

**Kwakwaka'wakw – Forests Relationships:**  
**The Forests are Our Cupboards; The Ocean is our Refrigerator**

by

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submitted by Andrea Joan Lyall in partial fulfillment of the requirements for  
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## Abstract

This research is centred on people-forest relationships that describe social aspects of forests' significance to communities within the Kwakwaka'wakw (the Kwakwaka-speaking peoples) on the mid-coast of present-day British Columbia, Canada. Forests have always surrounded the Kwikwasut'inuxw Haxwa'mis. As a result, forests are integral to peoplehood through oral histories, Indigenous stories, Indigenous language, forest practices, life cycles, and place-based Indigenous knowledge. The peoplehood model was considered compatible with the relationality found in the people-forest relationships that tie individual people to their respective communities and to wildlife, fish, plants, forests, and oceans. This research was developed using Indigenous methodologies and participatory action research. Consequently, the research questions, topics, and analysis methods were adjusted following group evaluation with community sessions led by myself. Four stand-alone empirical chapters were chosen to complement each other about people-forest relationships and Indigenous stories, Indigenous women's identities, and forest resources the Kwikwasut'inuxw Haxwa'mis depend on, including traditional foods and western red cedar. Even though the Kwikwasut'inuxw Haxwa'mis are forced to deal with modern-day issues, we wish to maintain and reassert our identities based on an ancient culture. The findings were, most of all, that the forest-people relationships are about being and remaining in place, by a continuous occupation of the area, with no intention of leaving. The Kwikwasut'inuxw Haxwa'mis origin story highlights a living history and the significance of western red cedar to Tsekame', a founding ancestor of the Kwikwasut'inuxw. Importantly, traditional foods were identified as an essential part of the culture that transcends nutritional values; these foods are expected to continue being served at ceremonies despite cumulative barriers to access. There are concerns from the community that our identities have been obscured, our forest practices have

been limited, and current policies do not safeguard essential forest resources, including traditional foods and western red cedar. Regardless, families want children to know our cultural heritage (including Indigenous stories, dances, songs, and place names), travel the territories, and learn the Indigenous language, Kwakwaka'wakw. Community-led resurgence projects are underway.

## Lay Summary

This research was written by a community member, with the community's involvement to co-develop this research, where I asked two Kwakwaka'wakw First Nations living in the mid-coast of British Columbia, Canada, about their relationships with the forests. Findings were that many aspects of the forests remain essential to the Kwakwaka'wakw, including our Indigenous language, ancient stories, traditional foods, forest practices, and western red cedar. Further, the Kwakwaka'wakw view the forests holistically to include people, plants, animals, the land and the waters. There were precautionary lessons about respect, so we must carefully consider which aspects of our traditional culture to maintain and restore. Challenges have arisen over the last two centuries, and the community is strengthened when we work together to support everyone's positive contributions to keeping an ancient culture resilient. Finally, the community is determined to live next to the forests and oceans that have sustained us for millennia.

## Preface

I began a career path in forestry almost three decades ago, with an interest in working in the forests and serving First Nations communities. A short shift of tree planting at Kingcome Inlet instantaneously drew me to my career path. Since then, I have wanted to work with my own First Nations and in the Kwakwaka'wakw forests. That was the primary motivation for this research.

This dissertation was designed, written, and analyzed by the author with the guidance of my research committee: Harry Nelson, Associate Professor, Faculty of Forestry, University of British Columbia; Charles Menzies, Professor, Department of Anthropology, University of British Columbia; and Dr. Ronald Trosper, Professor, American Indian Studies, University of Arizona. The research design, topics, and questions were adapted following group-analysis workshops led by the author with the community and participants in December 2017. Wayne Potoroka reviewed and edited the full document for English and copy edits. Chapter Seven was informed by the author's career working with, and for, over 30 Indigenous communities in British Columbia, Washington, Alaska, and Ontario.

Portions of section 2.3 were previously published in two peer-reviewed articles. In each article, I am the lead author on these sections, and the sections were edited by co-authors (Drs. Kendi Borona, Harry Nelson, Daisy Rosenblum and Mark Turin) and in previous peer-review processes:

Lyall, A., & Borona, K. (2019). Indigenous People-forest relationships, cultural continuity, and remobilization using Indigenous knowledge systems: A case study of Kenya and Canada. *Canadian Journal of Native Education* 41(1), 186–284.  
<https://doi.org/10.14288/cjne.v41i1>

Lyall, A., Nelson, H., Rosenblum, D., & Turin, M. (2019). *K'ankotlatlano'xw xa k'wak'wax'mas* ["We are going to learn about plants"]: Documenting and reclaiming plant names and

words in Kwákwala on Canada's West Coast. *Language Documentation & Conservation*, 13, 401–425.

I summarized a previous community-driven language reclamation research project in a portion of section 5.5. I used the output of this previous research project in a workshop for this research, a draft 100-page visual dictionary of plants. I began by preparing for the documentation process in 2014. For an entire season, I walked in the woods to take new high-resolution photographs of the 135 identified plants for inclusion in a visual dictionary that I developed. For rare plants, dozens of high-resolution photographs were requested and received from biologists, botanists, and photographers, including William Ron Lyall, and the consent to use their images for the project. I developed a 46 page Kwákwala plant dictionary with the help of Dr. Patricia Shaw with existing documentation. I added new documentation and audio files with the contributions of eight Kwákwala-speaking Elders: Annie Joseph, Ned “Chas” Coon, Audrey Wilson, Douglas Scow, Billie Peters, Hazel Dawson, Alfred Coon, and Edward Dawson. This research resulted in a peer-reviewed article with input from the co-authors on the research design, ethics section, content on language documentation and traditional ecological knowledge, findings, and conclusion. I was the lead author of this peer-reviewed article. Full citation:

Lyall, A., Nelson, H., Rosenblum, D., & Turin, M. (2019). *K'ankotlatlano 'xw xa k'wakwax'mas* [“We are going to learn about plants”]: Documenting and reclaiming plant names and words in Kwákwala on Canada's West Coast. *Language Documentation & Conservation*, 13, 401–425.

An ethics approval for this research was obtained from the University of British Columbia Behavioural Research Ethics Board, Certificate Number HC15 - 01969.

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## Kwakwala / English Glossary

a'thi – forest

Ałaxu – Wakeman Sound, BC

awi'nakola – land, ocean, and sky

ali'was – Sitka spruce

Ba'as – Blunden Harbour, BC

Dzawada'enuxw - First Nation of Gwa'yi (Kingcome River)

dzaxwan – eulachon

dza'wan – coho salmon

dłaxsam – Pacific silverweed

gawiganux – butter clam

gala – grizzly bear

gaxo – a boat which drifts away after a tied knot becomes loose

giwas – deer

gukwdzi – big house

gula – trout

gulgulum – littleneck clam

Gwawa'enuxw –First Nation of Hegams (Hopetown, BC)

Gwa'yi – Kingcome River

galgapoła – strengthening one another

gwadam – huckleberries

gwax'nis – dog salmon

Gwa'yasdams – Village at Health Bay, Gilford Island, BC

Hada – Bond Sound, BC

hanu'n – pink salmon

Hegams – Hopetown, BC

joli – cockles

Kwakwaka'wakw – Kwakwala-speaking peoples, a group First Nations with a common

Indigenous language living on the mid-coast of present-day British Columbia

Kwakwala – a dialect of the Indigenous language spoken by the Kwakwaka'wakw

kakasalam – white pine

ka'nxiwi – cedar rings worn as regalia

kulus – supernatural being, an immature thunderbird that is a bit smaller than a thunderbird and  
has down covering their body

Kwikwasut'inuxw Haxwa'mis – two amalgamated First Nations of the Kwakwaka'wakw

Kwikwasut'inuxw Haxwa'mis First Nations – *Indian Act* name for the Kwikwasut'inuxw  
Haxwa'mis

kutala – salmon

Kaniki'lakw – the transformer

kamdzakw – salmonberries

k̓isina – skink currant  
 K̓wax̓w̓alawadi – Echo Bay, BC  
 k̓wax̓'as – western hemlock  
 k̓w̓ala'yū – you are my reason for living  
 lak̓astan – edible seaweed  
 lat̓lants̓ k̓wa'la - we are going to pick salmonberry sprouts  
 ma'misa – cougar  
 Mam̓alilik̓ala – Village Island First Nation  
 matani – horse clam  
 maya'x̓ala – respect for yourself, others, property  
 max̓'inuxw – killer whale  
 ma̓lik – sockeye salmon  
 migwat – seal  
 mumx̓wad – balsam fir  
 Mus̓gamakw Dzawada'enuxw – the “four First Nations”: the Dzawada'enuxw,  
     K̓wik̓wasut'inuxw, H̓axwa'mis and Gwawa'enuxw  
 'ma'mak'wayu – calendar  
 'ma̓lx̓t̓lu – mountain goat  
 'Mimkwamlis – Village Island, BC  
 nanwala k̓wax̓t̓lo'wa'yi – supernatural tip of hemlock boughs  
 na̓k̓wa̓l – salal berries  
 'Nakwaxda'xw – First Nation of Blunden Harbour  
 'na'mima – clan, extended family unit “of one kind”  
 'Namgis – Alert Bay First Nation of 'Y̓alis  
 pa̓x̓ala – shaman  
 p̓asa – to potlatch  
 p̓o'yi' – halibut  
 sats̓am – spring salmon  
 sisiut̓l – double-headed sea serpent  
 Tsax̓is – Fort Rupert, BC  
 tsaga̓l – thimbleberries  
 tsal̓xw' – Pacific crabapple  
 tax̓wsus – springbank clover  
 ts̓apa – to dip food  
 ts̓atsa'yam – eelgrass  
 ts̓ixina – red elderberry  
 t̓la'i – black bear  
 t̓les'mas – red alder  
 t̓li'na – eulachon grease  
 T̓lu't̓ap̓imas – berry plant with ripe berries  
 T̓sekaga - one of K̓wik̓wasut'inuxw's founding ancestors

Ṭsekame' – one of Kwikwasut'inuxw's founding ancestors  
Ukwanalis – ancestral and occupied Village of the Dzawada'enuxw  
usa – fish soup  
u'ligan – wolves  
wa'ne' – herring  
wilkw – western red-cedar  
xuxw'mas – northern rice root  
'Yalis – Alert Bay, BC



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## **Dedication**

Writing sessions would begin with calling upon ancestors to do this work. Thus, this work is dedicated to the ancestors and the present and future generations of Ṭsekaga and Ṭsekame’.

## Chapter 1: Introduction

*The forest is our cupboard; the ocean is our refrigerator. You can go down there and get what you want. So, we're very lucky (personal communication, July 18, 2016).*

The Kwakwaka'wakw live at the edge of the forests and the oceans and consider each intertwined. As this quote from an Elder suggests, “the forest is our cupboard; the ocean is our refrigerator.” This quote explains a deep respect and reliance upon the resources surrounding us to survive over millennia; at the same time, this quote describes a contemporary way of life. At one time, we did not have cupboards or refrigerators but stored our food by drying it or storing it in cedar boxes. Our technology has evolved. However, we still have teachings that describe how we appreciate the resources that have sustained us by not taking them for granted. While the world has presented changes for the Kwakwaka'wakw over the last two centuries, the Kwakwaka'wakw have remained resilient, even defiant, and continue benefitting from the forests and sea that surround us. The Kwakwaka'wakw were labelled traditionalists, resistant to change by early academics, traders, and Indian Agents. This has remained true. Although Indigenous Peoples live in modern-day worlds that have drastically changed, we wish to make future decisions based on ancient cultures. Since colonialism, there has been a shift from a complete coexistence with the lands to a place of dislocation for cumulative reasons. Ecosystems that had supported livelihoods and maintained cultural continuity for millennia have been degraded. Colonial and imperialistic tactics have evolved into a stronghold of power of policies over the Kwakwaka'wakw traditional territory lands by developing complex industrial structures.

