattle: Squamish Nation Education Department ; in association with University of Washington Press, 2011).

First Peoples Heritage, Language, and Culture Council, "Report on the Status of B.C. First Nation Language 2010," <http://www.fpcc.ca/language/status-report/>, accessed 24 June 2012.

77 Among the documents stored in the Oblate National Archives at the Archives Deschatelet in Ottawa is a large collection of Christian hymns and catechisms that Oblate priests wrote in B.C. native languages, including Skwxwú7mesh. This collection would be a valuable resource for anyone involved in language revitalization efforts.

tutelage, and, above all, the refusal by all levels of government to compensate native people for the dispossession of their land.⁷⁹

In the remainder of this chapter I will attempt to evaluate the cultural position of Paull and three other significant Skwxwú7mesh leaders who shared with him, at least at times, a collegial attitude towards the Oblate church and, later, the residential school. I argue that their careers can be related to the decades of experience that the Eshá7an Skwxwú7mesh had with the type of pastoral colonialism that characterized Oblate missionization strategies, and that these leaders are best understood as diplomats: politically and culturally liminal figures whose source of effectiveness – and, by extension, influence – was their ability to present Skwxwú7mesh priorities in the cultural language of the colonists.

78 Much of the focus in the Canadian public debate about the residential school legacy has focused on the physical and especially sexual abuse of native students. While abuse was widespread enough to have had a significant negative effect on many native communities (and to justify identifying it as systemic, rather than merely incidental) it was not universal. I do not know whether any physical or sexual abuse occurred at the Squamish Boarding School, and, even if I had conducted oral interviews for this project, would not have felt comfortable asking the school's survivors about it. But many of the negative aspects of residential schools, such as the policies that promoted language loss, occurred by design and near-universally. The schools themselves – and not merely certain of their employees – were oppressive. For the history of Canadian residential schooling, see any of the following: Celia Haig-Brown, *Resistance and Renewal: Surviving the Indian Residential School* (Vancouver: Tillacum Library, 1988); Miller, *Shingwauk's Vision*; John S. Milloy, *A National Crime: The Canadian Government and the Residential School System, 1879-1986*, Manitoba Studies in Native History 11 (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1999); Paige Raibmon, "A New Understanding of Things Indian: George Raley's Negotiation of the Residential School Experience (Coqualeetza Indian Residential School, Sardis, BC)," *BC Studies*, no. 110 (August 1, 1996). For a dramatic exploration of the effects of residential schools in British Columbia, see Kevin Loring, *Where the Blood Mixes* (Vancouver: Talonbooks, 2009).

79 Brendan F.R. Edwards, "I Have Lots of Help Behind Me, Lots of Books, to Convince You."

Diplomats

The first major Skwxwú7mesh diplomat from post-Oblate Eshá7an was Skwatatwamkin's nephew Snatt, the same individual who, as I discussed in the first chapter of this thesis, the Oblates credited with instigating the Eshá7an mission's foundation. Unlike the later Eshá7an-based activists, such as Andrew Paull and Louis Miranda, whom I discuss in the following paragraphs, and whose memories are widely and fondly remembered throughout Skwxwú7mesh territory today, Snatt's contemporary legacy is largely limited to Eshá7an itself. The reason for this is likely two-fold: first, he belongs to an older generation than the others, and therefore there is no one alive today who knew him, and second, his political contributions were largely confined to Eshá7an.

Snatt's experience at political engagement with the colonial government predated his involvement with the Oblates, although this experience cannot genuinely be considered "resistance," either conservative or radical. In 1862, he formally requested the right to purchase a forested lot between New Westminster and Burnaby Lake, an area which the Skwxwú7mesh traditionally used as a hunting ground.⁸⁰ Snatt's motivation in seeking to purchase the land was likely pragmatic: as the non-native population increased around the colonial capital at New Westminster, Skwxwú7mesh economic activities were becoming threatened, and outright purchase could provide a greater level of immediate security than negotiation based on prior ownership. The Colonial Secretary, William Young, was only too happy to approve Snatt's request, viewing it as an opportunity to set a precedent that

⁸⁰ Richard Moody (Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works) to William Young (Colonial Secretary), New Westminster, 27 May 1862 in *Papers Connected with the Indian Land Question, 1850-1875: British Columbia: Free Download & Streaming: Internet Archive*, n.d., 23, <http://www.archive.org/details/papersconnectedw00britiala>; Emily Pauline Johnson/Tekahionwake, *Legends of Vancouver* (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1997).

native peoples' rights to off-reserve lands were equal to, not greater than, those of white settlers.⁸¹ Thus, Snatt achieved a personal and political success, but he did so in a way that, in hindsight, can be seen to have reinforced the intellectual pretensions of colonialism and, ultimately, the legitimacy of native dispossession. This trend would continue throughout Snatt's political career.

During the late 1860s, Snatt's political interactions with colonial officials revolved around one main priority: the preservation of Skwxwú7mesh settlement, and the prevention of non-Skwxwú7mesh encroachment, at Eslhá7an. Between 1866 and 1869, John "Gassy Jack" Deighton, "a white man named Lewis," and a third, unidentified white man all applied for ownership of lots near Eslhá7an, which the government seemed quite willing to grant until Snatt launched a series of petitions. The third and strongest of these, which was transcribed and delivered by Paul Durieu, presented a series of arguments as to why the Skwxwú7mesh should be allowed to enjoy exclusive rights to the area around Eslhá7an: that they had occupied the site prior to the arrival of non-native people, that Snatt had previously asked to have the Reserve surveyed (and its boundaries, thus, formalized), that the government had previously (in the Lewis case) recognized the Skwxwú7mesh claim to the requested land, and that the total area of land that the Skwxwú7mesh were requesting be preserved was less than the amount the government would have automatically approved for an equal number of white families.⁸²

Here, as with his own earlier attempts to pre-empt land, Snatt showed himself willing to work within the terms of discourse and advocacy

81 William Young (Colonial Secretary) to Richard Moody (Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works), Victoria, 18 June 1862, in *Papers Connected with the Indian Land Question, 1850-1875*, 2420; Stuart Banner, *Possessing the Pacific: Land, Settlers, and Indigenous People from Australia to Alaska* (Harvard University Press, 2007), 220.

82 *Papers Connected with the Indian Land Question, 1850-1875*, 74–78.

established by provincial officials, so long as it meant eliminating a threat to Eslhá7an's territorial integrity. Snatt and Durieu emphasized that S̄kw̄wú7mesh occupation of Eslhá7an was longstanding, for example, because they (or, at the very least, Durieu) knew that the government would evaluate the Eslhá7an S̄kw̄wú7mesh claim based on the Western legal doctrine of effective occupation, for which a mere seasonal hunting camp would not qualify.⁸³ Similarly, Snatt and Durieu's appeals to cadastral authority, to legal precedent, and to the equal treatment of native and non-native land claimants couched their petition in the cultural logic of the British Empire. Nowhere in the petition did Snatt assert either of the central positions shared by virtually all twenty-first-century native leaders and activists as well as the General Assembly of the United Nations: that the rights of indigenous peoples exist independently of state laws, and include a significant claim on all lands within their traditional territory regardless of whether these lands have traditionally been used for settlement. By implicitly accepting the negation of these contentions, Snatt and Durieu's petition helped to legitimize macroscopic British colonial rule in S̄kw̄wú7mesh territory, even as it successfully defended Eslhá7an against microscopic settler encroachment.

The petition's success also increased Snatt's political stature relative to other S̄kw̄wú7mesh leaders. No longer merely the nephew of a relatively minor settlement chief, Snatt had established himself as hard-working and effective diplomat. For the next fifty years, this connection between an individual's external political efficacy and his⁸⁴ internal political influence would be a significant driver of social change among the S̄kw̄wú7mesh, and

83 For the doctrine of effective occupation in international law, see Federico Lenzerini, "Sovereignty Revisited: International Law and Parallel Sovereignty of Indigenous Peoples," *Texas International Law Journal* 42, no. 1 (Fall 2006): 155–189; Bruce Buchan and Mary Heath, "Savagery and Civilization From Terra Nullius to the 'Tide of History'," *Ethnicities* 6, no. 1 (March 1, 2006): 5–26; Banner, *Possessing the Pacific*.

of the growing importance of Eslhá7an. The three principal Sḵw̓xwú7mesh diplomats of the early twentieth-century – Joe Capilano (Sa7plek), Andrew Paull (Xwechtáal), and Chief Dan George (Slahoot) – each lived for at least part of their lives at Eslhá7an, and each derived part of his influence from his ability to use the Oblate mission as a political resource.⁸⁵



Sa7plek (front row, 5th from left) about to embark on his 1906 diplomatic voyage to England. Note the traditionalist dress of both Sa7plek and the dignitaries who are sending him off. Photographer Unknown. City of Vancouver Archives, In.P41.

The first of these leaders to be noticed outside of the Sḵw̓xwú7mesh community, Sa7plek, was born in the mid-1850s to a high-status family in the Squamish Valley.⁸⁶ In his late teens, he moved to Eslhá7an, where he married Mary Agnes Líxwelut and worked as a labourer at the Moodyville

84 As I have noted earlier, the opportunities for extra-community political influence that the colonial state and Oblate church created were not available to native women.

85 Today, Chief Dan George is remembered as a Tseil-Waututh, not a Sḵw̓xwú7mesh, leader. However, as I argue in the third chapter of this thesis, the distinction between these two peoples was not always as clear as it is now.

Sawmill.⁸⁷ Sa7plek's political career began in 1895 when, with the support of Paul Durieu, he succeeded Lawa as the chief of Xwmełch'stn, a settlement only a few kilometres down the coast from Eslhá7an. According to historian Robin Fisher, Durieu had hoped that Sa7plek, a Sḵwxwú7mesh Catholic, would extend the church's influence at Xwmełch'stn, which had become a destination for Eslhá7an Sḵwxwú7mesh people who were frustrated with the Oblates' theocratic rule. Initially, Sa7plek acted as Durieu had hoped, and even personally financed the construction of a satellite church.⁸⁸ However, as he became more involved in high-level native rights activism, he would ultimately lose confidence in the Oblates's willingness to support him and his people.⁸⁹

The break between Sa7plek and his Oblate supporters occurred as a result of the former's agitation in support of native land, fishing, and hunting rights. During the first decade of the twentieth-century, Sa7plek's activism took him to many different native territories in the area around Georgia Strait, and famously, in 1906, to London, England, where he led a delegation of B.C. native leaders. The Sḵwxwú7mesh community strongly supported Sa7plek's diplomatic mission, and, in a ceremony in downtown Vancouver, honoured him with the hereditary title held by the Sḵwxwú7mesh leader who had met with George Vancouver over a century earlier: Kiapilanoq, or Capilano⁹⁰ The Oblate church, however, did not support the mission, likely finding it too radical for their taste, and when Sa7plek returned from London

86 I call Sa7plek exclusively by his Sḵwxwú7mesh name because his English name, Joe Capilano, was controversial among his Sḵwxwú7mesh contemporaries, many of whom believed that Sa7plek did not possess the noble lineage that it suggested.

87 Robin Fisher, "SU-Á-PU-LUCK (Joseph Capilano)," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online*, n.d., http://www.biographi.ca/009004-119.01-e.php?&id_nbr=7092, Accessed 15 July 2012.