## 1.1 Scope

This research considered the people-forest relationships with a community within the Kwakwaka'wakw (roughly translating to the Kwakwaka-speaking peoples) and the efforts to maintain and remobilize Indigenous knowledge to future generations. This research worked most closely with the Kwikwasut'inuxw Haxwa'mis, two amalgamated First Nations of the Kwakwaka'wakw. Though I described this research to the community to represent the Kwikwasut'inuxw Haxwa'mis, participants who contributed to this research were the Kwikwasut'inuxw Haxwa'mis and the neighbouring Kwakwaka'wakw First Nations. Neighbouring First Nations contributed because of kinship ties to the Kwikwasut'inuxw Haxwa'mis. Kinship ties were through marriage, playing on the Breakers soccer team, a Gilford Island soccer team that began in 1951 to play in Indigenous-led soccer tournaments (KHFN, 2023), and time growing up within the Kwikwasut'inuxw Haxwa'mis territories.



**Figure 1.1 Breakers Soccer Team in the 1990s (KHFN, 2023)**

Further, kinship ties of the K̓w̓ik̓w̓asut'nuxw H̓axwa'mis stem most closely with two adjacently located First Nations. The K̓w̓ik̓w̓asut'nuxw H̓axwa'mis are members of the Musg̓amakw Dzawad̓a'enuxw that have a long history of intermarrying with each other. The other two First Nations of the Musg̓amakw Dzawad̓a'enuxw are the Dzawad̓a'enuxw of Gwa'yi (Kingcome River) and the G̓wawa'enuxw of Hegams (Hopetown).

The K̓w̓ik̓w̓asut'inuxw and H̓axwa'mis have creation stories that link us to Gilford Island, other islands in the Broughton Archipelago, and the adjacent mainland, including Wakeman Sound, Holden Creek, Bond Sound, and Thompson Sound. Access to G̓wa'yasd̓am's, the main settlement, about 35 kilometres northeast of north Vancouver Island, British Columbia, is by boat or float plane.

## **1.2 Research Question and Objectives**

This research is about the K̓w̓ik̓w̓asut'nuxw H̓axwa'mis people-forest relationships. Initially, the starting research question was “What are the K̓w̓ik̓w̓asut'inuxw H̓axwa'mis's relationships with the forests?” This research used Indigenous methodologies (Smith, 2012) and mixed qualitative methodologies to engage the K̓w̓ik̓w̓asut'inuxw H̓axwa'mis in participatory action research (Chilisa, 2012; O'Leary, 2017).

The rationale for employing Indigenous methodologies is that there is a history of research where there has been little or no chance for Indigenous Peoples to contribute, edit, or even have informed consent to participate. Secondly, this research's objective was to critically consider how colonialism and imperialism have evolved into forest policies that continue marginalizing Indigenous Peoples. Thirdly, the research objective was to advocate with the

community, support community-driven resurgence, Indigenous scholarship, and move Indigenous Peoples to self-determination.

Participatory action research methods involve the community adapting the research topic, questions, and analysis methods. Methods use triangulation with semi-structured interviews, repeat interviews, workshops, cross referencing existing literature, and being in place.

### **1.3 Context for People-Forest Relationships**

The people-forest relationships are maintained by the interactions between themselves, other humans, animals, plants, and natural ecosystems. This research used a peoplehood approach for its ability to honour relationality held within people-forest relationships (Holm, Pearson, & Chavis, 2003). The peoplehood model honours the struggles of Indigenous cultures that have persisted in spite of colonialism (Archibald, 2008; Corntassel, 2012). At the foundation of forest-people relations is a philosophy of holism that interlinks the physical, spiritual, and intellectual connections to the forests (Archibald, 2008, p 12; Kovach, 2009, Chapter Three). Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Indian Reservation scholar Ronald Trosper describes the intricacies and varying scales of the peoplehood model as “Indigenous identity as peoplehood emerges from the association of the many relational agents making up an Indigenous society. Identity as peoplehood occurs at the macro level but go to put in the meso-level relational subjects and their interactions,” (2022, p. 74). Jeff Corntassel (2003) praised the peoplehood model as being a concept that is “flexible and dynamic” (p. 75) to describe Indigenous identity in a way that is less linear and rigid than definitions for Indigenous Peoples.

Further, the peoplehood model provides “a useful way to think about the nature of everyday resurgence practices both personally and collectively” (Corntassel, 2012, p. 89). The

peoplehood model also recognizes that Indigenous communities are unique because of the relationships that are shaped by their surroundings and language, places, spirituality, stories, and cultural practices (Anderson, 2016, p.106–112). Further, the peoplehood model supports “everyday acts” of resurgence such as being in place and going to the lands (Corntassel, 2012; Corntassel & Hardbarger, 2019, Daigle, 2016).



**Figure 1.2 People-forest relationships. This Model was Adapted from the Holm, Pearson, and Chavis (2003)**

#### **Peoplehood Matrix**

For this research, integral to the peoplehood model are four pillars to describe Indigenous identities that are interdependent but strengthened by each other.

Firstly, the people-forest relationships are influenced by a shared Indigenous language and shared oral traditions through stories. "Language matters because it holds within it a peoples worldview" (Kovach, 2009, p. 59). In Kwakwaka'wakw axiology, origin stories link us to ancestral territories and a common ancestor who began as a super natural being. So, in sharing



Indigenous stories, we learn about our origins, and since they continue being told, stories are lived histories to guide future generations. Therefore, stories share lessons about our natural laws and what Simpson describes as our “radiating responsibilities” (Corn tassel & Hardbarger, 2019, p. 92; Simpson, 2017, p. 9) to our ancestors, future generations, and forests and ocean ecosystems (Archibald, 2008, Burrow, 2010).

Secondly, many scholars have underscored the importance of place-based knowledge, especially by being in place, because places hold memory, are the sites for Indigenous stories, and sacred places are imbued with spirit (Basso, 1996; M. Ignace & R. E. Ignace, 2017; Kovach, 2009, p. 61). “Place names, for example, essentially bespeak a relationship with the environment or describe an area within the context of a group's sacred history and culture” (Holm, Pearson, & Chavis, 2003, p. 13). The relationships with the plants, wildlife, and fish are anchored over extended periods and based on place-based and Indigenous knowledge with the aspiration to maintain and safeguard forests into the future. Although place-based knowledge is essential to people-forest relationships, and traditional use maps were shared during workshops, I did not include resource maps in this research to protect intellectual property.

Thirdly, forest practices on the lands are an essential part of the people-forest relationship. The Holm, Pearson, and Chavis peoplehood model was slightly adapted to include traditional practices instead of ceremonies. A great deal has been written about the Kwakwaka'wakw religion and ceremony. This research identified a gap in the lack of documentation of traditional forest practices—an essential part of ceremony, amongst other things. Over millennia, traditional practices involved going to the lands and developing an in-depth Indigenous knowledge about their surroundings. Traditional forest practices include protecting and tending favoured plants and habitats. In particular, at least 34 plants held

important ceremonial and spiritual significance to the Kwakwaka'wakw (Turner & Bell, 1973). Notably, cedar bark rings (ka'naxawi) (Grubb, 1977, p.185) are worn during specific dances during potlatches. The tips of hemlock branches (nanwala kwaxtlo'wa'yi) (supernatural branch tips) are used for purification and protection in ceremony. Prayers are said before collecting tree bark or a whole tree, and the tree is referred to as “Oh, supernatural one” or “friend” (Turner & Bell, 1973). Further, experiential knowledge is learned by seeing, feeling, and actions while being in place and partaking in traditional practices.

Finally, living relationally with the forests and waters meant following the life cycles set by the surroundings. The Kwakwaka'wakw followed the seasonal rounds of traditional foods that moved them throughout the territories, and their ceremonial cycles revolved around a connection to the forests. Longer-term life cycles also existed—the Kwakwaka'wakw belief in reincarnation—which guides long-term relationships with the forests.

Together, the stories, the Indigenous language, the places, being in place, life cycles, and practices make up an Indigenous community's ancient and lived histories, identities, and economies. The four empirical chapters reflect these linkages and elements of the peoplehood model, albeit to a different extent, given the focus of the chapters. Consequently, the chapter topics were selected to complement each other.

## **1.4 Self in Relation**

It is a Kwakwaka'wakw tradition to introduce oneself in Kwakwala by stating your names (both Kwakwala and English names), your parents' and grandparents' names, where you are from, and your family heritage. At internal meetings, we often introduce ourselves to share our lineage and relationships to one another. My aunts and uncles have continually explained our shared

genealogical links because it ties us together as extended families to First Nations of the Kwakwaka'wakw. Genealogy is important because it explains our cultural heritage, which ties us to ancient stories, places, songs, and names. The stories, songs, and names, initially orated in the Kwakwala language, describe our relation to the lands and waters and the place names that surrounded us through the millennia:

Nugwa'am Andrea. Gayutlan lax Gwa'yasdām's.  
(My name is Andrea. I am from Gilford Island.)

Ron Lyall xtlan ump. Gayutli lax Britain.  
(Ron Lyall is my father's name. He is from Britain.)

Louisa Lyall (née Coon) xtlan abamp'wale'. Gayutl wali lax Gwa'yasdām's.  
(Louisa Lyall (née Coon) was my mother's name. She was from Gilford Island.)

Alfred Coon xtlan ga'gamp wale'. Gayutl wali lax Gwa'yasdām's.  
(Alfred Coon was my grandfather's name. He was from Gilford Island.)

Mary Dick xtlan gagas wale'. Gayutl wali lax Gwa'yi.  
(Mary Dick was my grandmother's name. She was from Kingcome River.)

My First Nations heritage is through my mother, the late Louisa Lyall (née Coon), born on Gilford Island, in the Village of Gwa'yasdām's, with heritage of the Kwikwasut'inuxw and Dzawada'enuxw First Nations of the Musgamakw Dzawada'enuxw. I am of half-British descent through my father, Ron Lyall, and grew up in an urban context in Coast Salish traditional territory (Victoria and lower mainland British Columbia). My grandfather was Alfred Coon, who hailed from the Kwikwasut'inuxw. Coons are considered one of the original and true families of Kwikwasut'inuxw, although many First Nations have benefitted from the location and lived there, especially during winter. At a Coon potlatch held in 2010, I was gifted the name Momoneh-ka-las-ee-neh-kla ("To-Feed-Many-People"). As a young woman in the early 1990s, my grandmother's side of the family, the Dick family, of the Dzawada'enuxw from the Village

of Ukwānālīs (an ancestral and occupied Village next to Gwa'yī), I was given the named Ṭlālīlīlogwa, which translates to the image of a killer whale cresting the ocean's surface. My family crests from my Ḵwīḵwāsut'inuxw are sisiutł (double-headed sea serpent) and ḵulus (immature supernatural thunderbird); my family crests from Dzawada'enuxw are the wolf and the sun. Since I was the first generation raised away from the territory, I have considered Kwakwāka'wakw traditional territory "home," even though I have not lived there. I believe that living in an area does not makeup someone's heritage. I still have ties to the area through genealogy, heritage, culture, and extended families still living there. As Absolon and Willett put it (2005), "our ancestors give us membership into nations and traditions; location both remembers and 're-members' us to those things" (p. 124).

Researchers sometimes introduce themselves to reflect how their demographic position would shape their perspective (Creswell & Poth, 2018). In addition to being a burgeoning Indigenous scholar, I have been a professional forester since 2006. In my career, I have worked for over 30 First Nations in British Columbia, Washington state, Alaska, and Ontario. When working for other First Nations, I moved several times to live within the community because it was beneficial to walk in the First Nations' respective forests to understand and hear the community's concerns firsthand. Repeatedly, I addressed conflicting Indigenous worldviews within the predominant industrial logging model. I had written briefing notes to Chiefs and Councils with recommendations on how to respond to industrial developments in their respective traditional territories (either by industry or themselves). With feedback from First Nations employers, I communicated First Nations' values and concerns to the forest industry and state and First Nations governments. The main concerns I heard from many First Nations were the impacts of logging on fish habitats and water quality and overall concerns for environmental

sustainability and health. Further, industrial forestry seems overly complicated with inflexible legislation, jargon, acronyms, and scientific and “objective” indicators. Further, concerns were raised when forest and conservation policies overtly overlooked Indigenous Peoples’ values and inherent rights.

I was raised to be proud of my First Nation’s heritage; however, as a woman of mixed heritage and Western training, I acknowledge my heritage, upbringing, and work experience have taught me to live with a foot in two worlds as a “boundary walker.” A boundary walker was a term coined by Natasha Caverley, of Algonquin, Irish, and Jamaican descent (Caverley & Offet-Gartner, 2021). I understand two terminologies of languages about the forests with mixed fluency, and this aptly describes the different terminologies or ways I would describe the same topic to different audiences.

## **1.5 A Note on Terminology**

The terminology for Indigenous Peoples in present-day British Columbia, Canada, has evolved over the last couple of centuries. A misnomer for the First Nations represented in this research was the name “Kwakutil” by early colonizers. This research uses the self-name for the Kwakwaka’wakw (Kwakwaka-speaking peoples), a term developed post-contact. Throughout this research, I used the terminology of First Nation, Aboriginal, and Indigenous Peoples: First Nations is a non-legal term used to describe the original Indigenous peoples living on the Northwest Coast of present-day British Columbia, including the Kwakwaka’wakw; Aboriginal was a term used to recognize the diversity of First Nations, Metis, and Inuit peoples in present-day Canada (e.g., see sections 2.3 and 5.6); and Indigenous Peoples to be inclusive of collective issues that have faced Indigenous People globally.

Locals called the general area of study “the mainland”; this research called the area by its recently known name, the Broughton Archipelago. Several Kwakwaka’wakw First Nations govern the area, collectively the Musgamakw Dzawada’enuxw, ’Namgis, and Mamalilikulla First Nations. I identified the tribal affiliations as closely as possible.

I use the terms for the forests to represent elements of awi’nakola: the land, the water, and the air surrounding the Kwakwaka’wakw territories. Western developed words that most closely relate to awi’nakola might be “environment” and “ecology,” including “traditional ecological knowledge”; however, these terms have limitations because they separate people from the lands (Trosper & Parrotta, 2012) and in doing so have aided in the destruction of said awi’nakola.

In this research, I used the U’mista orthography for Kwakwala words, except for excerpts from quotes from sources where authors used other Kwakwala orthographies. The U’mista orthography can be found at <https://bit.ly/3H8wtzN>. Further, this dissertation did not italicize Kwakwala place names and other words—a common editorial practice is to italicize “foreign” words—for the purpose of reintroducing Kwakwala into the common vernacular. The idea was that more Kwakwala place names and other words should be used on a daily basis.

I use “we,” “our,” and other inclusive pronouns, not because I feel I can speak for all communities that I hoped to include in this research but because I did not want to separate myself in a way that the Kwikwasut’nuxw Haxwa’mis would continue to be considered in a hierarchal research relationship that separates Indigenous Peoples into the “other,” “they,” or “them.” I acknowledge I do not speak for everybody. Any misinterpretations are my own.

## 1.6 Chapter Organization

Chapter One lays context to this research. Chapter Two explains the scope and background of this research. Chapter Three included research methods.

Chapters Four through Seven are designed to cover stand-alone topics prioritized by the community and each answer the question, “What are the K̓w̓ik̓w̓asut’inuḡw Haxwa’mis’ relationships with the forests?” Chapters are organized from ancient to contemporary. These research chapters were roughly adapted to follow a personhood model approach to forest-people relationships with the forests.

Chapter Four contextualizes a forest-people relationships beginning with a K̓w̓ik̓w̓asut’inuḡw origin story that describes how stories describes an oral history, teachings, and Indigenous knowledge about the forests based on an in-depth and ancient understanding of the local surroundings.

Chapter Five assesses women’s roles in the forests and how they evolved through time. At one time, Kwakw̓ak̓’wakw women had rights to the lands—culturally and through forest practices. These roles were misunderstood, downplayed, homogenized, or ignored altogether. On their own terms, by leading grassroots community-based initiatives, Musgamakw Dzawad̓a’enuḡw women are reclaiming relational ties to the forests and oceans for themselves and the next generations. More work can be done to contemporize Indigenous women’s roles in the twenty-first century.

Chapter Six describes the significance of traditional foods and harvesting practices to the Kwakw̓ak̓’wakw. It also followed a seasonal round—a Kwak̓wala ’ma’mak’wayu (calendar) year of clam digging, fishing, gathering, tending, and hunting.

Chapter Seven examines the impacts of present forest policies and legislation on western red cedar and yellow cedar. Cedar continues to be an incredibly vital tree to the Kwakwaka'wakw for ceremonial, cultural, and economic uses.

Chapter Eight and Nine discuss the results and interpretations and concludes this research.



## Chapter 2: Research Context

This chapter provides a brief synopsis of the history and context of this research. I introduce the First Nations people, the geographic region, and an overview of the history, especially at contact with settlers since this era introduced significant change for the Kwakwaka'wakw.

### 2.1 The Kwakwaka'wakw

Scholars that have completed extensive research with First Nations have described Indigenous identities as fluid and to include the individual, family, First Nation, neighbouring First Nations, and other First Nations (Archibald, 2008; Bell, 2005; Goodfellow, 2005). Besides cultural heritage and racial identity, First Nation communities are often expected to answer as a homogenous group, but in reality, pluralism and sub-communities exist within each First Nation community (McIlwraith, 2012; Menzies, 2004; Nadasdy, 2003; Natcher & Hickey, 2002).

The participants interviewed explained that “membership does not come from a status card.” Even though the Kwikwasut'nuw Haxwa'mis share the same name as the *Indian Act* band (the Kwikwasut'nuw Haxwa'mis First Nations), this research is described as community-driven, versus by a First Nation government defined by the federal government. For this research, the term “community” is defined as people of the Kwikwasut'nuw Haxwa'mis that have genealogical and kinship ties to the Kwikwasut'nuw Haxwa'mis, either living in the community or outside the Kwakwaka'wakw territory. Further, this research employed a peoplehood definition for community (Section 1.3) to describe the relational interactions of the Kwikwasut'nuw Haxwa'mis and acknowledges that individuals and communities have developed economic, ceremonial, and spiritual relationships within the animals and plants within their traditional territories over millennia.

The Ḵw̱iḵw̱asut'nux̱w H̱axwa'mis are two of approximately 19 First Nations of the Kwakwaka'wakw (a contemporary word that translates to "Kwakwala-speaking peoples"). The Ḵw̱iḵw̱asut'nux̱w H̱axwa'mis share the same language dialect, the Kwakwala language, with other First Nations from Dzawadi (Knight Inlet), 'Yalis (Alert Bay), Ukwanalís (Kingcome Inlet), Tsaxis (Fort Rupert), and Hegams (Hopetown). The Ḵw̱iḵw̱asut'inux̱w and H̱axwa'mis amalgamated into one First Nation and agreed to live together at Gwa'yasḏam's, on Gilford Island. According to an Elder in his 80s, the Ḵw̱iḵw̱asut'inux̱w and H̱axwa'mis decided to amalgamate beginning in the 1930s:

*See, the Ḵw̱iḵw̱asut'inux̱w and the H̱axwa'mis, they were two families.... I guess they started talking that we live side by side in Gilford, so as always, they had to involve all the people, like the H̱axwa'mis and the Ḵw̱iḵw̱asut'inux̱w. To get together and have a meeting. And like I said, about 1937/38, that they all get on the same page to agree to live side by side at Gilford (personal communication, July 28, 2016).*

The two First Nations formalized an amalgamation with the federal government in 1948 and are now considered the Ḵw̱iḵw̱asut'nux̱w H̱axwa'mis First Nation (Rohner, 1967).

The Ḵw̱iḵw̱asut'nux̱w H̱axwa'mis are members of the Musg̱amakw Dzawaḏa'enux̱w, a group of four First Nations that have a long history of intermarrying with each other. The other two First Nations of the Musg̱amakw Dzawaḏa'enux̱w are the Dzawaḏa'enux̱w of Ukwanalís and the G̱wawaḏa'enux̱w of Hegams that have populations of 500 and 40 respectively, most living outside of the traditional territory. As a consequence of the long-term familial ties, the Musg̱amakw Dzawaḏa'enux̱w are closely related to one another. Especially during the potlatch ban, the Musg̱amakw Dzawaḏa'enux̱w potlatched and feasted among themselves (Drucker & Heizer, 1967, p. 42). Because of the remoteness of the Musg̱amakw Dzawaḏa'enux̱w during

winter months, when potlatches generally occurred, the territories would be inaccessible to police and Indian Agents, allowing us to carry on with cultural activities with one another, to a fair extent, during the potlatch ban (Drucker & Heizer, 1967, p. 42).

## **2.2 Geography of the Kwakwaka'wakw**

For thousands of years, the Kwakwaka'wakw have lived on the coast of the present-day province of British Columbia, Canada, on the northeastern part of Vancouver Island, and adjacent islands and mainland. Kwakwaka'wakw traditional territory has relatively mild winters, enabling in-depth knowledge of our surroundings over the generations. The Kwakwaka'wakw had seasonal rounds throughout our territories to collect resources for food, clothing, shelter, and transportation. In the winters, the Kwakwaka'wakw have inhabited village sites on the foreshore, at the intersection of the forests and waters (oceans and freshwater). During winter ceremonies, they would redistribute wealth collected from the forests, foreshores, and oceans (Galois, 1994, p. 19–27).



**Figure 2.1 Gwa'yasdam's on a Sunny Day**

The K̓w̓ik̓w̓asut'nuxw Haxwa'mis traditional territory consists of Wakeman Sound, Wakeman River watershed to the height of land, Charles Creek watershed, Tribune Channel, most of Gilford Island, Hada River watershed to the height of land, Bond Sound, Thompson Sound, Kakweikan watershed to the height of land, Kwatsi Bay, and many of the island's northwest of Gwa'yasd̓am's, Gilford Island, and within the Broughton Archipelago of mid-coast British Columbia. Access to Gwa'yasd̓am's, the main settlement on Gilford Island, is by boat or float plane, about 35 kilometres northeast of Port McNeill, BC, on north Vancouver Island.



**Figure 2.2 Wakeman Sound on a Sunny Day**

Historically, critical forest-based resources for the Kwakwaka'wakw were plants and trees, as the communities depended daily on a wide range of flora for shelter, transportation, clothing, food, medicine, and ceremony (Boas, 1966; Stewart, 1984). The predominant tree cover is temperate rainforest trees of wilkw (western red cedar) (*Thuja plicata*), k̓wax'as (western hemlock) (*Tsuga heterophylla*), mumxw̓ad (balsam fir) (*Abies amabilis*),

ṭṭamḱi (yew) (*Taxus brevifolia*), ṭṭes'mas (red alder) (*Alnus rubra*), dixw'mas (yellow cedar) (*Callitropsis nootkatensis*), and ḱli'was (Sitka spruce) (*Picea sitchensis*) (Grubb, 1977; Pasco, Compton, & Hunt 1998; Pojar & MacKinnon, 1994). The Kwakwaka'wakw have documented 135 Kwakwala words for plants and plant parts throughout the traditional territory (Turner & Bell, 1973; Lyall, Nelson, Rosenblum, & Turin, 2019). Moreover, because of its innumerable uses, the Kwakwaka'wakw's most essential plant is wilkw (western red cedar) (Boas, 1966; Stewart, 1984).

A culturally essential species of the Kwikwasut'nuxw Haxwa'mis were, and continue to be, clams. This is demonstrated in the approximate 350 clam beds northwest of Gwa'yasdum's (Williams, 2006). The biophysical region grows clams better with colder waters than the southern region where clams grow:

*Representatives of Mac's Oysters state the clams they buy are dug by "Gilford people." Kwiksootainuk people, many of whom still live at Gwayasdum's, on Gilford Island at the heart of the Broughton Archipelago, have continued to harvest and to repair their productive butter clam beds because clams remain, for them, an important aspect of their domestic and commercial economies. Area 12 clams are still attractive for commercial harvesting since they are said to be less contaminated by red tide. This may be the result of the strong influx into the Broughton of cold water, driven west in the summer through Queen Charlotte Strait from the gap between the top of Vancouver Island and Calvert Island, combined with the winter's easterly, glacier-iced outflows from Knight Inlet. From late fall to early spring, water temperatures range around 7 to 10 degrees Celsius near the*

*surface and about 7 to 8 degrees Celsius at depth. However, summer temperatures in protected embayments can rise to 15 degrees Celsius (Williams, 2006, p. 46).*

The territory is home to many majestic wildlife including g̱ala (grizzly bears) (*Ursus arctos horribilis*), ma'misa (cougars) (*Puma concolor*), max̱'inuxw (killer whales) (*Orcinus orca*), u'ligan (wolves) (*Canis lupus*), and ṯla'i (black bears) (*Ursus americanus*). The fish-bearing streams on the mainland within the Ḵwiḵwasut'inuxw and H̱axwa'mis territories are at Hada (Bond Sound), Kakweikan (Thompson Sound), Wakeman Sound, and Charles Creek. There are 15 lakes on Gilford Island and eight main salmon-bearing streams: Viner Creek, Scott Cove Creek, Shoal Harbour Creek, Maple Bay Creek, Health Lagoon, Wahkana Bay Creek, Duck Creek, and Gilford Creek (Morton & Proctor, 2016). Cutthroat trout, Dolly Varden, steelhead, and all species of ḵutala (salmon) use the creeks: hanu'n (pink salmon) (*Oncorhynchus gorbusha*), dza'wan (coho salmon) (*O. kisutch*), saṯam (spring salmon) (*O. tshawytscha*), gwax̱'nis (dog salmon) (*O. keta*), and ma̱hik (sockeye salmon) (*O. nerka*) (Morton & Proctor, 2016, p. 112). Viner Sound was famous for fall coho runs.