88 J.S. Matthews, *Conversations with Khatsalano, 1932-1954* (Vancouver: Vancouver City Archives, 1969), 65.

89 Fisher, "SU-Á-PU-LUCK (Joseph Capilano)."

with no concrete concessions to show for his efforts, he closed the Xwmełch'stn church and banned the Oblates from the settlement.⁹¹ Sa7plek's experience is thus an example of both the advantages and the limitations that the Oblates conferred upon the Skwxwú7mesh leaders they chose to work with.

Sa7plek expressed his sense of defeat in a story he related to the Kanienkehaha writer Pauline Johnson / Tekahionwake, whom he had met while in London.⁹² "We Indians have lost many things," he began,

We have lost our forests, our game, our fish; we have lost our ancient religion, our ancient dress; some of the younger people have even lost their fathers' language and the legends and traditions of their ancestors. [...] These things are lost, just like 'The Island of the North Arm.' They may be somewhere near by, but no one can ever find them.⁹³

According to Johnson/Tekahionwake, she then prompted Sa7plek to explain what he meant by the "Island of the North Arm." He explained that a great pre-contact Skwxwú7mesh warrior had foreseen the arrival of Europeans, and, when he died, had transferred his strength to an island in the fjord north of Tsleil-Waututh to help future generations face the challenge of colonization. "Since then our young men and our old have searched for 'The Island,'" Sa7plek concluded, "It is there somewhere, up some lost channel, but we cannot find it. When we do, we will get back all the courage and bravery we had before the white man came."⁹⁴ The way Sa7plek

90 There was some disagreement among the mid-twentieth-century Skwxwú7mesh men who worked with anthropologists as to whether this title had been granted permanently to Sa7plek, or whether it was meant merely as a loan to increase his ability to represent the Skwxwú7mesh people to the British Crown.

91 Fisher, "SU-Á-PU-LUCK (Joseph Capilano)."

92 For more on Pauline Johnson see Carole Gerson and Veronica Jane Strong-Boag, *Paddling Her Own Canoe*, vol. 14., Studies in Gender and History (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000).

93 Quotation marks in original. Johnson, *Legends of Vancouver*, 38.

94 Ibid.

narrated this story demonstrates that, as he politically distanced himself from the Oblate mission, he also came to reject the conservative model of activism. However, Sa7plek's death in 1910 made room for the most successful conservative activist of all, Andrew Paull, to dominate Sḵw̓xwú7mesh politics.

Paull was born in 1892 to a high-rank family at St'a7mes, a Sḵw̓xwú7mesh settlement near the mouth of the Squamish River; his parents, Dan and Theresa, moved to Eslhá7an only a few years later as part of the general Sḵw̓xwú7mesh migration southward towards the resources available around Vancouver. After this point, his commonly-told autobiography, like that of Eslhá7an itself, begins to resemble a semi-legendary origin story that explicitly positions Paull as a trans-cultural ambassador for native rights. In his own telling, Paull, at age seven, was selected by his parents and some of Eslhá7an's more politically significant residents to "learn the ways of the white man and speak for the Indian."⁹⁵ (According to the historian E. Palmer Patterson, Durieu, not the Eslhá7an community, played the main role in Paull's selection as the principal future Sḵw̓xwú7mesh ambassador, a contention that I find unlikely).⁹⁶ As such, he was enrolled as a member of the Squamish Boarding School's inaugural class, and was given a name, Xwechtáal, after the legendary Sḵw̓xwú7mesh hero who had slain the two-headed serpent, Sinulhkay, which Paull would later use as a metaphor for colonial dispossession.⁹⁷ At the age of fifteen,

95 Paull, quoted in Brendan F.R. Edwards, "I Have Lots of Help Behind Me, Lots of Books, to Convince You."

96 Patterson, *Andrew Paull and Canadian Indian Resurgence*, 28–29.

97 Paull often emphasized, in his speeches, that he benefited from two simultaneous educations: a "white" education from the Boarding School, and a "native" one from his Sḵw̓xwú7mesh elders. That this was possible provides further evidence against the image, promulgated by the Oblates, that the Eslhá7an Sḵw̓xwú7mesh had undergone a wholesale cultural conversion under their tutelage. Matthews, *Conversations with Khatsalano, 1932-1954*, 14–15, 183–186; Brendan F.R. Edwards, "I Have Lots of Help Behind Me, Lots of Books, to Convince You."

he worked, with the encouragement of the Eslhá7an Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh community, as a legal assistant at a Vancouver law firm, a job at which he excelled: in the opinion of his coworkers, he could have been “one of the country's most brilliant criminal lawyers”.⁹⁸ Paull never practised law above the level of an assistant, however, partially because to be admitted to the British Columbia Bar Association he would have had to give up his Indian status, which he was not willing to do. Instead, he dedicated his career to business, public administration, and, above all, activism. I am going to go against chronology here and discuss Paull's work as a pan-Indian activist, leaving a discussion of his earlier work as an Eslhá7an and Squamish Nation bureaucrat until the next chapter.

Paull first became involved in broadly native, as opposed to specifically Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh, political causes in 1916. In that year, he and Peter Kelly, a Haida Protestant leader, organized a conference at Eslhá7an that was attended by anti-colonial activists from most of the major native groups of British Columbia. The main result of this conference was the establishment of a permanent organization, the Allied Tribes of British Columbia, whose mandate was to protest the alienation – both historical and ongoing – of native land in the province. Kelly became the first chairman of the ATBC executive, and Paull succeeded the anthropologist James Teit to become its second secretary.⁹⁹

Under Paull's and Kelly's leadership, the ATBC sent formal delegations to both London (1926) and Ottawa (1927) to contest the British Columbian and Canadian government's land policies. Unable to produce a moral or legal

98 Maisie Hurley, quoted in Brendan F.R. Edwards, “I Have Lots of Help Behind Me, Lots of Books, to Convince You.”

99 Patterson, *Andrew Paull and Canadian Indian Resurgence*, 112–128; Tennant, *Aboriginal Peoples and Politics*, 94–95. For James Teit's role as an advocate for native people, see Wendy Wickwire, “‘We Shall Drink from the Stream and so Shall You’: James A. Teit and Native Resistance in British Columbia, 1908–22,” *The Canadian Historical Review* 79, no. 2 (June 30, 1998): 199–236.

refutation of the ATBC's claims, the Department of Indian Affairs, led by Duncan Campbell Scott, replied with a merely practical objection: "If Indians were to get the kind of decision to which you are entitled," Scott told Paull, "[it] would smash Confederation."¹⁰⁰ To prevent any further delegations from representing native grievances in Ottawa (and thus threatening the existence of Canada), the Mackenzie King government promptly amended the *Indian Act* to prohibit native people from "raising a fund or providing money for the prosecution of any land claim" without the Department of Indian Affairs' approval.¹⁰¹ Unable to legally pursue its primary objective, the ATBC disbanded shortly afterwards.

After a decade-long hiatus from high-level politics during the 1930s, Paull briefly joined the Native Brotherhood of British Columbia in 1942 before founding his own short-lived organization, the North American Indian Brotherhood, in 1945. This was the organization he was representing to the Canadian House of Commons in the scene I described at the beginning of this chapter. In addition to his leadership in political organizations, he also single-handedly published two newspapers, *Totem Speaks* and *Thunderbird*, whose content he produced while "hunched" over his typewriter "like a dracula ... hammer[ing] out the letters of the alphabet like a stream of machine gun bullets...pound[ing] his protests onto each page," in the

100 Duncan Campbell Scott to Andrew Paull, 1927 (exact date unknown), quoted in Parliament of Canada, "Proceedings of the Joint Senate and House of Commons Committee on Indian Affairs," 25 May 1961, quoted in Peter McFarlane, *Brotherhood to Nationhood: George Manuel and the Making of the Modern Indian Movement* (Between the Lines, 1993), 583.

101 Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, "Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples", 1996, <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/webarchives/20071211050911/>, <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/webarchives/20071211050911/>. That the Department of Indian Affairs was willing and able to use this heavy-handed tactic to prevent native people from representing their grievances in court weakens Tina Loo's argument that the courts provided a discursive arena in which native people stood equally before the law with non-native people. Loo, "[Dan](#) [Cranmer's](#) [Potlatch](#)."

colourful recollection of an Oblate biographer.¹⁰² In both his political advocacy and his published writing, Paull emphasized three main themes: that native people were the cultural equals of non-native people; that native people had contributed greatly to the history of British Columbia; and that the Crown had a legal obligation to honour aboriginal land title.¹⁰³

Although Paull was Catholic and more comfortable working within a non-native cultural sphere than most of his native contemporaries, he was adamantly against the assimilation – voluntary or otherwise – of native people; in fact, this was Paull's main disagreement with Peter Kelly, one of his early collaborators.¹⁰⁴ What makes him such a culturally ambiguous figure is the extent to which his entire career was made possible by the federal assimilation programme. If government officials were occasionally willing to tolerate Paull's message, it was because it was presented in their language by an articulate male in Western-style dress who based his arguments on the Westminster legal tradition.¹⁰⁵ If the Oblates encouraged Paull as a leader (he was a bell-ringer in the post-Durieu Oblate System), it was because he presented himself as a devoted Catholic. Paull himself was highly derisive toward native people who had not learned to read in English – something no native person on the Northwest Coast had been able to do less than a century earlier, and which Paull had learned to do as part of the most high-profile assimilation program in Canadian history.¹⁰⁶ While he did speak

102 Herbert Francis Dunlop, *Andy Paull : as I Knew Him and Understood His Times* (Vancouver: Order of the O.M.I. of St. Paul's Province, 1983)., quoted in Brendan F.R. Edwards, "I Have Lots of Help Behind Me, Lots of Books, to Convince You." (This quote may not add a lot to my argument, but it was too delicious to pass up).

103 Brendan F.R. Edwards, "I Have Lots of Help Behind Me, Lots of Books, to Convince You"; Patterson, *Andrew Paull and Canadian Indian Resurgence*.

104 Brendan F.R. Edwards, "I Have Lots of Help Behind Me, Lots of Books, to Convince You."

105 Edwards has an excellent discussion of Paull's use of the rhetoric of legal precedent in his activism. Ibid.

106 Patterson, *Andrew Paull and Canadian Indian Resurgence*, 131.

Sḵw̓xw̓ú7mesh, he did not do so very well, in the opinion of August Jack Khatsalano, who accused Paull of “spoil[ing]” the language.¹⁰⁷ Without falling into the romantic trap that the historian James Axtell identified as scholars' desire to be the “champions of the underdog, defenders of the weak, and protectors of the ethnic enclave,” it is possible to argue that Paull was a product of the system he was protesting, and therefore the Platonic ideal of a conservative native activist.¹⁰⁸

While Andrew Paull was the most significant Sḵw̓xw̓ú7mesh politician of the twentieth-century, his impact within North American culture paled in comparison to another Eshá7an-educated diplomat: Chief Dan George. George was born as Geswanouth Slahoot at Tsleil-Waututh in 1899, but had to change his name as a condition of attending the Squamish Boarding School at Eshá7an. After dropping out of school, he worked as a logger and a longshoreman until an injury prevented him from performing manual labour.¹⁰⁹ It was only after he was unable to perform manual labour that George began the career that would bring him fame and influence: theatre. Through poetry, oratory, and an acting career highlighted by his Oscar-nominated performance in the anti-Western film, *Little Big Man*, Dan George established himself as one of the most visible representatives not only of the Sḵw̓xw̓ú7mesh, but of all North American native peoples, to the society that had colonized them.¹¹⁰

Much of George's success in connecting with non-native audiences was due to the fact that his voice, while often critical, was even less radical than Paull's. In his political speeches, he did not aggressively demand the redress of native dispossession; instead, he reflected sadly on its consequences. At

107 Matthews, *Conversations with Khatsalano, 1932-1954*, 34.

108 James Axtell, *After Columbus: Essays in the Ethnohistory of Colonial North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 50.