## **2.3 Historical Context**

It is essential to describe how settler colonialism has impacted Indigenous Peoples. This section briefly summarizes the history and the impacts of colonialism and imperialism since contact to explain why this research aims to prioritize themes around Indigenous knowledge, Indigenous forest practices, and people-forest relationships.

### 2.3.1 Contact

*Imperialism in a sense could be tied to a chronology of events to “discovery,” conquest, exploitation, distribution, and appropriation (Smith, 2012, p.60).*

From a Eurocentric perspective, the history of contact in the Broughton Archipelago began when Captains George Vancouver and Dionisio Alcala Galiano arrived from July 27 to July 30, 1792. At that time, two ships passed through Fife Sound, Wakeman Sound, Thompson Sound, and Tribune Channel to explore the area between Vancouver Island and the British Columbia mainland (Codere, 1950; Duff, 1969; Lamb, 1984, Menzies, 1923, p. 90–92). The exchanges were few, and First Nations were visibly shocked to see the European ships (Lamb, 1984) but perhaps not completely surprised to meet explorers for the first time since the fur-trade era in the Pacific Northwest (current day Washington State, British Columbia, and Alaska) began in the 1780s (Lamb, 1984).

### 2.3.2 Depopulation of Kwakwaka'wakw

Epidemics with diseases that First Nations people had not developed immunity against scourged the Kwakwaka'wakw population, beginning with waves of smallpox and influenza from the 1820s to 1880s (Galois, 1994). Tuberculosis epidemics swept through the population from the 1900s to the 1920s. The population of the Kwakwaka'wakw fell from over 8,500 pre-contact to 1,029 in 1924 (Galois, 1994). Devastating the population of the Kwikwasut'inuxw in particular to an even lower number was a massacre at Gwa'yasdām's in approximately 1856–1860 (Galois, 1994) when the Kwikwasut'inuxw were attacked by the Nuxalk (Bella Coola) First Nations. The massacre was revenge for a previous event (Cranmer, 2019; personal communication, July 18, 2016; Reid, 2004). Remarkably, a few people survived the surprise attack, with accounts ranging

from nine to 30 survivors (personal communication, February 18, 2016; Reid, 2004). At the time of the massacre, there were 15 or 16 gukwdzi (big houses) at Gwa'yasdām's that multiple families lived in (Galois, 1994). Survivors moved to 'Mimkwamlis (Village Island), 'Yālis, and Tsaxis, with many returning to live in two of the 15 houses in 1914 (Galois, 1994; personal communication, February 18, 2016).

### **2.3.3 Trade and Industrialization**

The Hudson's Bay Company established an outpost in Fort Rupert in 1851. Especially after the 1851, there was a dramatic expansion in the number of potlatches and feasts each year, and gift exchange increased (Codere, 1950, p. 90–91; Drucker & Heizer, 1967, p.35–52; Masco 1995, p. 51). Joining the wage economy and trading resources with the Hudson's Bay Company and others made potlatching more achievable for individuals and families (Codere, 1950; Drucker & Heizer, 1967, p.37). Commercial fishing, canneries, and trapping became less prevalent by the mid-twentieth century.

The province of British Columbia began formalizing forest licences with large corporations when British Columbia introduced the *Forest Act* in 1912. But forest policy became more involved with the Sloan Commission in 1945 when it was realized that the forests in British Columbia were not inexhaustible, and a sustained yield policy was needed. Larger forest licences, including tree farm licences, were granted to large corporations (versus smaller-scale family-led logging permits). The 1978 Pearse Commission implemented significant changes to the *Forest Act*, including control on log exports, setting logging rates with “cut controls,” and limiting the transfer of forest licences from one licensee to another. In 1987, the need to tree plant and tend trees until they were a certain age and height was introduced.



### 2.3.4 The Dominion of Canada

*The forests have been at the centre of much of the conflict between Indigenous Peoples and the Crown regarding ownership and decision making about natural resources. Anyone familiar with the richness of these forests and the array of benefits and wealth they provide and what they mean for the way of life of Indigenous Peoples will not be surprised in any way that this is true* (White & Danesh, 2015, p.3).

Contact with settlers occurred relatively recently on the Northwest Coast and centuries after the east coast of Canada. It should be noted First Nations in British Columbia had lived autonomously until the 1850s with little interference in their traditional lifestyles or pre-contact governance systems from the federal or provincial governments (Tennant, 1990, p. 17). A drastic change was introduced when Great Britain claimed sovereignty over what they named the “Colony of British Columbia” from 1858 to 1871.

In the 1860s, Joseph Trutch, the Chief Commissioner of Land and Works of the Crown Colony, developed Indian land policies that denied Aboriginal title of lands and ensured Indian Reserves were small (Borrows, 2017; Tennant, 1990). Provincewide, less than 0.4% of the land base was Indian Reserve land to pre-confederate British Columbia. In 1865, settlers were invited to pre-empt land and stake tracts of lands for logging and trapping for early settlers before settling treaties (Colony of British Columbia, 1865). The laws had imperialistic objectives to divest lands from Indigenous Peoples and were clearly to gain economic control over the lands and resources in Canada.

The Dominion of Canada was asserted in 1867, and the province of British Columbia joined Canada in 1871. After this, the federal government of Canada alienated the surviving Kwakwaka'wakw from the forests and oceans through repressive policies (Tennant, 1990).

Under Trutch's reign, Peter O'Reilly surveyed Indian Reserves in the Broughton Archipelago from 1886 to 1888. Racialized laws formalized Indian Reserves with the Indian Reserve Ordinance, introducing the Indian Reserve system (Colony of British Columbia, 1869). The Indian Reserve Ordinance made it difficult for First Nations to pre-empt land from 1869 to 1953, as it would require a Governor exemption (Colony of British Columbia, 1869).

Some of the first Indian Reserves were allotted incorrectly to the Mamalilikulla First Nations (Village Island) instead of the Kwikwasut'inuxw. Moreover, Indian Agent William Halliday grouped four Kwakwaka'wakw First Nations as the "Kingcome Indian First Nations," known as the Musgamakw Dzawada'enuxw (the four First Nations of Kingcome). Halliday noted that the Kingcome Indian First Nations were the largest First Nation in the Kwawkwalth Agency. Chief Johnny Scow of the Kwikwasut'inuxw led a group of Chiefs to meet with the McKenna McBride Commission on June 4 and 5, 1914 (Canada, 1914) to rectify the identity of the Kwikwasut'inuxw Indian Reserves. Further clarifications for places of importance to the Kwikwasut'inuxw were repeated in the 1922 Ditchburn-Clark commission, led by Indigenous lawyer Andrew Paull.

The *Indian Act* was first passed in 1876. In its early years, the *Indian Act* included extremely oppressive laws, including outlawing the potlatch system from 1885 to 1951, not allowing status Indians to hire a lawyer to address the British Columbia "Indian land question" (1927–1950), and not allowing status Indians to vote until 1960 (Tennant, 1990). First Nations women would lose "Indian Status" if they married a non-First Nations person (1867–1985),

disenfranchising and alienating women from their families and communities (Lawrence, 2003). The federal government created the Kwawkwalth Agency (1881–1969), and an office was set up in 'Yalis in 1889 to administer the *Indian Act*. The federal government supported cultural genocide and assimilation tactics by disrupting families from their cultural heritage, identities, Indigenous laws, and Indigenous language and ending traditional marriage practices and criminalizing traditional governance structures (Abele, 2007; Lawrence, 2003; TRCC, 2015). The motivation of federal policies was to assert control over land and resources (Abele, 2007; TRCC, 2015). Although many of the most oppressive legislative pieces of the *Indian Act* were repealed by the federal government post World War II, the *Indian Act* remains in place for administering Indians on reserve lands unless an alternative agreement has been negotiated.

The *Indian Act* was not developed to foster self-determination for First Nations. Quite the opposite, it was developed to make Indians wards of the Crown (Abele, 2007). Undoubtedly, the federal *Indian Act* remains a relic of Canadian law and accompanying policies that govern “Indians,” “bands,” and “Indian reserve” lands. It reflects colonial public institutions from the early to mid-twentieth century that rely on top-down administration and fiscal control (Abele, 2007). The *Indian Act* continues to govern the 10 K̓w̓ik̓wasut'nuxw Haxwa'mis First Nations' 10 Indian Reserves of 179.1 hectares, *Indian Act* managed federal lands, membership codes, and election codes for Chief and Council.

### **2.3.5 Churches**

Canada's Indian Residential Schools system became a central driver in the national policy to eliminate Indigenous Peoples' rights, history, and cultural values (Million, 2014; Regan, 2010; TRCC, 2015). One hundred thirty-nine Indian Residential Schools nationwide ran for 150 years,

“educating” approximately 150,000 Indigenous children between the ages of four and 17 (NCTR, 2022; TRCC, 2015, p. 6). The objective of the Indian Residential Schools system was to replace Indigenous culture with Eurocentric ideals. Curricula included the teaching of the English language and Christianity, but survivors complained that Indigenous culture, heritage, and language were shamed at Indian Residential Schools. Speaking Kwakwaka’wakw became stigmatized when Kwakwaka’wakw children attended residential schools, sometimes year-round, in ’Yalis or Port Alberni, on the coast of British Columbia. The federal government funded these schools, run by the Anglican and United churches. St. Michael’s Residential School operated from 1894 to 1974, while Alberni Residential School operated from 1900 to 1973 (NCTR, 2022). The nutrition was poor, and the children were often hungry (Bagelman, Deveraux, & Hartley, 2016; TRCC, 2015 p. 56–60). Besides separating children from their families and their lands, within these schools, children were neglected and raised themselves and there was a strict segregation between boys and girls (Joseph, 2022; Sellars, 2013; TRCC, 2015). Unfortunately, neglect often gave way to children being preyed on sexually, physically, and verbally while attending Indian Residential Schools (TRCC, 2015). Survivors of this experience, now Elders, regularly summarize the experience simply by indicating how many years they attended Indian Residential School as if they had served a prison sentence: “I went for 13 years” or “I went for six years” (personal communication; TRCC, 2015).

#### **2.4 The K̓w̓ik̓w̓asut’nu̓xw H̓axwa’mis First Nations**

The K̓w̓ik̓w̓asut’nu̓xw H̓axwa’mis First Nations have successfully led several capital projects, including the repopulation of Gwa’yasd̓am’s, the remaining inhabited village within the K̓w̓ik̓w̓asut’nu̓xw H̓axwa’mis First Nations territory. After years of fundraising, the village

rebuild began in 2010, with previous houses being declared uninhabitable and the water undrinkable. Twenty-one new houses were built. A traditionally styled gukwdzi (big house) with house posts from the Johnson family was reconstructed, and new drinking water and generator systems were installed. Other sizable capital projects are underway, with six more houses, an administrative building, and a sizable solar-energy project under construction. K̓w̓ik̓w̓asut'nux̓w H̓axwa'mis First Nations seeks most of its operating revenues from grants, Indigenous Services Canada, and, more recently, forestry income. The K̓w̓ik̓w̓asut'nux̓w H̓axwa'mis First Nations have led hiking-trail building projects at Gwa'yasd̓am's (Health Bay), K̓waḡw̓alawadi (Echo Bay), and Hada (Bond Sound). In 2020, the K̓w̓ik̓w̓asut'nux̓w H̓axwa'mis First Nations purchased a full-service marina in the heart of the K̓w̓ik̓w̓asut'inux̓w territory at Echo Bay since it is adjacent to the K̓w̓ik̓w̓asut'inux̓w village of K̓waḡw̓alawadi.

## **Chapter 3: Research Methods**

This research used Indigenous research methodologies (Smith, 2012) and mixed qualitative methodologies to engage the K̓w̓ik̓w̓asut'inuxw H̓axwa'mis in participatory action research (Chilisa, 2012; O'Leary, 2017). This research can be explained as an interdisciplinary project with disciplines spanning Indigenous studies, natural resources studies, and language reclamation. The preferred location for interviews and writing this dissertation is within or next to the forests of the Kwakw̓aka'wakw traditional territory (Kovach, 2009).

### **3.1 Indigenous Methodologies**

Indigenous methodologies, and other mixed qualitative methodologies, were selected for their ability to document the strength of our survival and our own histories (Smith, 2012, p. 144–145), emphasize our Indigenous language as a critical link to our worldviews (Kovach, 2009, p. 59), recognize our relationships with the forests, and strategically and carefully consider which aspects of our tradition and culture to maintain and restore (Simpson, 2011; Simpson, 2018, p. 228–229; Starblanket, 2017; Starblanket & Stark, 2018, p.193).

Firstly, a reason to utilize Indigenous methodologies was because they recognize a history of research where there has been little or no chance for Indigenous Peoples to contribute, edit, or even have informed consent to participate in research about themselves (Smith, 2012; Wilson, 2008). Especially the Kwakw̓aka'wakw have had a great deal written about us that began in the nineteenth century (Glass, 2021). However, scholarship has changed since the nineteenth century since the Kwakw̓aka'wakw were not the original audience of accounts written about us at that time since it was assumed our culture would not exist in the future (Grounds, 2021; Kehoe, 1983). Accordingly, over the last several decades, there has been a shift by some

researchers from doing research *on* Indigenous Peoples to doing research *for* or *with* them (Wilson, 2008).

The prevailing narrative about the forests in the natural resource management and economic development disciplines is that Indigenous Peoples “need help” or could use improvements by “developing capacity” (Menzies & Butler, 2019; Stevenson & Perrault, 2008). Problematic types of research usually describe Indigenous People as laden with problems that only outsiders can solve (Borona, 2019, p. 34; Chilisa, 2012, p. 244). Conversely, there is a history and an ongoing issue when researchers come to the community with a pre-set list of questions, assumptions, and Western knowledge traditions before knowing if such research would be relevant or accurate (Botha, 2011). Therefore, Indigenous scholars pointedly emphasize that it is sometimes the researcher, not the Indigenous Peoples they are researching, that could use “building capacity” through preparation and training before reaching out to the community to be respectful of peoples’ time (Kovach, 2009; Stevenson & Perrault, 2008).

Over the last couple of decades, there is growing literature on Indigenous studies and other disciplines describing how researchers could think about how research could move past being extractive of Indigenous knowledge (Archibald, 2008; Cornthassel & Gaudry, 2014; Hermes, Bang, & Marin, 2012; Menzies & Butler, 2021, Smith, 2012; Wilson, 2008, *inter alia*). As a result, this research considered ways to include the community in this research. For instance, I considered Chilisa’s (2012) recommendation for using appreciative inquiry by avoiding deficit-based questions. I asked questions during interviews based on appreciative inquiry and open-ended questions about people-forest relationships (Appendix A, also see the next section on how I endeavoured to be inclusive to community input). Although I opted for neutral questions, given the history of repression and colonization, I did not always get a positive

response. Unfortunately, there was an unfair need to explain the ongoing challenges of colonialism and industrialization.

The second objective of employing Indigenous research methods was influenced by Māori scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2012) and their ground-breaking work *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, which challenges Indigenous scholars to engage in decolonizing research by critically considering the underlying assumptions, tenets, and methods of Western theory in the literary work of history, colonialism<sup>1</sup> and imperialism<sup>2</sup> have and continue to marginalize Indigenous Peoples. Indigenous Peoples want past historical injustices—and the cumulative and considerable losses—considered as a baseline in making decisions about the forests, in addition to current and future anticipated developments that impact the forests and cultural uses (Turner, Gregory, Brooks, Failing, & Satterfield, 2008). Therefore, Indigenous research is sometimes described as “rewriting” and “re-righting” our own positions and our own ways (Smith, 2012, p. 24 and p. 30) to expose normative forms of knowledge production that have canonized and privileged European knowledge (de Leeuw &

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<sup>1</sup> Where colonialism is defined by Joyce Green (2003) as “Colonization, initiated by imperialism, forms the foundation of Project Canada. Colonization is not only about the physical occupation of someone else's land but also about the appropriation of others' political authority, cultural self-determination, economic capacity, and strategic location. That is, colonialism is a profoundly exploitative relationship to the benefit of one at the expense of the Other” (p. 52). And added by Jeff Cornthassel and Cheryl Bryce (2012) with “these forces of disconnection further distance indigenous peoples from their spiritual, cultural, and physical relationships with the natural world and serve to destroy the confidence and well-being of indigenous people” (p. 152).

<sup>2</sup> Where imperialism is interlinked with colonialism and is a concept developed to govern a dominate ways of thinking of knowledge, including decentralization and globalization. As outlined by Linda Tuhiwai Smith “Imperialism tends to be used in at least four different ways when describing the form of European imperialism which ‘started’ in the fifteenth century: (1) imperialism as economic expansion; (2) imperialism as the subjugation of ‘others’; (3) imperialism as an idea or spirit with many forms of realization; and (4) imperialism as a discursive field of knowledge.... Imperialism in this sense could be tied to a chronology of events related to ‘discovery’” (p. 22).



Hunt, 2018; LaRocque, 2015). There have been uneasy relationships among knowledge systems (Trosper & Parrotta, 2012), where Indigenous knowledge has been categorized by Western Science “as content” versus any of its social, cultural, or political “contexts” (Copes-Gerbitz, Hagerman, & Daniels, 2021, p. 25). Further, Western Science has categorized Indigenous knowledge (Smith, 2012, p. 44–45) and epistemologies into facts that could inform ecological processes with terminologies such as non-timber forest products and traditional ecological knowledge. During the imperialism and Enlightenment eras, western tenets of “objectivity” and being “impartial” were initially defined in science and history. In a review of current forest policy, forestry, and conservation disciplines, “objectivity” is built into Western Science frameworks, allowing the commodification and compartmentalization of forest resources as objects for extraction versus the non-commodified resources they can offer humans. Scholars describe Western institutions’ exclusionary practices as political and epistemic violence (Hunt, 2014).

During my undergraduate studies at the University of British Columbia, Faculty of Forestry, I learned about a “three-legged stool.” I was taught that the goal was to “balance” a three-legged stool equally between ecological, economic, and social values. Since I believe that in the academic disciplines and government profiles for the forest management and conservation focus on the economic and environmental aspects of the forests, this research considers the *social* aspects of the forests.

A third objective of this research was to acknowledge the responsibility of myself as a researcher to be directed almost exclusively toward doing research with the community in a way that could support Indigenous scholarship (Section 3.2.4), Indigenous resurgence and language reclamation (Gaudry, 2011).

Indigenous scholars have advocated for a need to write for their own research agendas, meaning they are not interested in writing within colonial frameworks, such as reconciliation or recognition politics (Coulthard, 2014; Daigle, 2016; Smith, 1999). After all, it is not the job of Indigenous Peoples to teach settlers about past injustices, but a collective responsibility to reconcile the past, including learning about history. Further, there are a growing number of Indigenous scholars, and they have begun to write their own versions of history, stories, theory, and Indigenous Science—in their own ways and for their own purposes (Borrows, 2010; de Leeuw & Hunt, 2018; M. Ignace & R. E. Ignace, 2017; Menzies, 2016; Simpson, 2011; Simpson, 2017; Smith, 2012, p. 29–30; Tuck, 2009). Indigenous-centred voices and intellect are vital to self-determination (Archibald, 2008; Smith, 2012, p. 31). Indeed, Indigenous Peoples want to critically evaluate the past to make future decisions for community and self-determination purposes by documenting our own literature and centring Indigenous perspectives within our communities. Further, Indigenous Peoples want to learn about knowing history from as many perspectives necessary to understand the present.

This research adopts Leonard’s definition of language reclamation as “a larger effort by a community to claim its right to speak a language and to set associated goals in response to community needs and perspectives” (Leonard, 2012, p. 359; Lyall et al., 2019). The success of language reclamation and resurgence projects should be measured by whether community members find the work responsive to their contemporary concerns and needs (Hermes et al., 2012).

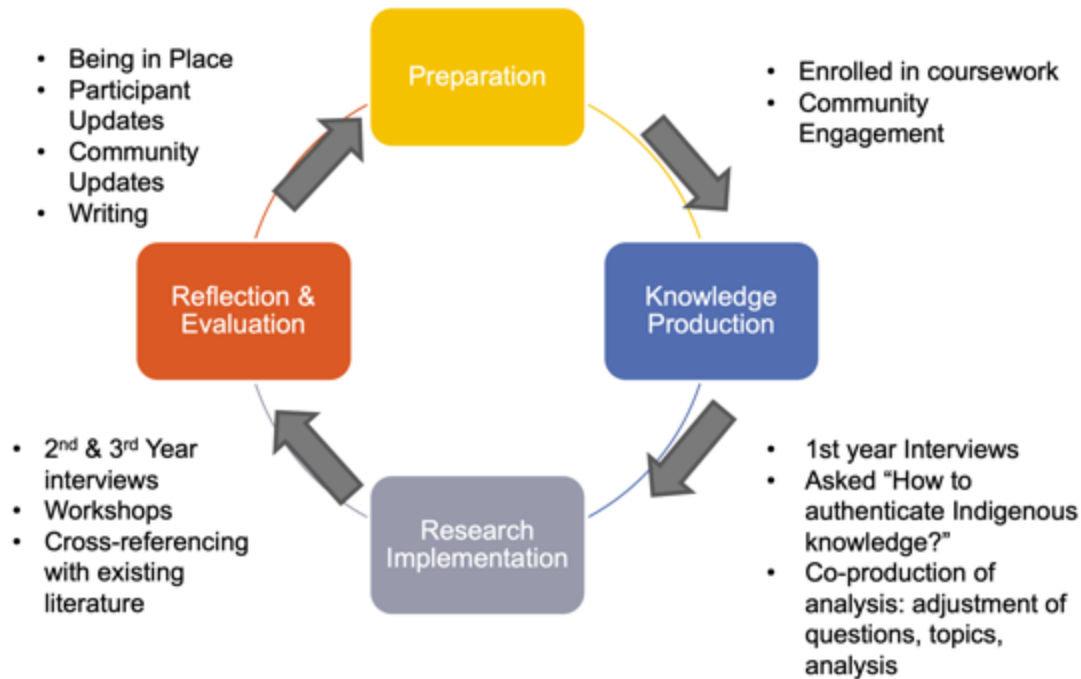
This research acknowledges the acts of “everyday” resurgence efforts that involve strategically reconnecting with the forests, oceans, languages, oral histories, and storytelling (Corntassel and Bryce, 2012, p. 153; Corntassel and Hardbarger, 2019, p. 92; Daigle, 2016;

Meyer, 2001). Everyday actions of Indigenous resurgence might not make the news because they happen when Indigenous people turn to community priorities and reject “the performativity of a rights discourse geared toward state affirmation and recognition, and embracing a daily existence conditioned by place-based cultural practices” (Corntassel, 2012, p. 89).

This research about traditional practices, an ancient culture, and a living history is not to suppose a pre-contact purity or a singular authentic Indigenous Peoples. As described by Smith (2012), the genuineness of Indigenous identity is not about an “idealized past when there was no colonizer” (p. 77) but about remembering our past, including painful parts of our past, and writing our own literature and theory (p. 147–151). Indigenous knowledge has been praised for being adaptive, and this adaptability aided in Indigenous Peoples' survival (Pierotti & Wildcat, 2000). There are also precautionary considerations about respect and supporting one another in our oral traditions. Therefore, Indigenous scholars argue “that culture is not immutable” (LaRocque, 1996, p. 14), so Indigenous communities need to be very careful to consider how to revive practices in a way that does not reproduce rigid forms of “tradition” that excludes or harms people (Starblanket, 2017; Simpson, 2018).

### **3.2 Participatory Action Research Methods**

Participatory action research methods were valued in this research because it is inclusionary to Indigenous knowledge and community input into the research design (Chilisa, 2012; O’Leary, 2017).