109 Daniel J. K. Beavon, Cora Jane Voyageur, and David Newhouse, *Hidden In Plain Sight: Contributions Of Aboriginal Peoples To Canadian Identity And Culture* (University of Toronto Press, 2005), 14.

the City of Vancouver's celebration of Canada's centennial in 1967, for example, Dan George provided the following summary of the history of Canada's native people, using himself as a metonym:

[...]I have known you [Canada] when your forests were mine; when they gave me my meat and my clothing. I have known you in your streams and rivers where your fish flashed and danced in the sun, where the waters said 'come, come and eat of my abundance.' I have known you in the freedom of the winds. And my spirit, like the winds, once roamed your good lands. But in the long hundred years since the white man came, I have seen my freedom disappear like the salmon going mysteriously out to sea; the white man's strange customs, which I could not understand, pressed down upon me until I could no longer breathe.¹¹¹

Like Sa7plek in his metaphorical conversation with Pauline Johnson, Dan George lamented native peoples' "lack of ... will to fight back."¹¹² His proposed counterattack, however, perfectly fit the conservative activism model. He called upon native people to "humbly accept this new culture and through it rise up and go on," and to "grab the instruments of the white man's success – his education, his skills - and with these new tools [...] build [their] race into the proudest segment of [Canadian] society."¹¹³

This explicit reference to "the instruments of the white man's success" illustrates the fundamental difference between the Eslhá7an S̓kwxwú7mesh activists I have described in this section and the radical native activists who

110 George, *My Heart Soars*; George, *My Spirit Soars*.; Hirnschall and George, *The Best of Chief Dan George*; Ryga, *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe*; Arthur Penn, *Little Big Man*, videorecording (Paramount Home Entertainment, 2003); "'I Was Born 1,000 Years Ago...': Open Letter from Chief Dan George of the Capilano Indians - Ethics - January 1975", 2001, http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1310/is_2001_Dec/ai_82066715/; Hilda Mortimer and Dan George, *You Call Me Chief* (Doubleday Canada, 1981).

111 Dan George, "Lament for Confederation," 1967.

112 Dan George, "Lament for Confederation," 1967.

113 Ibid.

are prominent today. Snatt, Sa7plek, Paull, and George all focused their extracommunity political careers on achieving gains for native people within political, legal, and cultural systems designed by colonists. The Eslhá7an church provided them with some of the “instruments” necessary to do this effectively: its priests helped explain Euro-Canadian political culture to them, its aura of “civilization” allowed them to present themselves as progressive and its residential school helped the latter two to learn to express themselves eloquently in English. By contrast, radical contemporary Sḵw̱w̱ú7mesh activists like Khelsilem Rivers are likely to agree with the Caribbean-American feminist scholar Audre Lorde that “the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house,” an opinion that echoes the Gramscian thesis I proposed at the beginning of this chapter.¹¹⁴

Conclusion

Conservative Sḵw̱w̱ú7mesh activists increasingly achieved prominence throughout the settlement period because the colonists' hegemony allowed them, to a large extent, to dictate the terms of opposition to colonialism. In turn, those Sḵw̱w̱ú7mesh leaders who adopted a liminal, diplomatic position toward non-native governments were sometimes able to achieve real political gains for their people, increasing their political legitimacy at home. However, Dan George's lamenting speeches, as much as they are examples of the Eslhá7an diplomatic strategy, also demonstrate its failure. While Snatt, Sa7plek, Paull, and many other less prominent leaders can be credited with making the Sḵw̱w̱ú7mesh one of the most successful native peoples in contemporary Canada, that is a relative achievement, not an absolute one: the Sḵw̱w̱ú7mesh still suffered the same loss of territorial and political self-determination that Sa7plek expressed to Pauline Johnson. At the same time,

¹¹⁴ Geraldine Audre Lorde, *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches*, 1st ed. (Crossing Press, 1984), 110.

the series of leaders that the Oblate church helped to produce would change Skwxwú7mesh society from the inside in a number of ways, one of which I discuss in the following chapter.

The conservative forms of anti-colonial protest that emerged from Eslhá7an grew naturally from the settlement's cultural politics. The leaders of Eslhá7an, reacting to the constraints of "a narrow world, strewn with prohibitions" created by colonists, had adopted, out of necessity and a history of religious dialogue with Christian missionaries, a social contract in which Oblate priests governed through pastoral power.¹¹⁵ As a buffer between the Skwxwú7mesh and the state, the Oblates did not "pacify" the Skwxwú7mesh so much as facilitate hegemonic forms of resistance focused on the actions, rather than the existence, of the colonial state.¹¹⁶ In the early years of the mission, this kind of activism depended upon the cooperation of the Oblate priests themselves. Later, as the church lost influence compared to the state, it required both the state's acquiescence and cultural tools that would-be activists could only acquire by participating in federally-funded assimilation programs such as the residential school system. Therefore, it is not a coincidence that the Skwxwú7mesh people who spoke loudest against colonialism were also those most strongly shaped by it.

115 Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 13.

116 Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*; Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*.

Chapter 3

Eslhá7an and S̱kw̱wú7mesh Ethnogenesis

The [Oblate] father spoke to the chief and the people, and so the Chief Skwatatxwamkin says, "well," he says, "why not? They're all my old relations." He says, "The S̱kw̱wú7mesh are from the one heading, therefore we're all related, so they have just as much right to [Eslhá7an] as I have, so, sure, they can come over."

Louis Miranda, 1979¹

Returning to the issue of nationhood, we must acknowledge that, unlike the earth, social and political institutions were created by men and women.

Taiaiake Alfred, *Peace, Power, Righteousness*, 1999²

Presenting the Nation

Contemporary visitors to the Squamish Nation's website may notice that it presents, in different places, two competing versions of S̱kw̱wú7mesh history.³ The sections entitled "Modern Profile" and "Our Culture" emphasize that the S̱kw̱wú7mesh are members of an ancient indigenous society by asserting that they have existed in their traditional territory "since beyond recorded history" and describing some of the social and linguistic aspects of

1 Louis Miranda, Interviewed by Reuben Ware, 1979, British Columbia Archives, Tape 4356:0014.

2 Taiaiake Alfred, *Peace, Power, Righteousness* (Oxford University Press, 1999), 62.

3 Squamish Nation, <http://www.squamish.net>

what may be considered traditional Sḵw̱x̱w̱ú7mesh culture. By contrast, the section entitled “Our History” provides only the following brief account, almost entirely focused on the twentieth-century:

After contact with European settlers, 16 Squamish speaking tribes amalgamated to form one unit called the Squamish Indian Band. The amalgamation was signed on July 23, 1923 and it was established to guarantee equality to all Squamish people and to ensure good government.⁴

This same paragraph appears on the site's home page, accompanied by a photograph of the chiefs, dignitaries, and federal officials present at the signing of the amalgamation. Together, the words and image present the political formation of the Squamish Nation as the foundational moment in Sḵw̱x̱w̱ú7mesh history; by implication, Sḵw̱x̱w̱ú7mesh history is rooted more in native responses to late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century colonization than in any prior existence.

It is possible to explain the strange dichotomy that the Squamish Nation's website creates between history and culture by ontologically separating the Sḵw̱x̱w̱ú7mesh, as an ethnic group, from the Squamish Nation, the present-day First Nations government under the Indian Act. This has been the position of Sḵw̱x̱w̱ú7mesh-Kwakwaka'wakw researcher and activist Khelsilem Rivers, who, besides being a prominent participant to the Sḵw̱x̱w̱ú7mesh language revitalization project, is also the organizer of and main contributor to most of the Wikipedia.org articles concerning the native peoples of the Lower Mainland.⁵ For Rivers, the Squamish Nation is an institution imposed on the Sḵw̱x̱w̱ú7mesh by the colonial government, and possesses neither the moral authority nor the ability to effectively govern

4 Squamish Nation, “Our History,” www.squamish.net/aboutus/ourHistory.html, Accessed 20 July 2010.

5 Wikipedia.org, “User:OldManRivers,” <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/User:OldManRivers>, Accessed 17 August 2012.

them.⁶ From this perspective, the website's focus on the amalgamation is the result not only of a careless conflation of terms, but also of a deliberate institutional bias.

The intention of this chapter is not to choose sides in the rhetorical battle for political legitimacy between the Squamish Nation leadership and some of its more radical constituents. Rather, it aims to explore the roots of Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh nationhood by problematizing Rivers's neat division of semiotic labour between institution and identity. While it is undeniable that current First Nations governance structures were developed under constraints imposed by the federal government, some important characteristics of the Squamish Nation were determined by the Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh themselves. In particular, I argue that the fact that Xwmełch'stn, Eslhá7an, Ch'í'ch'elxwi7kw, St'á7mes, and Ch'iyá7mesh, along with many other Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh settlements, are all administered by one First Nations government was not a historical inevitability. Furthermore, I argue that the changes that occurred in Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh society before, during, and after the amalgamation demonstrate that its effects were not limited to political economy, but in fact extended in meaningful ways to the identity of the people who participated in the process, and to their descendants. Finally, the Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh political reorganization of 1923 both reflected and furthered the increasing social and political importance of Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh Christian diplomats with ties to the Eslhá7an mission. My conclusions are tentative, and would benefit from further study involving oral

6 Rivers recommends Alfred's *Peace, Power, Righteousness*, and gives it 5/5 stars, on his list of suggested readings at the website www.goodreads.com/review/list/865624-dustin Alfred, *Peace, Power, Righteousness*.

For Rivers's views on ontologically separating the Squamish Nation from the Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh, see Wikipedia contributors, "Talk:Squamish Nation," *Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia* (Wikimedia Foundation, Inc., June 18, 2012), http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Talk:Squamish_Nation&oldid=493933480.

interviews with those Skwxwú7mesh people who were alive during the first few decades of the Squamish Nation's existence. However, I believe that there is enough evidence to at least suggest a connection between the Eshlá7an-based social processes I have described in previous chapters and the production of the modern Skwxwú7mesh identity.

Deconstructing the Nation

One of the most significant developments in the recent scholarship on indigenous history has been an increased emphasis on historically deconstructing ontological categories such as “the Skwxwú7mesh people.” These new histories treat native identities, and the societies they delimit, as products as well as subjects of colonization. Perhaps no other moment illustrates this trends as well as the experience of John Milloy, who had been one of Canada's leading historians of native history during the 1980s, and whose work had focused largely on the Cree, at the annual meeting of the Canadian Historical Association in 2008. While chairing a panel entitled “Power, Culture, and Place: Aboriginal Historians in Aboriginal History,” he was repeatedly informed by the presenters – two of whom were of “Cree” descent – that the Cree did not, in fact, exist, at least not in the *a priori* sense they accused him of using. That category, they argued, had been socially constructed by unreflexive Western anthropologists, Indian Act bureaucrats, and twentieth-century native leaders operating under conditions of cultural hegemony.⁷ They, and others, had adopted a new approach to writing native history that began by deconstructing ethnic groupings.⁸

The local historian most closely identified with this process of ethnic deconstruction is Alexandra Harmon.⁹ As the legal counsel to one of the Coast Salish peoples who live in Washington state, Harmon had felt an

7 Information on this panel can be found at http://www.cha-shc.ca/en/Annual_Meeting_59/items/6.html, Panel 76.

awkward tension between the assumptions that the legal system made about native societies – and that therefore constituted the criteria for claiming aboriginal rights and land title – and what she saw as the lived historical reality of the people she worked with. Forced by rational self-interest and her support for native self-determination to “deflect” this issue in the courtroom, she returned to it later in her second career as an academic historian. Her resulting intervention aimed to apply contemporary ethnohistorians' understanding of societies as historically contingent social structures, rather than “primordial” entities, to the study of Northwest Coast native history. “Descendants of Indians,” she argued, “are inextricably tangled in the cultural, economic, and racial threads of a social fabric designed by non-Indians. [...] As a result, relatively little remains of the characteristics that distinguished indigenous people from Europeans when they first met.”¹⁰

While Harmon took pains throughout *Indians in the Making* to disavow any conclusions that might be drawn from her work that could negatively impact the ability of native peoples to claim legal rights, her argument still could not fail to be controversial due to the iconoclastic claims it made about

8 Jonathan Anuik, “Metis Families and Schools: The Decline and Reclamation of Metis Identities in Saskatchewan, 1885--1980”, 2009; John Kennedy, “Labrador Metis Ethnogenesis,” *Ethnos* 62, no. 3 (January 1, 1997): 5–23; Joane Nagel, *American Indian Ethnic Renewal: Red Power and the Resurgence of Identity and Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996). For an earlier effort toward a similar goal, see James Clifford, “Identity in Mashpee,” in *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1988), 277–346.

9 Readers may also wish to consult a recent, even more local work that addresses some of Harmon's themes: Keith Thor Carlson, *The Power of Place, the Problem of Time: Aboriginal Identity and Historical Consciousness in the Cauldron of Colonialism* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), especially Chapter 7: “Identity in the Face of Missionaries and the Anti-Potlatch Law.”

10 Alexandra Harmon, *Indians in the Making: Ethnic Relations and Indian Identities Around Puget Sound* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 2–3. In Harmon's writing, the order of these two sentences is reversed.

native identity and alterity. For one thing, she built her case far too strongly. It is inaccurate to say that the people who self-identify as indigenous today lack meaningful distinguishing features; in fact, as I argued in the first chapter of this thesis, the changes that have occurred in native societies such as that of the Skwxwú7mesh since the arrival of colonists occurred within the cultural context of those pre-existing societies. Furthermore, as Harmon's introductory reflections on her courtroom experience demonstrate, this kind of analysis threatens to destabilize native claims to political self-determination, putting the researcher in an extremely dubious ethical position.¹¹

Still, presenting native societies as innovations helps to contest an older, even more politically problematic portrayal of native people as fundamentally – even if laudably – backwards and anti-modern. The historians Philip Deloria and Paige Raibmon have both written excellent monographs on this theme; Deloria's confronts it directly by showing counterexamples, while Raibmon's analyzes the political and ideological work that such constructions have performed.¹² Some of the major Canadian native activists, too, have

11 Contrary to the recommendation of James Axtell, who argued in 1988 that historians should remain aloof from native politics, most historians working in the field today consider their work to be a contribution to native political goals as well as to abstract scholarship. Some, including Julia Emberley, Mary-Ellen Kelm, and Robin Brownlie, have argued that this subject-position is in fact an ethical imperative for scholars who depend on native communities for the qualitative data they use in their work. James Axtell, *After Columbus: Essays in the Ethnohistory of Colonial North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988); Julia V. Emberley, "A Gift for Languages': Native Women and the Textual Economy of the Colonial Archive," *Cultural Critique*, no. 17 (December 1, 1990): 21–50; R. Brownlie and M.E. Kelm, "Desperately Seeking Absolution: Native Agency as Colonialist Alibi?," *Canadian Historical Review* 75, no. 4 (1994): 543–556.

12 Paige Raibmon, *Authentic Indians: Episodes of Encounter from the Late-Nineteenth-Century Northwest Coast* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005); Philip J. Deloria, *Indians in Unexpected Places* (University Press of Kansas, 2006).

begun to reject the assumption that native social units have always existed in a one-to-one correspondence with those that exist today. In his “manifesto” for radical indigenous politics in Canada, Taiaiake Alfred approvingly quotes Alaskan political scientist and science advisor Fae Korsmo, who critiques the concept of nationhood as applied to native societies:

Insofar as the colonial mythology has put the burden on the indigenous societies to justify their claims in terms of their origins and hardy continuity, the doctrine of aboriginal title is part of colonialism and therefore dooms the indigenous claimants to failure.¹³

Korsmo and Alfred, while they may reject portions of Harmon's argument, agree with her that any just approach to determining which rights to self-determination native peoples can claim cannot be based upon the requirement that they be culturally, politically, or economically static, or, generally, fit into a mold defined by non-native people with reference to European history. By adopting this stance, they have created an intellectual space in which scholars can explore even fairly recent occurrences of native ethnogenesis without being accused of inhibiting native calls for justice.

Constructing the Nation

Ethics aside, what grounds are there to speak of Skwxwú7mesh ethnogenesis? There are two main reasons to suspect that the amalgamation of 1923 helped to create a new, or at least modified, ethnic identity: one arrived at through synchronic comparison of the Squamish Nation to analogous governmental bodies, and another by diachronic comparison of the

13 Fae Korsmo, cited in Alfred, *Peace, Power, Righteousness*, 58. For an example of the problem Korsmo describes, see Thomas Flanagan, *First Nations? Second Thoughts* (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2008).

contemporary Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh with their early-twentieth-century ancestors.

First, there is the degree to which Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh political organization differs from that of other linguistic groups in the region. With the exception of Tsleil-Waututh, all of the settlements that had large Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh-speaking populations in the mid-1800s and which are still inhabited by Coast Salish people, are governed by the Squamish Nation, which administers their economic, cultural, and diplomatic affairs from its headquarters at Chi'ch'elxiwikw'. By contrast, some of their closest neighbours, the St'at'imc and the Stó:lō, are divided into, respectively, eleven and twenty-nine separate First Nations, each governing only a few hundred people.¹⁴ These First Nations have established tribal councils that represent multiple local governments, and that therefore exist at roughly the same scale as the Squamish Nation, but these have less direct control over local affairs and tend not to represent entire linguistic groups.¹⁵ This form of political organization closely resembles that which the Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh possessed during the early contact period, in which settlements sharing a common language were politically separate but diplomatically close. The

14 Paul Tennant, *Aboriginal Peoples and Politics: The Indian Land Question in British Columbia, 1849-1989* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1990), 5.

15 Of the 29 Stó:lō governments, 11 are members of the Stó:lō Nation, 8 are members of the Stó:lō Tribal Council, and 11 are not members of any supranational organization. The St'at'imc governments are split between the St'at'imc Chiefs Council (7 members) and the In-SHUCK-ch Nation (3 members), with the one remaining First Nation, N'quatqua, loosely affiliated with the In-SHUCK-ch Nation through the Lower St'at'imc Tribal Council. All of these organizations were established several decades after the Squamish Nation. Sto:lo Nation, "Sto:lo Nation Bands," *Sto:lo Nation*, n.d., <http://www.stolonation.bc.ca/about-us/stolo-nation-bands.htm>; Sto:lo Tribal Council, "STC Communities," *Sto:lo Tribal Council*, n.d., http://www.stolotribalcouncil.ca/stc_communities.html; St'at'imc Chiefs Council, "S T'at'imc," *St'at'imc*, n.d., www.statimc.net; In-SHUCK-ch Nation, "In-SHUCK-ch Nation," *In-SHUCK-ch Nation*, n.d., <http://www.inshuckch.com/home.html>; N'Quatqua First Nation, "About Us," *Welcome to N'Quatqua*, n.d., http://www.nquatqua.ca/html/about_us.html.

contemporary Squamish Nation, by contrast, more closely resembles a nation-state: a centralized polity uniting all of the members of a self-identified cultural and linguistic group.¹⁶

Second, the lines delimiting who is Skwxwú7mesh and who is not have moved and hardened since the late nineteenth-century. At that time, the native settlements on Burrard Inlet were multicultural and multilingual: they contained significant minorities of Hunquminum speakers and mixed-ancestry Skwxwú7mesh speakers, as well as European, Asian, and Latin American industrial workers, French-Catholic missionaries, and Anglo-Canadian government officials. The Skwxwú7mesh Chief August Jack Khatsalano, whose mother spoke Hunquminum, received hereditary names in both Skwxwú7mesh and Hunquminum and governed a completely bilingual settlement, Seńákw.¹⁷ Xwáy'xway, too, was home to both Skwxwú7mesh and

16 One old study, along with many of the contemporary non-native people who live in the traditional Skwxwú7mesh territory, hold that the Skwxwú7mesh have retained a degree of traditional political organization in that clan loyalties remain more important at Chief and Council meetings than differences of opinion on public policy. As I have not engaged in participant observation in writing this thesis, I can neither confirm nor deny this perception. I will, however, make two observations about it. First, it tends to conform to non-native conceptions of native societies as petty and dysfunctional, and should therefore be treated with suspicion. Second, the larger point, that Skwxwú7mesh political traditions have persisted in the Squamish Nation, is true by definition.

Behari Lal Verma, *The Squamish: study of changing political organisation*. (Thesis (M.A.)--University of British Columbia, 1956., 1954).

17 In 1860, A.T. Voight, an early settler in the Vancouver area, mentioned a Skwxwú7mesh settlement called "Malee" located "half a mile north on the coast from the northernmost mouth of the Fraser River." In other words, he identified Musqueam as a Skwxwú7mesh village. Voight might not have known what he was talking about (I have doubts about the ability of early white settlers to distinguish in accurate and meaningful ways between neighbouring Coast Salish groups, especially when they would have likely used Chinook to communicate with both Hun'qumyi'num' and Skwxwú7mesh speakers); that is why I mention his statement here rather than in the main body of the text. J.S. Matthews, *Conversations with Khatsalano, 1932-1954* (Vancouver: Vancouver City Archives, 1969), 26.