**Figure 3.1: Participatory Action Research Cycle**

Community input and direction for the dissertation has been adapted throughout all terms of the research, including the questions, research topics, and analysis. Consequently, as directed by the community, analysis of how to authenticate Indigenous knowledge was to use triangulation efforts with semi-structured interviews, repeat interviews, workshops, and cross-referencing interdisciplinary literature.

Further, participatory action research recognized that the relationship with Indigenous communities lasts beyond the final report or, in this case, a dissertation (Chilisa, 2012; O’Leary, 2017). Since I am a member of the K̓w̓ik̓wasut’inuxw Haxwa’mis, it was important to develop reciprocal relationships during this research. This research was influenced when I took coursework in Indigenous methodologies and contacted to the community for input into the

research design. This approach meant participants interested in contributing were involved beyond the interview process. To illustrate this, community contributions, including quotes, appear throughout this dissertation, not only in the empirical chapters (Four to Seven).

How knowledge was produced and analyzed for this research was tailored as a result of interview responses to the question “How is Indigenous knowledge authenticated?” Consequently, research methods used triangulation efforts of semi-structured interviews, repeat interviews, workshops, and cross-referencing interdisciplinary literature. I was advised to speak with people that were knowledgeable and that would tell the truth, with community definitions outlined in Section 3.2.3 (Knowledge Production – Authenticating Indigenous Knowledge).

Research reflection meant being in place and going to the Kwakwaka'wakw traditional territory each year throughout this research. Research evaluation was ongoing, including while conducting, writing, and concluding this research (Appendix B and section 8.3).

Beginning in 2014, during the development of the research design, an essential part of developing this research proposal was talking with over 100 community members, including Kwakwaka'wakw Elders, Kwakwaka'wakw speakers, harvesters of plants, trappers, fishers, hunters, Kwikwasut'nuxw Haxwa'mis First Nations staff, forestry board members, and carvers of wilkw (western red cedar).

Also showing dedication from the University of British Columbia, Faculty of Forestry, research supervisor Dr. Harry Nelson visited Gwa'yasdam's for a week in the summer of 2016 at the beginning of interviews. He attended community events and a community presentation. Further, Dr. Nelson attended a Chief and Council meeting in Campbell River in 2017 to introduce himself and answer any questions about the research. Dr. Nelson also joined me for a final presentation offered at Gwa'yasdam's in March 2023.

### **3.2.1 Preparation**

Participatory and collaborative research principles outline the importance of preparation by researchers before going to the community (Chilisa, 2012). Preparation by researchers before engaging the community is important because most communities are not prepared to develop research projects for researchers (Kovach, 2009). Consequently, preparation was an important step in this research and considered thoroughly before going to the community.

Further, this research design was heavily influenced by coursework at the University of British Columbia, most of which went beyond my faculty's minimum course requirements. In 2014 and 2015, I chose courses applicable to developing a culturally relevant research design in the social sciences. I enrolled in courses about Indigenous methodologies at the University of British Columbia Department of Education with professors Bryan Brayboy and Cash Ahenakew. Seven female graduate students from the Faculty of Forestry enrolled in Dr. Ahenakew's class. In these courses, I learned the importance of Indigenous scholarship by reading and analyzing works of Indigenous resurgence literature, such as that authored by Marie Battiste (Mi'kmaw), Bagele Chilisa (Botswanan), Vine Deloria Jr (Standing Rock Sioux), Jo-Ann Archibald (Sto:lo), Gregory Cajete (Tewa), Margaret Kovach (Nêhiyaw and Saulteaux), Manulani Aluli Meyer (Hawaiian), Linda Tuhiwai Smith (Māori, Ngāti Awa and Ngāti Porou iwi), and Shawn Wilson (Opaskwayak Cree) among others. Course projects included drafting a literature review and a research proposal. It was helpful to reflect on and discuss our respective research projects and have talking circles with seminars attended primarily by Indigenous graduate students and women doing research within their respective communities.

I was delighted with the opportunity to enroll in two Kwakwaka'wakw Indigenous language courses at the University of British Columbia offered by the First Nations and Endangered Languages Program and taught by Elder Rita Barnes, Dr. Daisy Rosenblum, Elder Henry Seaweed, and Dr. Patricia Shaw.

### **3.2.2 Establishing Knowledge Production – Community as Researchers**

In participatory action research, community members participate as co-researchers by helping identify and define the research topics, making decisions about the research design and data-gathering instruments, and assisting with research analysis and interpretation (Chilisa, 2012, p. 230).

The research design was adapted through an iterative process, especially during the research design and after the first year of interviews (O'Leary, 2017). The feedback from community was vast and extensive due to the open-ended questions. I transcribed interviews from 2016 into verbatim Word documents and read interviews several times, analyzing them using grounded theory. As Charmaz (2014) explained, grounded theory uses inductive information collected during interviews by coding topics as they are presented—rather than pre-existing codes. For instance, grounded theory does not recommend coding information from interviews into pre-conceived codes. Rather, grounded theory recommends “staying close to the data, paying particular attention to actions versus coding for topics” (Charmaz, 2014, p. 121). The research was organized using Nvivo, a software that organizes verbatim interview transcripts.

Thereafter, I returned to community and led two group analysis workshops in Gwa'yasdām's and 'Yālis in 2017. The communities were invited to act as co-researchers and

were involved in co-developing the research analysis. In two group analysis workshops, the community was asked to confirm the importance of topics and feedback received to ranked feedback by prioritizing coded topics repeated by multiple participants. There were two half-day sessions attended by 19 people that began with a hosted lunch with traditional and locally sourced wild foods. After lunch, I summarized the results in a short presentation and asked the group to rank the coded topics.

I had envisioned the groups would fill out and rank the forms individually. But, both groups at Gwa'yasdām's and 'Yālis wanted to go over the form together, discuss the topics in greater detail, and then answer the forms individually. Some appreciated the opportunity to assist with the analysis and felt ownership over the interviews.

Research topics became evident through interviews, two analysis sessions in 2017, workshops discussing research topics, repeat interviews, and cross-referencing interviews with literature. Therefore, the research topic and questions changed the dissertation's focus after the first and second years of interviews (Appendix C). After community collaboration, the dissertation topic and research questions were adjusted and narrowed in scope as repeated themes using grounded theory, grouping information, and community updates at workshops. Further, in the following section about authenticating Indigenous knowledge, community collaboration affirmed community protocols for conducting research and how to analyze information.

### **3.2.3 Knowledge Production – Authenticating Indigenous Knowledge**

Research that includes Indigenous worldviews is often questioned for objectivity, transferability, and credibility (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 56). To authenticate Indigenous knowledge for this



research that aspired to be relevant to Indigenous Peoples, I asked participants a critical, open-ended question: "How is Indigenous knowledge authenticated?" Using grounded theory, I coded the most crucial authentic information to the community using Nvivo and grouped them thematically. I brought back coded themes to the community, in 2017, to analyze and prioritize in a group setting. In order of importance, the topmost essential criteria for authenticating knowledge from the interviews was to "cross-reference" information, including repeat interviews. I was also advised to speak with people who were "knowledgeable" and would "tell the truth" and watch and listen to people who "might lie." These criteria seemed interlinked and indicative of Kwakwaka'wakw oral culture.

The community stated that the most important criteria for authenticating information for this research involved cross-referencing information from several sources by interviewing multiple people, gathering people into groups to ensure participants were "on the same page," and cross-referencing interviews with relevant literature. Triangulating multiple sources of information is a common approach in research methods for ensuring information is reliable (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2011). In an interview, an Elder supported triangulation interview information with additional interviews when he commented, "I might not know it all; ask someone else, too" (personal communication, April 4, 2016).

Further, I was asked to closely pay attention and consider if people who would "tell the truth" and watch and listen to people who "might lie." I understood that participants who would "tell the truth" were respected Elders or knowledge keepers who lived their lives honourably and the community admired. These were people who were humble and would speak without ego. Typically, in interviews with these revered people, they would use statements

starting with comments such as “If I don’t know something, I won’t lie” (personal communication, July 28, 2016).

For authenticating Indigenous knowledge, I was advised to speak with knowledgeable people for this research. Participants described people who were knowledgeable as Elders who speak the Indigenous language Kwakwala, traditional harvesters, and knowledge keepers of the Kwakwaka’wakw culture:

- Elders who fluently spoke Kwakwala were considered knowledgeable, not only for a fluency in a language, but about the knowledge held within language and the way that it would be traditionally conveyed.
- Knowledge keepers of the Kwakwaka’wakw culture (people knowledgeable about Kwakwaka’wakw stories, songs, place names, and dances) are revered for their ability to research and safeguard information within community. Many can recite knowledge from memory and orally—be it a story, ancestral family lines, or significant events from decades past.
- Traditional harvesters—people that continue collecting resources from the forests—are revered for their persistence to remain in the Kwakwaka’wakw territory and going out to the lands and oceans. Traditional harvesters are described as those who would know about various aspects of harvesting wild foods and taught how and where to collect, prepare, and preserve traditional foods.

*He has his own map he is making of Gilford of the villages and burial sites, what beaches are good for digging. He is doing his own little land and resource map. He is very knowledgeable that way* (personal communication, August 2, 2016).

When living in an out-of-the-way community in the Broughton Archipelago, people learn to depend on each other and each other's strengths:

*Its people that know the land; it is people that know the medicines. I mean, those are obvious people within our own band, our family here, you know. You just have people that just know. People that teach other kids about their own land and about what is there and what is not there (personal communication, July 22, 2016).*

Traditionally, the Kwakwaka'wakw would groom families and individuals into the roles they were expected to contribute to our communities, as explained by an Elder in his 70s:

*That's what we used to do in the old days, as recently as my mother's time. People were identified at birth to occupy certain roles in the society. It doesn't happen anymore. Give them money, send them to university. You know, if they come back, it's a bonus (personal communication, October 11, 2017).*

These days, younger people considered knowledgeable in the community are members who are accepted, even celebrated, for the skills in which they excel and contribute within the community. From a community perspective, whether the skilled individual was inclined to work in the community promoting and teaching culture, they were welcome to contribute individual skills to complement a set of community resources. A few participants noted I would be considered knowledgeable about the forests and forestry because I am a forester. Other contemporary examples of knowledgeable people are, for instance, cultural leaders who have learned and revived our songs and stories. Advanced Kwakwaka'wakw language learners and teachers of the language and culture to youth are valued in the community for the knowledge they share with the youth.

I interpreted people who “might lie” as a warning to pay attention and listen carefully when people spoke. I interpreted people who might lie not literally, but concerning for someone’s general character. A modern term could be to watch out for a conflict of interest. Alternately, I interpreted people who might lie as people, particularly youth, who needed to learn lessons and listen before they spoke. I did not take this to mean I should exclude people from interviews, but rather I should pay attention to the information given when conducting interviews and cross-reference information with multiple people. For instance, one Elder was recognized to make up answers or lie about some topics (usually around political topics) but was known to be knowledgeable on other essential Indigenous knowledge topics.

With these criteria for authenticating knowledge, I understood I should listen and watch for participants’ opinions. So when I was doing the interviews, I was reminded of the responsibilities in an Indigenous culture of the importance of listening. The interviews and articles I read reminded me of the responsibilities of both the storyteller and listener; the storyteller needs to impart the story from their own perspective and suit the setting, and the listener has the responsibility to listen and interpret the story. I needed to learn to better listen and respect the people I interviewed. My previous training and experience had not taught me the value of listening, so I consider myself to be a “baby listener.” A baby listener is a name I adapted from living in Coast Salish territories, where “babies” are novices, not fully inducted into the spiritual and religious practices of the Coast Salish longhouse. Additionally, I grew up in a time when an Indigenous culture was less accepted than it is today. So, I needed to teach myself how to be a better listener since listening is an essential part of the orality of Indigenous thought. I gained an understanding from listening to and reading interviews multiple times, particularly from Elders, knowledge keepers, and fluent Kwakwaka speakers.

### 3.2.4 Triangulating Literature about the Kwakwaka'wakw and Citation Practices

Along with the previous section, this section describes how this research, with community member participation during interviews and group analysis workshops, put the research design into action. The strategy for analysis of this research was to cross-reference literature.