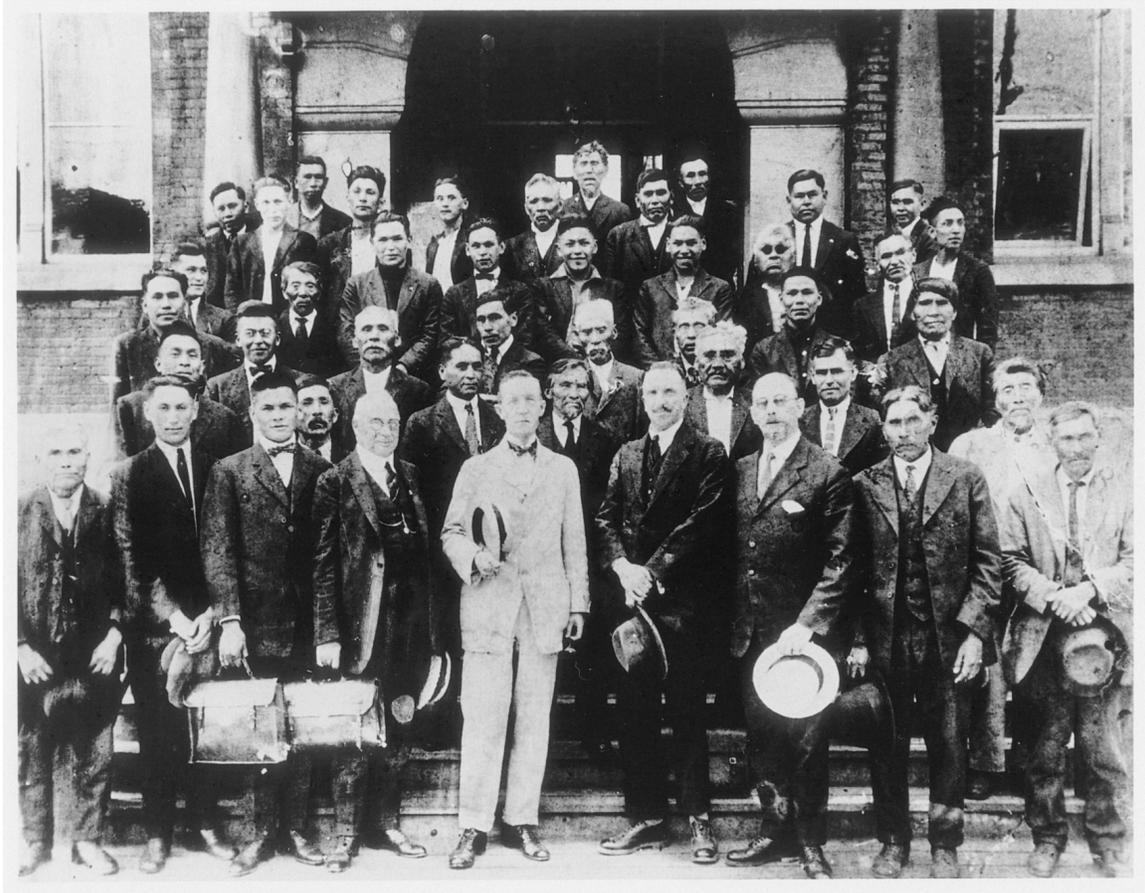
Hunquminum speakers, whose descendants have appeared in court to establish whether Stanley Park is on Sḵw̱x̱wú7mesh, Musqueam, or Tsleil-Waututh land (or some combination of the three).¹⁸

Today, people who live (or whose families live) on reserves governed by the Squamish Nation mainly identify as Sḵw̱x̱wú7mesh, while people who live (or whose families live) on other reserves mainly do not.¹⁹ Nothing illustrates this separation of identity more than the case of the Tsleil-Waututh, a First Nation that Paul Tennant categorized as "Squamish" as late as 1990, and whose most famous mid-century leader, Chief Dan George, had lived and studied at Esłhá7an.²⁰ During the 1910s, Tsleil-Waututh was as much a Sḵw̱x̱wú7mesh settlement as Seńáḵw or Xwayxay: it possessed, at the very least, a major minority of people who spoke Sḵw̱x̱wú7mesh and who were part of Sḵw̱x̱wú7mesh kinship groups. However, Tsleil-Waututh did not join the amalgamation. Now, despite their shared pre-1923 history with the Sḵw̱x̱wú7mesh, the contemporary inhabitants of Tsleil-Waututh consider

18 R. Mawani, "From Colonialism to Multiculturalism? Totem Poles, Tourism and National Identity in Vancouver's Stanley Park," *ARIEL: A Review of International English Literature* 35, no. 1-2 (2004): 44, <http://ariel.ucalgary.ca/ariel/index.php/ariel/article/viewFile/3888/3825>. See also R. Mawani, "Imperial Legacies (Post) Colonial Identities: Law, Space and the Making of Stanley Park, 1859-2001," *Law Text Culture* 7 (2003): 98; Jean Barman, "Erasing Indigenous Indigeneity in Vancouver," *BC Studies*, no. 155 (Autumn 2007): 3-30.

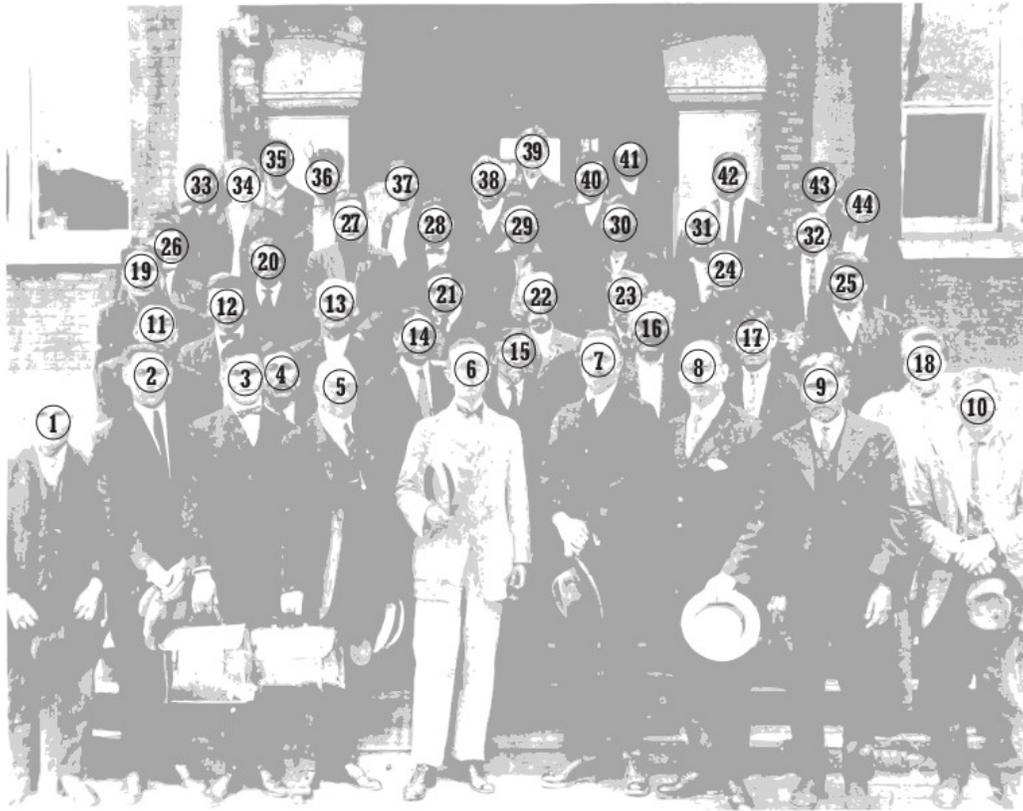
19 According to the Squamish Nation's statistics, 2,239 of the Nation's 3,324 members (67%) live on-reserve. This is significantly higher than the national average of approximately 40%, likely because most Sḵw̱x̱wú7mesh reserves are near urban areas, giving their residents access to a wider range of economic opportunities than native people living on remote reservations. Squamish Nation, "About Us," <http://www.squamish.net/aboutus>, Accessed 19 July 2012. Statistics Canada, "2006 Census: Aboriginal Peoples in Canada in 2006: Inuit, Métis and First Nations, 2006 Census: First Nations people," <http://www12.statcan.ca/census-recensement/2006/as-sa/97-558/p16-eng.cfm>, Accessed 19 July 2012.

20 Tennant, *Aboriginal Peoples and Politics*, 5.



**Representatives at the signing of the Skwxwú7mesh amalgamation,
Downtown Vancouver, 23 July 1923.**

This image, and the legend on the following page, are from a pamphlet produced by the Squamish Nation Chiefs and Council and available at http://squamish.net/files/PDF/Amalgamation_Celebration_Handout.pdf, Accessed 18 December 2012. The authors of the pamphlet credit the photograph to North Vancouver Museum and Archives, Item #4835.



- | | | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Jimmy Jimmy | 2. Frank Baker | 3. Andy Paull | 4. Henry Jack |
| 5. Ditch Burn | 6. Dr. Duncan C. Scott | 7. Jack Grant | 8. Perry (Indian Agent) |
| 9. Chief George | 10. Joseph Thomas | 11. Mathias Joe | 12. Edward Williams |
| 13. Tim Moody | 14. Dan Paull | 15. Chief Charlie | 16. Harry Discon |
| 17. Willie Baker | 18. Chief Billy | 19. Napoleon Moody | 20. Old William |
| 21. Louie Miranda | 22. Chief Tom | 23. Ned (Ed) Joseph | 24. Charlie Antone |
| 25. Chief Andrew | 26. Dave Thomas | 27. Louie Lewis | 28. Moses Joseph |
| 29. Robert Baker | 30. Stan Joseph | 31. Chief Squamish Jacob | 32. Jacob Lewis |
| 33. Isadore Pierre | 34. Alfred George | 35. Guss Denny | 36. Bud Miranda |
| 37. Ignatius George | 38. Julian August | 39. Old Jim August | 40. Joe Thomas |
| 41. Old Denny | 42. Al Williams | 43. Denny Paull | 44. Gus Band |

Legend to the Squamish Nation Amalgamation Handout (see previous page).

themselves a distinct Hunkwimín-wakwaxwí7mesh-speaking people, and their efforts at language revitalization have focused on that language.²¹ The official Skwkwú7mesh position on Tsleil-Waututh has changed in step: while early twentieth-century Skwkwú7mesh leaders rejected Tsleil-Waututh claims to a separate identity, a recent Squamish Nation map did not include Tsleil-Waututh as an historical Skwkwú7mesh settlement, even though it did include another landmark *beyond* Tsleil-Waututh.²² As a result, people who self-identify as Skwkwú7mesh today are almost all members of the Squamish Nation, and vice versa.

As with the external political processes discussed in the last chapter, the members of the Skwkwú7mesh Christian community of Eslhá7an played a pivotal role in pushing Skwkwú7mesh political organization towards a national model. In the 1910s and 1920s, Eslhá7an was, and had been for several decades, the economic, demographic, and diplomatic centre of Skwkwú7mesh society.²³ As a site where Skwkwú7mesh people had spent the past sixty years learning about – and being strongly encouraged to adopt – Euro-Canadian cultural and political practises, it was also the most likely place for non-traditional responses to the problems created by the *Indian Act* to emerge. The most influential proponent of political reorganization was, ironically, Khelsilem Rivers' great-grandfather, Andrew Paull.

21 Kendall Walters and Lucas Powers, "Ancestral Language Promotes Healing for Tsleil-Waututh Nation," UBC Department of Journalism: Reporting on Indigenous Peoples, <http://www.indigenousreporting.com/story-3/>, Accessed 17 August 2012.

22 Squamish Nation Education Department and University of Washington, *Skwkwú7mesh Sničim Xwelifen Sničim: Skexwts = Squamish - English Dictionary* (North Vancouver, BC : Seattle: Squamish Nation Education Department ; in association with University of Washington Press, 2011), x.

23 Of the four Skwkwú7mesh men who were most active in this period in representing Skwkwú7mesh political and cultural perspectives to non-native people, two – Andrew Paull and Louis Miranda – lived at Eslhá7an, and a third – Dan George – had attended the residential school there. Only August Jack Khatsalano had no connection with the settlement. See chapter 3.

Paull's rise to political prominence was the result not only of his personal qualities, prominent family, and prestigious ancestral name, but also of the increasing influence of non-native bureaucrats in Skwxwú7mesh politics under Duncan Campbell Scott's Department of Indian Affairs. In 1911, the Department reorganized its relationship with the Skwxwú7mesh by sponsoring the creation of a Squamish Council of Chiefs. Identifying Paull, a politically-engaged young Catholic with a residential-school education and legal training, as a leader likely to promote "progressive" policies, the local Indian Agent appointed him as its chairman.²⁴ Paull's appointment was, therefore, besides being intimately connected to the beginnings of modern pan-Skwxwú7mesh governance, also a result of the state's increasing confidence in its own hegemony.

As chairman, Paull dominated the Council of Chiefs. He considered himself a shrewd businessman and was often several steps ahead of the non-native bureaucrats charged with protecting his people from themselves and from settlers. In 1913, the Eshá7an Skwxwú7mesh, acting under his advice, signed an agreement-in-principle to lease a portion of the Mission #1 reserve to a railroad company. When the federal officials learned of the deal, they indignantly scheduled a Council meeting to make it clear that the Skwxwú7mesh needed their approval in order to conduct business, only to have Paull inform them that the deal had already been cancelled because the Skwxwú7mesh, acting for themselves, had lost confidence in the company's intentions.²⁵ In most cases, however, the Department was able to maintain control. In the same year that the railroad negotiations were taking place, Paull's plan to modernize the water and sanitation systems on the North Vancouver reserves was stalled when Ottawa refused to approve the release

24 E. Palmer Patterson, *Andrew Paull and Canadian Indian Resurgence* (University of Washington Ph.D. Thesis, 1962), 52.

25 William John Zaharoff, *Success in Struggle: The Squamish People and Kitsilano Indian Reserve No. 6* (s.l., 1978), 68.

of Skwxwú7mesh monies for the investment²⁶ The government similarly refused a proposal by Joe Matthias, the son of Sa7plek and the Council's representative from Xwemelch'stn, to sell those same reserves and move the southern Skwxwú7mesh northward to establish a farming community in the Squamish Valley.²⁷ Paull petitioned for the removal of some of the tutelage laws that motivated these refusals, but the government stood firm. The end result, according to the historian William Zaharoff, was that Skwxwú7mesh economic development was stifled by red tape. In effect, the Skwxwú7mesh, like other native peoples in British Columbia, were legislated into poverty.²⁸

One economic resource that the Skwxwú7mesh did possess at this time was their land. As the growth of Vancouver's non-native population accelerated in the 1900s and 1910s, the market value of the southern Skwxwú7mesh reserved skyrocketed. According to the economic historian Chris Roine, real estate was the basis of the Skwxwú7mesh economy from 1913 until the amalgamation, so much so that the North Vancouver Board of Trade labelled the Council of Chiefs "indolent speculators" (a pejorative that displayed the Board members' expectation that native people should occupy low socioeconomic positions, not any general distaste for speculation on their part).²⁹ Land-based wealth was a decidedly mixed blessing for the Skwxwú7mesh, as it was accompanied by growing pressure to sell their

26 Ibid., 43–45; Mary-Ellen Kelm, *Colonizing Bodies: Aboriginal Health and Healing in British Columbia, 1900-50* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1998).

27 Zaharoff, *Success in Struggle*, 66. A reader might object that the Skwxwú7mesh today are among the wealthiest First Nations groups in Canada, due mainly to their land deals in West Vancouver and (more recently) investments in advertising infrastructure and a casino. However, for much of the twentieth-century, the Skwxwú7mesh did not enjoy these advantage. Furthermore, Canadian First Nations people generally have incomes far below the Canadian average, so comparisons between the Skwxwú7mesh and other native groups drastically overstate Skwxwú7mesh wealth.

28 Ibid., 65. See also Kelm, *Colonizing Bodies*; John Sutton Lutz, *Makúk: A New History of Aboriginal-White Relations* (UBC Press, 2008).

29 Chris Roine, *The Squamish Aboriginal Economy, 1860-1940* (Simon Fraser University M.A. Thesis, 1996), 58; Lutz, *Makúk*.

reserves whether they wanted to or not, and often on poor terms. However, given that the Skwxwú7mesh had few other options, the desire of non-native settlers to acquire their land provided a much-needed source of income even if the deals the Skwxwú7mesh entered into were often unfair and coerced.³⁰

While land deals provided the Skwxwú7mesh with a source of income, they also caused internal disputes, as it was unclear which subset of the Skwxwú7mesh people should benefit from a given sale or lease. In traditional Skwxwú7mesh political economy, many people followed a seasonal round, living at multiple different settlements throughout the year. Furthermore, there were multiple ways in which an individual could claim an interest in a settlement besides living there. At the time of contact, Skwxwú7mesh heredity was bilateral and bilocal, which meant that individuals often held residence from birth in two different settlements: their mother's and father's.³¹ In addition, Skwxwú7mesh people could earn claims to a settlement through labour or potlatching. All of these claims were understood in terms more similar to the Euro-Canadian concept of citizenship than that of ownership. As a result, the claims of Skwxwú7mesh individuals could not easily be translated into the patrilineal, title-based system of land-ownership employed by the federal government.³² Having an economy based on such a nebulously owned cross-cultural commodity led to growing tensions within the Skwxwú7mesh community, as the Squamish Council of Chiefs struggled to answer the questions that, as political scientist Harold Liswell famously argued, structure every culture's politics: "who gets what,

30 See my discussion of the Kitsilano sale below. See also: Barman, "Erasing Indigenous Indigeneity in Vancouver"; Jordan Stanger-Ross, "Municipal Colonialism in Vancouver: City Planning and the Conflict over Indian Reserves, 1928–1950s," *The Canadian Historical Review* 89, no. 4 (2008): 541–580.

31 Wayne Suttles, "Central Coast Salish," in Wayne Suttles (editor), *Handbook of North American Indians, Volume 7: Northwest Coast* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 1990): 463.

when, and how?"³³

One land deal in particular would play a decisive role in determining the direction of internal Skwxwú7mesh politics: the sale of the Kitsilano (Señákw) reservation. In 1901, 1904, and 1909, the City of Vancouver asked the Señákw Skwxwú7mesh to sell; each time, the offer was refused.³⁴ Three things changed in the period between their refusal in 1909 and a fourth offer, which they ultimately accepted, in 1913. First the federal government amended the *Indian Act* to make it easier for municipalities and corporations to pre-empt urban reserve land. "Where a reserve is in the vicinity of a growing town," Prime Minister Laurier had argued in support of the new bill, "it becomes a source of nuisance and an impediment of progress," and the new legislation aimed to encourage "progress" by removing native people from city limits and compensating them for the (federally-appraised) value of their land.³⁵ Second, an American railroad company expressed interest in buying the reserve, causing the municipal government of Vancouver to accelerate its efforts to buy it first. Third, the British Columbia government began to specifically support Vancouver's interest in the Kitsilano affair, bolstering the City's negotiating power by

32 It is possible that modernizing Skwxwú7mesh leaders at this time, including Andrew Paull and August Jack Khatsalano, had to some extent adopted Western philosophies of land ownership, not merely as political tools to be used out of necessity, but in earnest. For example, when J.S. Matthews asked A.J. Khatsalano about Musqueam claims to English Bay and Burard Inlet, the latter based his argument on the labour theory of value: "Musqueams' got no claim. They not build a house there; Squamish build house there. Musqueams just come round from North Arm to fish on the sandbar [Granville Island] and up False Creek, and then they go away again, but Squamish build house." J.S. Matthews, *Conversations with Khatsalano, 1932-1954* (Vancouver, B.C.: Vancouver City Archives, 1969), 40.

33 Harold D. Lasswell, *Politics: Who Gets What, When and How* (Peter Smith, 1990).

34 Barman, "Erasing Indigenous Indigeneity in Vancouver."

35 Wilfrid Laurier, 19 April 1911, House of Commons Debates, 1910-11: 7249, quoted in Ibid.

issuing economic and para-military threats against the Skwxwú7mesh. If Seńákw was not sold quickly to the City of Vancouver, the province's attorney general warned, its inhabitants would lose all chance of receiving any money at all for it, be driven away by police, and be forced to relocate to a new reserve in the Squamish Valley.³⁶ The Seńákw Skwxwú7mesh had, to paraphrase Don Corleone, been given an offer they could not refuse, and not a very generous one at that.³⁷ On 18 April 1913, they agreed to sell the reserve to the City for approximately \$250,000, less than a quarter of the amount that the railway company had offered.³⁸

While the Seńákw Skwxwú7mesh left the reserve immediately after signing the agreement, the issues of whether the sale would be valid, how much money should be paid, and who should receive it took ten years to resolve. The first complication was that, according to the *Indian Act*, the Skwxwú7mesh could not sell reserve land without federal approval, which had not been granted: they “had not the right to give up their right” in the peevish phrasing of a federal official.³⁹ While this assertion was made within the context of a paternalistic governance structure that denied self-determination to the Skwxwú7mesh, the Laurier government should perhaps not be criticized too much for it, for it was also trying to buy the reserve – for almost four times the price offered by the province – and had correctly surmised that the province had not negotiated the deal fairly.⁴⁰ The second complication involved the distribution of the money from the sale. Zaharoff

36 Ibid.

37 Francis Ford Coppola, *The Godfather*, 1972.

38 Barman, “Erasing Indigenous Indigeneity in Vancouver”; Zaharoff, *Success in Struggle*, 103. See also Roine, *The Squamish Aboriginal Economy*, 57.

39 Zaharoff, *Success in Struggle*. Ironically, the federal government's attempt to meddle in the Skwxwú7mesh land economy may actually have provided the Squamish Nation with some long-run benefits, as, in the late 1990s, they were able to demonstrate in court that, in the federal government's opinion, they were still the legal owners of the area around Vanier Park. This effectively allowed them to sell the Kitsilano reserve twice.

See <http://www.squamish.net/mediacentreandarchives/kitsilanoagreement.htm>

argues, without evidence and against common sense, that most Sḵw̱w̱ú7mesh people believed that the residents of Seńáḵw should receive all of the proceeds from selling the reserve. In fact, the deal and payment plan were highly controversial, leading to inter-settlement discord and even acts of violence between the various Sḵw̱w̱ú7mesh interest groups.⁴¹

Paull's opinion was that the profit should be shared between all Sḵw̱w̱ú7mesh settlements, but that this unprecedented level of fiscal co-operation should be accompanied by an increase in political integration, a goal he had already been pursuing in order to move away from the consensus-based politics of the Council of Chiefs towards a majority-rule model he believed would be more effective.⁴² As the chairman of the Council, he organized a series of meetings between 1913 and 1922 in which he gradually convinced almost all of the Chiefs to adopt his position. By the December of 1922, he had enough support to present W.E. Ditchburn, the Chief Inspector of Indian Agencies, with a list of recommendations for the future governance of the Sḵw̱w̱ú7mesh people:

I recommend that the Squamish Indians be amalgamated, and that they have tribal ownership of the several reserves to the credit of the tribe.

I recommend that the funds of the several bands of the tribe be consolidated.

I recommend that no portion of a reserve be sold without the consent of a majority of the tribe [...]

These three primary recommendations were followed by a list of more specific requests including the expansion of reserves in the Squamish Valley, a re-appraisal of the value of the Seńáḵw reserve, compensation for eroded land on Burrard Inlet, fishing rights, beach-combing rights, foreshore rights,

40 Barman, "Erasing Indigenous Indigeneity in Vancouver"; Stanger-Ross, "Municipal Colonialism in Vancouver"; Zaharoff, *Success in Struggle*.