*If it's worth doing, it's worth doing well. In anything you do. So, you've got to get right into it. Eat it right up. It's part of a metaphor. Read it like you're hungry for it. The way to do that is to think about your ancestors—where they came from; where they are. I know you guys have a hard time because you think you're Westerners, which is funny. But you aren't really* (personal communication, November 13, 2017).

Participants were well-read about the Kwakwaka'wakw and literature written within and about Kwakwaka'wakw traditional territory (Glass, 2021; Robertson & Kwagu'ł gixsam clan, 2012). Several participants printed hard copies of origin stories for me to read; others recommended books, including ethnographic books, written by authors living in the traditional territory of the Kwakwaka'wakw (Boas & Hunt, 1905: p. 7–25, 165–247; Halliday, 1935; Morton & Proctor, 2016; Proctor & Maximchuk, 2003). It was supported and recommended that I read existing literature about the Kwakwaka'wakw by non-Indigenous Peoples mainly because these books held local knowledge about the areas where the Kwakwaka'wakw live.

Considering the copious amount of literature written about the Kwakwaka'wakw, I garnered insight from contemporary scholars who had developed long-term and co-authorship with Kwakwaka'wakw communities (Glass, 2021; Robertson & Kwagu'ł gixsam clan, 2012). In the introductory chapter of Leslie Robertson's co-authored book with the Kwagu'ł gixsam clan

(2012), Robertson supported what I found during this research: that the Kwakwaka'wakw are well-read on the accounts written about us. To be inclusive of a Kwakwaka'wakw voice in the book, Robertson used a grounded-theory approach—"I didn't know what I was going to write" (personal communication, 2014)—that shaped a co-authored story about a family story and an ethnographic account. The grounded theory approach meant a community perspective was the driver; archives and ethnographic accounts were supplementary to a community perspective. Aaron Glass's (2021) *Writing the Hamatsa: Ethnography, Colonialism, and the Cannibal Dance* comprehensively and critically sifted through accounts written about the Kwakwaka'wakw from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Scholarship has changed since the nineteenth century since the Kwakwaka'wakw were not the original audience of accounts written about them, since it was assumed that culture would not exist into the future (Glass, 2021; Grounds, 2021; Kehoe, 1983). Glass is critical about the "pervasiveness of misinformation that travels through time" (Glass & Everson, 2022) found in the literature that followed the nineteenth century as a result of authors reduplicating, without critically considering, ethical researcher citation approaches to documenting Kwakwaka'wakw history and culture (Glass, 2021). As an interviewee involved in researching archived information about the Kwakwaka'wakw explains:

*But I think with any of the research ... it's the same type of principle as, you know, finding something that they say and then supporting it from others. So, it's really quite a time-consuming thing to do .... I find myself still trying to get better organized at it. If I find a piece of information that I'm like, oh, I'll highlight that information, or I'll highlight that passage, or I'll bookmark it or whatever, and I'll keep it in my mind or jot it down somewhere where I don't lose it and then if I come*

*across another thing that's similar, I could say, oh, there's a second piece of information on that and that's supportive, right? Because I know there are some things particularly with George Hunt that are very hard to support. I know through some of the other researchers they found stuff on Hunt, him saying something and then they have yet to ever find supporting evidence of what Hunt had written. So, they're not laying blame, they're just saying well maybe it's possible that Hunt just didn't get first-hand information and got second-hand information or if he had first-hand information, he didn't write it down right away and just wrote it when he got back home back type of thing, so we don't really know. (personal communication, June 4, 2016).*

The quote above summarizes a need to cross-reference nineteenth-century literature. George Hunt was critiqued concerning how he recorded information. Hunt was of Tlingit and English descent and married into the Kwakwaka'wakw culture, thus he may have always been on some level considered an outsider (Bruchac, 2014; Glass, 2021). Questions of validity of information arise because Hunt was an employee of Boas, paid by the page, perhaps about 10 thousand pages of documentation, much of which were not published. Hence, it is probable the hiring of Hunt to collect information about the Kwakwaka'wakw dictated the large volume of material for Boas to review and it also introduced power dynamics in the research relationship between Boas and Hunt (Berman, 2000, p. 36; Bruchac, 2014; Wickwire, 2019). Boas and Hunt often did not reveal if their work was written with second- or third-hand information or how many informants were consulted. Further, Hunt is noted for travelling with a small notebook, which was easy to conceal, so it is questioned if his information is verbatim, a mix of what Hunt recalled, or information he constructed after the fact (Bruchac, 2014). Further, in Chapter Five, I

synthesize Indigenous feminist literature that criticizes early accounts of Indigenous women, including by Boas and Hunt, as being based on social norms of the nineteenth to early twentieth centuries that confounded the norms for Indigenous women with Eurocentric ideals and culture.

The strengths of the collaboration, in general, were Boas' expertise, including ecology, geography, history, and culture (Darnell, Smith, Hamilton, & Hancock, 2015). Boas taught Hunt an orthography in Kwakwaka'wakw and had Hunt transcribe in an ancient Indigenous language; there are 11 volumes of texts of that documented ethnographic work submitted by Hunt in the Kwakwaka'wakw language and translated to English by Boas (Berman, 2000). Published texts are numerous, lengthy, and described as raw and unprocessed translations of Hunt's works by Boas (Berman 2000, p. 13). Hunt's expertise included the knowledge of the Kwakwaka'wakw language and the duration of documentation with his family (Bruchac, 2014; Nicolson, 2013). The Boas and Hunt's collaboration has left a legacy that informed generations of research. Indeed, the four-decade collaboration resulted in profuse documentation that has sparked marvel, appreciation, and debate.

Marianne Nicolson, a Musgumakw Dzawada'enuxw scholar and artist explained an important point that current and future Kwakwaka'wakw are now able to move past the position of being the "observed" to the "observer" now that there is more agency for Indigenous Peoples: "By reviewing ethnographic publications, manuscripts, archival and legal records, and material collections with a critical eye. We now occupy the position of the observer" (as cited in Glass, 2021, p. 21; Nicolson, 2013). Where once we were written about, without reading the manuscripts before or until well after publication, we have become authors in our own right (Justice, 2018; Nicolson, 2013; Wilson, 2008). Further, Andy Everson stated on the topic of Kwakwaka'wakw representation in the literature that Kwakwaka'wakw now have the abilities



within our own researchers and research to read the literature and decide “what needs to be used and what needs to be left behind” (Glass & Everson, 2022).

I wanted to be mindful and ethical about citation practices (Ahmed, 2013; Tuck et al., 2015). Daniel Justice (2018) considered citation politics in the final chapter of his book *Why Indigenous Literature Matters* and a need to avoid reproducing outmoded narratives by explaining that “especially that we not continue to replicate the closed circuit of hetero-patriarchy in affirming the same group of voices over and over again” (p. 241). There are now Indigenous scholars to cite who weren't available in decades past. As an Indigenous female graduate student in the twenty-first century, I benefitted from many Indigenous scholars who went before me and broke many glass ceilings.

Consequently, this research actively considered citation of Indigenous scholars, Indigenous feminist literature, STEM research in partnership with Indigenous communities, and community sources by Indigenous community members and organizations. Indigenous authors were especially identified as it was essential to legitimize the knowledge held by said authors who work with Indigenous communities and focus on justice issues related to Indigenous topics (CBC Radio, 2018; Caverley, Lyall, Pizzirani, & Bulkan, 2020; Tuck, Yang, & Gaztambide-Fernández, 2015).

### **3.2.5 Research Implementation**

The research methods included triangulation with semi-structured interviews and workshops, sometimes called sharing circles in Indigenous methodology books (Chilisa, 2012) and cross-referenced information with existing literature.

### **3.2.5.1 Interviews**

This research was co-developed with the K̓w̓ik̓wasut'inuxw Haxwa'mis and Kwakwaka'wakw participants. In total, there were 33 semi-structured interviews with 42 people, resulting in 391 pages of verbatim notes from audio recordings and dozens of handwritten notes from interviews with people who preferred not being recorded. Before each interview, all participants were told their identities would be kept anonymous. All interviews were face to face. I conducted all of the interviews and arranged a time to visit the participants at a place and time most convenient for them.

### **3.2.5.2 First-year Interviews**

Interviews began in July 2016, when I moved to the Village of Gwa'yasd̓am's, the only remaining habituated village on Gilford Island. There were 21 interviews with 29 people and took 265 pages of transcribed verbatim notes from 22 participants. I took 24 pages of notes for seven participants who preferred not to be recorded.

Most of the 2016 interviews occurred with residents living at Gwa'yasd̓am's and in Kwakwaka'wakw traditional territory; other interview locations were Nanaimo, North Vancouver, and Victoria. Interviews were conducted at an agreed-upon location that suited the participant, such as their homes, the forest, a carving studio, a boat, a pier, a local restaurant, the Gilford Island band office, or my home. Most interviews were one-on-one; however, by choice of the participants, some interviews were completed in small family groups—brother and sisters, cousins, aunt and nieces, and mother and son. It is no coincidence that all participants who engaged in group interviews were related to one another and demonstrated the strong kinship ties within the community. The group interviews seemed to flow well because they welcomed

dialogue and participants had a chance to remember things and support each other's points in a discussion (Nikolakis, Akter, & Nelson, 2016). Interviews were one to three hours depending on the interviewee, with most being about one hour. One Elder said he preferred more extended interviews.

### **3.2.5.3 Second-year and Follow-up Interviews**

The second year of interviews continued while I was based in 'Yālis. There were 10 interviews in 2017 with residents living in the Kwakwaka'wakw territory, including the villages of Gwa'yasdām's and 'Yālis and the towns of Port McNeill and Port Hardy.

In 2018 and 2019, there were three interviews.

Relationships with participants continued with verbatim notes handed back to them, community updates, my extended visits in community. With those interested in doing so, I had follow-up discussions about their interviews and the research in general. In the following years (2020–2023), after finishing the interviews, I continued communicating with Elders, mainly aunts and uncles, to learn the Kwakwaka'wakw language and about traditional foods.

### **3.2.5.4 Workshops and Public Talks**

“Workshops” was a preferred term for what is sometimes called talking circles in Indigenous methodology literature. Workshops meant many things during this research including group analysis sessions and meetings for gathering information for this research. Throughout, there were “workshops” where I shared information about this research in general or to share information I had about the forests with the community.

Typically, what was consistent during workshops was that sessions would last about half a day and begin or end with lunch. Meals with traditional foods and small gifts or door prizes were shared at workshops. Sharing food was an important aspect for this community-based research since it “speaks to the holistic nature of Indigenous knowledge and the importance of interdisciplinarity and openness in avoiding further fragmenting fragile knowledge through discipline-specific boundary making” (Lyall et al., 2019, p. 419).

There were two workshops for the purposes of group analysis and to rank coded research topics, in 2017, in Gwa'yasdām's and 'Yālis.

Thereafter, there were three workshops held in 2017 in Gwa'yasdām's and 'Yālis for the purpose of collecting information and content for empirical chapters of this research. The themes were chosen after community involvement earlier in 2016 and in 2017 (see “Community as Researchers” section 3.2.2). The format varied, with me asking questions around different topics about the seasonal rounds of food harvesting, traditional food production, and the Kwakwala language. For discussion purposes during workshops, I shared several traditional-use maps or two 'ma'mak'wayu (Kwakwala calendars) showing seasons used for collecting different traditional foods.

At another workshop, I shared a 100-page photo book created by myself using an Apple program to begin discussions about the forests. It contained high-resolution photographs of plants accompanied with their Kwakwala, English, and Latin names. The “plant book” was created for a Kwakwala language reclamation project about plants as a product of a directed study class (Lyall et al., 2019). Most of the same Elders involved in the plant-reclamation project returned for the workshops for this research.



**Figure 3.2 Photo Dictionary with Pictures of Plants, Kwakwala, English, and Latin Names**

From the beginning of this research, it was clear that part of a reciprocal research relationship was that sharing knowledge was not a one-way street and I would be asked to share information back with the community. So, I shared my forest knowledge. As an example, I once shared a walking tour of medicinal plants and I led a salve-making workshop the summer I lived at Gwa'yasdām's. For instance, in advance of the oral defence at the University of British Columbia, a presentation was offered at Gwa'yasdām's to present the research findings for community feedback and information in March 2023.

Further, I presented introductions and updates about this research at three Tribal Council annual general meetings (2014 through to 2017) and several other community-hosted public events. In total, there were 10 public talks. The topics varied over the years and were held at Gwa'yasdām's, 'Yalis, Campbell River, and Vancouver, with over 160 people attending. I

provided research updates and discussed and received feedback on research topics at workshops and public talks.