41 Zaharoff, *Success in Struggle*, 135; Verma, *The Squamish*, 71–72.

42 Roine, *The Squamish Aboriginal Economy*, 67–69.

and an inquiry into the removal of land from the reserve around Eslhá7an during the late nineteenth-century.⁴³ While the federal government ignored some of Paull's recommendations, it approved those pertaining to the Seńákŵ sale and Sķwŵú7mesh amalgamation, and an agreement was signed by sixteen chiefs – the representatives of all candidate settlements except Tseil-Waututh – on July 23, 1923.⁴⁴

The political amalgamation of the Sķwŵú7mesh settlements, as hinted by Paull's crucial role in effecting it, was part of a historical process centred at Eslhá7an. The very fact that the Sķwŵú7mesh required federal approval to change their own constitution shows the extent to which Sķwŵú7mesh amalgamation was, like the social and cultural compromises that the Eslhá7an Sķwŵú7mesh had made with the Oblates, a decision made under serious constraints. As the most experienced participants in this kind of unequal negotiation, the Eslhá7an Sķwŵú7mesh were well positioned to take leading roles in the amalgamation process. Paull, in particular, was able to use his facility with Canadian legal and organizational discourse to draft a proposal that the Department of Indian Affairs would find convincing. Furthermore, Eslhá7an's attractive religious, educational, and economic opportunities had, over the past decades, made it the political hub of Sķwŵú7mesh society, and many of the chiefs who signed the

43 Andrew Paull to W.E. Ditchburn, 14 December 1922, Oblate House, Box 46. This last point about land alienation at Eslhá7an is exactly the same issue that Snatt had protested a generation earlier (see previous chapter).

44 Squamish Nation, "Amalgamation Celebration Handout," http://squamish.net/files/PDF/Amalgamation_Celebration_Handout.pdf, Accessed 18 July 2012.

The reasons why the representatives of Tseil-Waututh did not join the amalgamation would be an interesting topic for future research. My own reading has suggested two main possibilities. The first is the nationalist explanation: that the settlement's large Hun'qumyi'num' population led its residents to see themselves as naturally separate from the Sķwŵú7mesh. The second is the economic explanation: that they they did not want to dilute the value of their reserve by combining it with the economically marginal reserves in the Squamish Valley.

amalgamation, even if they represented other settlements, had lived there for extended periods of time.⁴⁵

In his famous study of nationalism, Benedict Anderson argued that geographically distributed people tend to develop a shared national consciousness through dialogue with each other during “pilgrimages” to economic, political, and educational centres.⁴⁶ Under Anderson’s model, Eslhá7an itself, in addition to its people, would have been a driver of S̓k̓w̓x̓w̓ú7mesh nation-building.⁴⁷ The creation of the most important – if often criticized – S̓k̓w̓x̓w̓ú7mesh institution of the *Indian Act* period seems to have been driven largely by people with the most intensive experience of contact, and centred at the site at which contact was most profound.

45 Squamish Nation, “Amalgamation Celebration Handout,” http://squamish.net/files/PDF/Amalgamation_Celebration_Handout.pdf, Accessed 18 July 2012; “Map of Mission #1 Reserve,” Oblate House, Box 46; “List of Residents of Mission #1 Reserve,” Oblate House, Box 46. [These titles are merely descriptive; the actual documents are untitled].

46 Benedict Richard O’Gorman Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin And Spread of Nationalism* (Verso, 2006).

47 When the amalgamation was signed, there had not been a resident priest at Eslhá7an for several years. Zaharoff argues that the absence of missionary activity during this time allowed the S̓k̓w̓x̓w̓ú7mesh the chance to politically mature; this assertion is not based on any evidence but is nonetheless reasonable, as S̓k̓w̓x̓w̓ú7mesh leaders would have naturally stepped up to fill the vacuum left by Durieu. Regardless of what effect the absence of priests had, their prior presence had a greater role in the emergence of Eslhá7an as a political centre.

A similar example of Oblate activity catalysing centralization in a Coast Salish group can be found in the case of the Shishalh. See Rodney A. Fowler, *The Oblate System at the Sechelt Mission, 1862-1899*, 1987, 33.

Defining the Nation

Skw̓wú7mesh nationalism, like other nationalisms, involved not only the creation of political unity between similar groups but also an increased articulation of their similarity. One of the ways in which Skw̓wú7mesh culture was defined and, arguably, reified during the early national period was through the production of ethnographic works in dialogue with non-Skw̓wú7mesh researchers.⁴⁸ As with the process of political unification, those Skw̓wú7mesh people who were most practised in trans-cultural dialogue played a disproportionate role in creating these cultural documents. Prior to the 1980s, writers and anthropologists who studied Skw̓wú7mesh language, religion, and culture almost exclusively relied on the same five informants: Sa7plek, Louis Miranda, August Jack Khatsalano, Andrew Paull, and Dominic Charlie: all were men, all were Catholics, and most were at some point residents of Eslhá7an. For contemporary Skw̓wú7mesh people who wish to study their people's past, these written works, along with oral history, are the main sources of available information.

Sa7plek's recorded ethnographic contributions consist mainly of his conversations with Pauline Johnson/Tekahionwake in the 1900s, which the latter published to great success as *Legends of Vancouver*. The oral histories Sa7plek narrates in *Legends of Vancouver* are often inspired by, and intimately related to, geographical features within southern Skw̓wú7mesh territory, including such notable Vancouver landmarks as the Lions and Siwash Rock. By providing both Skw̓wú7mesh names and Skw̓wú7mesh histories for those landmarks, Sa7plek made an explicit connection between the Skw̓wú7mesh people – which he presented as a single unit – and their

48 For a discussion of the ways in which anthropologists can inadvertently help to define the cultures they attempt to merely describe, see S. Webster, "Realism and Reification in the Ethnographic Genre," *Critique of Anthropology* 6, no. 1 (April 1, 1986): 39–62.

territory.⁴⁹

Like Sa7plek, August Jack Khatsalano worked primarily with a single researcher: the Vancouver archivist J.S. Matthews. Khatsalano's and Matthews's interactions, however, were quite different than those between Sa7plek and Tekahionwake, in which Sa7plek seems to have introduced most of the subjects. Generally, Matthews used interview-style questions to steer the conversations towards his main research interest: the historical geography of Vancouver. Accordingly, his notes from his work with Khatsalano consist largely of place names, maps, demographics, family genealogies sorted by location of settlement, and accounts of early relationships between native and non-native people. In addition, it is clear that Matthews considered himself a gatherer, rather than presenter, of information: his publications are structured by subheadings and interview dates rather than any coherent narrative. As a result, Khatsalano's perspective on S̄kw̄x̄wú7mesh history did not enjoy the same level of public exposure as Sa7plek's. Nevertheless, Matthews's books remain an essential source for anyone studying S̄kw̄x̄wú7mesh history today.⁵⁰

Andrew Paull's work with scholars from outside the S̄kw̄x̄wú7mesh community differs qualitatively from that of the others in that he himself, rather than his people, was often the primary research subject.⁵¹ However, Paull also contributed to J.S. Matthews's reports on S̄kw̄x̄wú7mesh history, and in particular to Matthews's research into indigenous place names in the Vancouver region. Crucially, Paull's contributions to S̄kw̄x̄wú7mesh geography extended beyond anthropology into the arena of government policy. In 1933, the Squamish Indian Council, of which Paull was the

49 Johnson/Tekahionwake Emily Pauline, *Legends of Vancouver* (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1997).

50 Matthews, *Conversations with Khatsalano, 1932-1954*.

51 Herbert Francis Dunlop, *Andy Paull : as I Knew Him and Understood His Times* (Vancouver: Order of the O.M.I. of St. Paul's Province, 1983); Patterson, *Andrew Paull and Canadian Indian Resurgence*.

secretary, adopted his spellings of over thirty geographical locations in Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh territory as the official English transcriptions of those traditional names.⁵² While these spellings have since given way to the orthography that the Squamish Nation adopted in the 1970s, they represent the first centralized regulation of the Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh language: a common policy of modern nation-states.

Louis Miranda's influence on Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh understandings of their culture was immense. Throughout this thesis I have drawn heavily on his extended interview with the anthropologist Reuben Ware, in which it is abundantly clear that Miranda had conducted a significant amount of his own research on Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh history and culture.⁵³ He was among the main informants for both of the efforts to record and standardize the Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh language during the 1960s and 1970s, including the one that superseded Paull's earlier linguistic work.⁵⁴ In addition, he worked closely with the Oblate historian Thomas Lascelles, whose 1984 pamphlet *Mission on the Inlet* was the first published history of Eslhá7an.⁵⁵

Finally, Dominic Charlie, another resident of Eslhá7an, narrated Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh legends for J.S. Matthews and assisted Aert Kuipers in his study of the Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh language.⁵⁶

It is not my intention to suggest, on the slim evidence that many of the

52 Matthews, *Conversations with Khatsalano, 1932-1954*, 22–24.

53 Louis Miranda, interviewed by Reuben Ware, 1979, B.C. Provincial Archives, Tapes 4256:0001-4256:0014. Louis Miranda, *Referring Mostly to a Boy's Upbringing, but It Also Includes a Girl's* (Squamish Indian Band, 1972).

54 Aert Hendrik Kuipers, *Squamish Language* (Humanities, 1967); British Columbia Indian Language, *How to Write the Squamish Language*. (Victoria, B.C., 1973).

55 Thomas A Lascelles, *Mission on the Inlet: St. Paul's Indian Catholic Church, North Vancouver, B.C., 1863-1984* ([Vancouver: St. Paul's Province, Order of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate], 1984). Lascelles' notes from his interviews with Miranda are available at the British Columbia Oblate Archives in Oblate House, Vancouver, Box 46.

56 Kuipers, *Squamish Language*; August Jack Khahtsahlano, *Squamish legends*, (Vancouver: C. Chamberlain & F.T. Coan, 1966).

major twentieth-century Skwxwú7mesh cultural figures were all Catholics, that contemporary Skwxwú7mesh revivalists have adopted a distorted view of their traditional culture; to the contrary, as I argued in the first chapter of this thesis, Skwxwú7mesh Catholicism is best understood as a *part* of traditional Skwxwú7mesh culture. However, it is significant that, at the same time that the Skwxwú7mesh were reorganizing their political economy around a national model, they were also articulating to authoritative non-native recorders what it meant to be Skwxwú7mesh, and that roughly the same group of Eshhá7an-based Christians was involved in both processes.

I believe, but cannot prove, that the link between these two sociocultural activities was the trans-culturalism that I identified as a unifying feature of conservative Skwxwú7mesh activists in the second chapter of this thesis. By forcing Skwxwú7mesh people to work within a socioeconomic system designed by Euro-Canadians, state policies both encouraged the Skwxwú7mesh to reorganize their political system to more closely resemble that of the colonists, and disproportionately empowered those individuals within Skwxwú7mesh society who were likely to enact such a change. Similarly, anthropologists favoured those Skwxwú7mesh informants who were fluent in English and were interested in the same cultural questions as Euro-Canadian academics. In both cases, those Skwxwú7mesh people who functioned best in the trans-cultural setting of dialogue with non-natives seem to have acquired, through that dialogue, the strongest voices in determining internal Skwxwú7mesh political and cultural norms.⁵⁷

57 In the 1980s, Sam George, a Councillor from Eshhá7an, provided an example of one kind of late-twentieth-century normative Skwxwú7mesh identity when he proudly proclaimed himself, "a member of the Squamish Nation, a Christian, and a person who loves and respects his elders."

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter has been to raise questions about the emergence of Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh nationhood and nationalism, even if I cannot fully answer them. In it, I presented two main ideas. First, I argued that the creation of the Squamish Nation should be considered part of the tradition of Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh diplomacy under conditions of colonial hegemony, a process that, as I showed in the second chapter of this thesis, was centred at Eshhá7an. Second, and more tentatively, I suggested that both the existence of a central governing body and the cultural activities of Eshhá7an's trans-cultural residents led to an increased articulation of Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh identity in the early twentieth-century.

Both of these arguments rest on a potentially circular form of reasoning. By limiting myself to published or archival records, I have had to base my understanding of the Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh experience of amalgamation, and the changes in social identity that attended it, on the recorded testimony of certain Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh men whom I have identified as occupying a trans-cultural discursive position. Among them was the principal proponent of political amalgamation – Andrew Paull. It is likely that members of other Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh subcultures, including women, descendents of lower-caste families, and residents of the Squamish Valley, would have experienced the amalgamation, and Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh nationalism, differently than did Paull, Miranda, or Khatsalano.

Finally, I wish to reassert that problematizing Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh nationhood, or that of any other native group, does nothing to negate that group's claim to territory and self-determination. I mention this because, in 2000, the conservative scholar Thomas Flanagan used the gap between the Euro-Canadian concept of nationhood and the historical political organizations of native peoples as the basis for an argument intended to

undermine native requests that their historical sovereignty be recognized.⁵⁸ The structure of Flanagan's argument, however, misrepresents both the letter and the intent of Canadian and international law concerning indigenous peoples.⁵⁹ In a legal environment where native people are no longer required to remain culturally static to assert traditional economic rights, it is possible to have conversations about the role of contact with non-native people in the production of native identities. I hope that this chapter, despite its relatively weak empirical foundations, will be a welcome contribution to that conversation.

58 Flanagan, *First Nations?*.

59 Supreme Court of Canada, *Delgamuukw V. British Columbia*, [1997] 3 S.C.R. 1010, n.d.; General Assembly of the United Nations, *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, 2007.

Conclusion

When I began researching the Eslhá7an mission in early 2008, I was interested primarily in how and why St. Paul's church – both as a community and as a building – exhibited aspects of cultural blending, despite its stereotyped history as an institution of assimilation; I had not intended to structure a history of the S̓kw̓x̓wú7mesh people around it. However, during the course of my archival research, I became convinced that the cultural and political histories of Eslhá7an were closely linked, and that the latter was ultimately more significant for the wider S̓kw̓x̓wú7mesh population. This thesis is the result of that shift in focus.

In the first chapter, I argued, based on the ways in which the settlement's origin stories both corroborate and contradict each other, that the Eslhá7an S̓kw̓x̓wú7mesh conceptualized their early relationship with Oblates in terms of political alliance and religious exploration rather than of cultural assimilation. In contrast to Charles Hill-Tout, the Victorian anthropologist whose work at Eslhá7an I discussed in the chapter, I portrayed the S̓kw̓x̓wú7mesh as neither traditional nor assimilated, but culturally dynamic.¹ This is probably the least controversial of my arguments, as many contemporary historians of North American missions have reached similar conclusions about the various native groups that they have studied.²

In the first half of the second chapter, I described the internal political economy of Oblate-led Eslhá7an as an authoritarian, patriarchal theocracy in which males with high traditional rank occupied positions of significant authority. I argued that this group accepted and participated in the Oblate System because the Oblates were able to mitigate some of the negative

1 See John Sutton Lutz, *Makúk: A New History of Aboriginal-White Relations* (UBC Press, 2008).

materialistic effects of colonization, and because Oblate-sanctioned cultural events replicated some of the social functions of pre-contact ceremonies. I modelled this act of social decision-making using Lynn Blake's distinction, following Foucault, between the disciplinary power strategies of the British Columbian colonial state and the pastoral power strategies of British Columbian missionaries; given what seemed at the time to be the choice between the two, Eslhá7an's leaders preferred the latter. I demonstrated that this interpretation of Eslhá7an history better fits the cultural evidence presented in the first chapter, and better presents contemporary understandings of human power and agency, than one in which the S̱kw̱wú7mesh were intimately colonized by missionaries without the opportunity to exercise their own agency.

For the remainder of the thesis, I discussed the ways in which the social contract the Eslhá7an S̱kw̱wú7mesh made with the Oblates affected S̱kw̱wú7mesh politics beyond the borders of the Mission #1 reserve. In the second half of the second chapter, I analyzed the biographies of a series of Eslhá7an-based S̱kw̱wú7mesh politicians and argued that they could be described as conservative anti-colonial activists, meaning that they protested colonial policies without directly challenging the culture of colonialism. The Oblate mission, I proposed, produced this kind of activist because it gave Eslhá7an S̱kw̱wú7mesh people – especially men – experience at working within non-native systems of power (especially the Durieu System), and also provided them with the ability to learn English to a greater extent than those

2 Kerry Abel, *Drum Songs: Glimpses of Dene History*, 2nd ed. (Queen's Policy Studies, 2005), 113–144; Susan Neylan, *The Heavens Are Changing: Nineteenth-Century Protestant Missions and Tsimshian Christianity* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003); Allan Greer, *Mohawk Saint: Catherine Tekakwitha and the Jesuits* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); Clarence Bolt, *Thomas Crosby and the Tsimshian: Small Shoes for Feet Too Large* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1992); Christopher Brett, *Positioning the Missionary: John Booth Good and the Colonial Confluence of Cultures*, New ed. (University of British Columbia Press, 1999).

who lived on other reserves. Furthermore, these conservative activists achieved prominence because they were the only kind of activist with whom state officials were willing to negotiate.³ In the third chapter, I explored the idea that these same activists may have played a pivotal role in creating the Squamish Nation as we know it today, both as a political institution that blends traditional and liberal forms of political organization, and as a national identity. Because of these ripple effects, this thesis is not merely a micro-historical study of one Skwxwú7mesh settlement, but is relevant to the history of the Skwxwú7mesh people as a whole, as well as that of the Vancouver area.⁴

Assuming that this thesis will be of interest to future historians of the Skwxwú7mesh people and of the British Columbia Oblates, there will be several ways in which they could expand or extend the ideas I have explored.

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- 3 I have made no arguments about whether or not more radical forms anti-colonial activism occurred among the pre-amalgamation Skwxwú7mesh because I do not have any evidence that would support a conclusion either way. Michel-Rolf Trouillot, James C. Scott, Ann Laura Stoler, and Gayatri C. Spivak all have written influential works discussing the bias against radical anti-colonial activism in colonial archives. To paraphrase Trouillot, forms and methods of activism that reject important tenets of the culture of domination (for example, the naturalness of political domination, or the comparatively high value of the dominators' culture) do not make it into archives, not because of any conscious conspiracy on the part of the colonial archivists, but because the activists' implicit claims are "unimaginable" in the context of the culture of domination. Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past* (Beacon Press, 1997); Ann Laura Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense* (Princeton University Press, 2010); Gayatri C. Spivak, *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a History of the Vanishing Present* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1999); James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (Yale University Press, 1992).
- 4 John Walton, James Brooks, and Christopher R. DeCorse, *Small Worlds*, School for Advanced Research Advanced Seminar Series (School for Advanced Research Press, 2008); John Brewer, "Microhistory and the Histories of Everyday Life," *Cultural and Social History* 7, no. 1 (March 1, 2010): 87; István Szijártó, "Four Arguments for Microhistory," *Rethinking History* 6, no. 2 (June 1, 2002): 209–215.

An oral-historical study of Skwxwú7mesh cultural, political, and religious identities in the mid-twentieth-century could help to confirm or refute the tentative arguments I have advanced about the role of Eslhá7an-based Catholics in creating the modern Skwxwú7mesh national identity. A similar study might help to find examples of Skwxwú7mesh resistance against the state that was more radical than that which I have described – perhaps even involving those same individuals that I have labelled as “conservative.” An investigation of the Squamish Nation's institutional archives may help to explain why, despite Eslhá7an's pre-eminence among Skwxwú7mesh settlements at the time of the amalgamation, none of the Squamish Nation's important offices are located there.⁵ The relationship between the resident priests of St. Paul's church and their Skwxwú7mesh parishioners during the mid- to late- twentieth-century also deserves additional study. In the 1960s and 1970s, encouraged by the Second Vatican Council and in dialogue with Eslhá7an Skwxwú7mesh leaders, the Eslhá7an Oblates engaged in a process of *vergangenheitsbewältigung*⁶ in which they made several attempts to reach out to proponents of “traditional” Skwxwú7mesh culture, some of which are evidenced by the artwork inside the church. How both the Oblates and the Skwxwú7mesh felt about these attempts at reconciliation, how they affected patterns of church attendance, and how they contributed to further reifying an Eslhá7an-centric sense of Skwxwú7mesh national identity, would all be interesting topics of study. On the same theme, an intellectual biography of Thomas Lascelles, an historian who was a resident priest at Eslhá7an during the early 1980s, would provide an intriguing way to evaluate the way local Oblates conceptualized their history in the years leading up to their national organization's 1991 apology to native Canadians for their participation in the

5 One explanation may be lack of space on the Mission #1 Reserve, due to its high pre-amalgamation population, steep landscape, small area, and large cemetery.

6 *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, *German*, = “Coming to terms with the past.”

federal residential school program.⁷

Even without the benefit of these additional perspectives, the history of Eslhá7an as presented in this thesis allows for an overarching conclusion: that the Oblate mission was an extremely powerful force in Sḵw̱x̱wú7mesh history, but not in the way its founders intended. Its effect on Sḵw̱x̱wú7mesh religious culture was significant but limited: most Sḵw̱x̱wú7mesh people who embraced Christianity did so without adopting the missionaries' antagonism towards other forms of worship. The mission's effect on Sḵw̱x̱wú7mesh political culture, by contrast, was transformational. Largely due to the missionaries' presence, Eslhá7an was the principal site of Sḵw̱x̱wú7mesh contact with settler ideas, technologies, and power prior to the amalgamation. Oblate-mediated contact imposed cultural restrictions on the Eslhá7an Sḵw̱x̱wú7mesh, but also allowed a select group of male leaders to represent Sḵw̱x̱wú7mesh grievances to the federal and provincial governments more effectively than leaders from other settlements. As a result, these leaders dominated the Squamish Nation at the time of its creation and for decades afterwards.

External contact with non-natives, therefore, was an important – perhaps the most important – driver of internal Sḵw̱x̱wú7mesh politics throughout the pre-amalgamation period, as well as the source of Eslhá7an's political significance. However, contact occurred in the context of a highly repressive and racist state-driven colonialism, with which the Oblates shared some intellectual assumptions and from which they benefited politically. While church-sponsored activists arguably improved the Squamish Nation's position within colonialism, their achievements were overshadowed by the general trend of native dispossession which all native peoples in British Columbia suffered. Led by residents of Eslhá7an, the pre-amalgamation

⁷ Archdiocese of Vancouver, "Parish Profiles," 2007, [http://www.rcav.org/uploadedFiles/About_Us/AOV_Parish%20Profiles.1\(1\).pdf?n=7274](http://www.rcav.org/uploadedFiles/About_Us/AOV_Parish%20Profiles.1(1).pdf?n=7274), Accessed 2 January 2011.

Skwxwú7mesh made their own history, but they did not make it as they pleased.⁸

8 Karl Marx. *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (1852). Project Gutenberg, 2006. <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/1346/1346-h/1346-h.htm>.

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