### **3.2.6 Reflection and Being in Place**

An essential part of participatory research methods, especially for someone conducting research with their own community, is self-reflection (Chilisa, 2012). For me, reflection was an active endeavour and meant being in the Kwakwaka'wakw territory and participating in my culture. I learned from Kovach (2009) that while it was necessary to consider *how* to conduct research, *where* research was conducted was essential, too. While working on her doctorate, Kovach moved from where she was studying at the University of Victoria to her traditional territory in Saskatchewan for interviews and to write her dissertation:

*That I was based in the general vicinity of my traditional territory was critical to this research. I believe where we are, and the daily influences of our lives, shape how we think and write. If I were located on Vancouver Island, the flavour and feel of this research would have been drastically different. It would have been the writing of an expatriate Cree/Saulteaux from the cafés of Victoria* (Kovach, 2009, p. 52).

Consequently, from early on my research design was influenced by Kovach's method of being in the community. I considered it essential to go to the place I would eventually write about. As a professional forester, I hadn't written about a forest without seeing the landscapes, lands, forests, animals, and waters. I felt I had known the forests of other First Nations better than those in my own First Nation territory. Since I reside in North Vancouver, an eight-hour

commute from the Kwakwaka'wakw territory, I would plan to stay in community for extended periods, averaging about two months a year from 2016 to 2021.



**Figure 3.3 A'tli at Kwaxwālawadi**

I moved to the main settlement of Gwa'yasdam's in July and August 2016. In 2017, I moved to 'Yalis, from September to December. I made dozens of trips to the Kwakwaka'wakw territory for about two months a year in 2018 and 2019. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I remained in contact with the community, but did not visit Gwa'yasdam's after February 2020 until March 2023. I lived and worked at Kwaxwālawadi, another Kwikwasut'inuxw village roughly a 15-minute motorboat ride from Gwa'yasdam's, from 2020 to 2021. Being in the Kwakwaka'wakw territory as much as possible helped me get to know the territory better and develop relationships with people in my community.

Throughout this research, I joined community events, lived in the community, and went out with community members to collect traditional forest resources. This took place and extended past the interview stage of interviews. I had the opportunity to drive most of the drivable roads on Gilford Island. Still, most of the travel was by boat (motorboat, canoe, or kayak), and I circumnavigated the island and the Broughton Archipelago twice by motorboat. I viewed the traditional territory via helicopter during two helicopter trips sponsored by Interfor (the company with the most logging rights within K̓w̓ik̓wasut'nux̓w H̓ax̓wa'mis traditional territory).



**Figure 3.4 Fieldtour in 2016 by Motorboat and Truck**

It was significant for me to travel around the territory with community members to collect traditional resources. We collected medicines and berries, long-line halibut fished, dug for clams, and gathered cedar bark. I saw the seasons and forest resources movements by staying



for extended periods over a few years. I practiced some of the seasonal rounds by moving around the territory as the seasons changed to follow and harvest traditional foods. Lessons on the lands taught me about our practices and heritage and grounded place-based knowledge of the forests, foreshores, and waters. Further, by immersing myself in place, I learned and saw things I would have only talked about or read about in interviews and books. As Leanne Betasamosake Simpson argues:

*Not one time has an Elder ever told me to go to school to learn Indigenous knowledge.*

*Not one time has an Elder told me to go and get a degree so that I can pass Indigenous knowledge down to my children.... The land must once again become the pedagogy. (L.B. Simpson, 2014, p. 14).*

This research allowed me more time to live in community. However, as a community member, my relationships with the Kwakwaka'wakw will endure past the length of this research. How I had ethically acted before, during, or after this research will have bearing on my career.

### **3.2.7 Reflection and Evaluation**

In 2018, I evaluated the participatory action and collaborative-research process by completing a form developed by Dr. Ronald Trosper and his graduate class named “Collaborative research scoring rubric for projects with Indigenous Peoples” (Trosper et al., 2014; see Appendix B). I evaluated my inclusion in research questions, topics, triangulation methods, and reciprocity in knowledge.

Yet, there was room for improvement. Firstly, at the beginning of this research, I unilaterally decided, in the research design, to keep participants anonymous. But participants contributed valuable information to this research. Some of the participants may have wanted

their perspectives credited. However, it felt awkward to ask after the fact and change the original offer of keeping participants anonymous by offering to give them credit. I would change this research design for future projects. I would ask if the participants wanted to be credited or remain anonymous.

Secondly, I decided not to include the community in assisting with conducting interviews. The University of British Columbia requires that researchers take an online course about ethics, Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans Course on Research Ethics (TCPS 2: CORE), before they begin interviewing people. I sensed it would have been too much to ask the community to study an institution-based sense of ethics before working within a community-based-research framework.

Thirdly, while group analysis is reflected in the research topics, there were still many priorities about the forests that were important to community, and the four empirical chapters cover a subset of the priorities highlighted in Appendix C. The Kwakwaka language ranked highly, and Indigenous language is also an important part of the peoplehood model. Therefore, aspects of the Kwakwaka language are highlighted through this research, including Kwakwaka place names instead of English names. Relational Kwakwaka words for the plants and animals are used throughout.

Further, I asked questions about forest governance and policies during interviews. While Chapter Seven talks about the forest governance of cedar - other topics, like monitoring were discussed, but not addressed in this research. Prioritized were the topics of traditional foods and community-based initiatives because these were the topics that seemed more important to the participants overall.

Lastly, I could not co-author with the community because this is a dissertation was to submit to a university with the purpose of being authored by a Ph.D. student. Many scholars developing research projects with Indigenous Peoples are now offering co-authorship in collaborative research designs after a long-standing relationship with Indigenous Peoples.

### **3.3 Summary**

In this chapter I shared the Indigenous Methodologies and research participatory action research methods to be inclusive to an Indigenous voice in the research design. Research methods were shared.

In the following four chapters, I share some of the research topics that were co-developed with community.

## Chapter 4: Ṭsekame' Origin Story and the Forests

### 4.1 Introduction

This is the first of four chapters for research dissemination. It is a result of asking, “What does our creation story tell us about our relationship with the lands?” I learned cultural teachings from two quotes from participants about the Ṭsekame' story that inform our place-based knowledge, forest practices, and ethics.

Beginning a research chapter with an origin story is relevant as it sets a context and a holistic description of a Kwakwaka'wakw worldview. Further, this research used a peoplehood model for its recognition that Indigenous cultures still exist despite colonialism (Cornassel, 2012; Holm et al., 2003). Therefore, a Kwakwaka'wakw perspective about people-forest interactions begins with a chapter about an origin story of the Kwikwasut'inuxw. This chapter intentionally centres an Indigenous perspective to share the importance of origin stories and learn about the forests from a community perspective. Without Ṭsekame', a Kwikwasut'inuxw perspective of the forests would be decontextualized. Kwakwaka'wakw origin stories tell us about our people-forest interactions because of our deep-rooted history formed over thousands of years of living with our surroundings. Indigenous stories explain Indigenous Peoples' relationality with the earth, forests, waters, and sky (Masco, 1995). Margaret Kovach (2021) defines relational as “self in relationship with the natural world, the human world, kin, community, place, and land; relationships over time; and interdependent and collectivist relationships” (p. 74).

By their very nature, stories tell us what our ancestors were up to, where we lived, where we travelled throughout the year in seasonal rounds to collect forest resources, and what foods and medicines were central to our culture and well-being.

I purposely focussed on Indigenous knowledge production since there is an internal prerogative and a great deal of responsibility to retell our stories, especially to the next generations. Stories continue to be told and are relived in ceremony. Therefore, they remain a part of Kwakwaka'wakw's living culture, identity, and resilience.

## **4.2 Cultural Teachings Found in Story**

Q'um Q'um Xiim (Jo-Ann Archibald), in her ground breaking work *Indigenous Storywork: Educating the Heart, Mind, Body, and Spirit* (2008), defines cultural teachings found in stories as “cultural values, beliefs, lessons, and understandings that are passed from generation to generation” (p.1). Further, teachings included ethical principles and practices (Archibald, 2008). Teachings in this chapter are rooted and found from many sources, including Indigenous stories, spirituality, oral histories, natural laws, and extended family relations (Archibald, 2008; Borrows, 2010; Trosper, 2009). This chapter's focus is on how Kwakwaka'wakw teachings informed forest practices and principles that sustained the forests for millennia.

The benefits of following the teachings are staying connected or reconnecting to the places relevant to our ancestors and future generations by being conscientious about the impacts of our actions that informed our forest practices.

## **4.3 Methodology**

Considering Indigenous Peoples' stories was a way of critically decentering colonial knowledge frameworks and a “way to make Indigenous Peoples lived realities more visible on their own terms and expression of self-determination” (de Leeuw & Hunt, 2018, p. 9). Further, “the right, the space, the voice to ‘tell our own stories from our own perspectives’ has been an important

aspect of decolonizing knowledge” (Smith, 2019, p. xi). Thus, this chapter focused on the Indigenous Peoples’ stories and the forests from a community perspective.

Because these ancient stories were spoken, not written, it was helpful to talk with K̓w̓ik̓w̓asut’inux̓w Haxwa'mis community members about them. During interviews in 2016 and 2017, I asked, “What does our creation story tell us about our relationship with the forests?” Most centrally involved were two women and two men from interviews in 2016. Verbatim interview transcripts were shared with participants, followed by repeat interviews in 2017. Results are quoted in this chapter to explain what is relevant to the community about the complex relationships the Kwakwaka’wakw have with the forests and teachings, Indigenous knowledge, and Indigenous laws that can be drawn from the people-forest interactions. Kwakwaka’wakw researchers cross-reference existing literature with family versions of stories and by talking with other Elders and knowledge keepers:

*R2: Some read about it. We are born into it.*

*R1: It belongs to us, so we have the access, and we can do it right.*

*R2: Little bit from so and so, little bit [four other names mentioned], little bit from all these guys, all their lives. We heard it when my mom had parties; heard it when my mom had soccer tournaments; we heard it all the time (personal communication, July 18, 2016).*

Participants supported, and recommended, that I cross-reference interviews and existing literature, including the literature written about the Kwakwaka’wakw. So, for this chapter I read published versions of the origin stories of the K̓w̓ik̓w̓asut’inux̓w. Some of the stories are longer than others, some over 150 pages long (Boas & Hunt, 1905, p. 65–247, p. 499; Galois, 1994, p. 114–115; Rohner, 1964, p. 47–48; Turner, 2014, V. 2., p. 231–232; inter alia). I did not find

many published versions of the Haxwa'mis story and was offered no quotes in interviews, so I do not include the Haxwa'mis origin story of Wakeman Sound.

I do not share individual family versions of the T̓sek̓ame' story that I have heard or read as a community member, and they are not included in this research. Nor did I compare the quotes with stories I read. Instead, I listened to the participants, reread the verbatim notes, and interpreted the quotes chosen for how they answered the questions about how Indigenous stories gave a voice about Kw̓ikw̓asut'inuxw's relationships with the forests.

## **4.4 Background**

### **4.4.1 Kwakw̓ak̓a'wakw Origin Stories**

*Our stories are about how we became; all of our traditional stories are about how we started out, how we all became and then how we separated; if you listen to all the stories, how the wolves are there in Kingcome, right, and then one of them came out Gilford, Wakeman, that is how we became. The stories, it shows where we are from, where we came out. We were here a long time ago—those legends are telling us this is where we are out of Bond Sound, Kingcome, Wakeman (personal communication, August 5, 2016).*

Origin stories describe places the Kwakw̓ak̓a'wakw “came to be” as put by a Kwakw̓ak̓a'wakw woman raised in Gwa'yasd̓am's. Therefore, stories tie metaphysical and mythological perspectives of the forests and explain how we “began” as animals and spirits. The story of T̓sek̓ame' begins in a time of antiquity, a beginning of time for humans, when our first ancestors interacted more freely with nature. However, the Kwakw̓ak̓a'wakw epistemology about time considers there were four eras of the myth age (Berman, 2000; Nicolson, 2013). The Kwakw̓ak̓a'wakw origin stories convey aspects of myth time being a time of transformation

from the earth being dark to light. Humans were not here during the first eras of myth time, and what is notable in the origin stories is that when humans arrived, the forests, rivers, oceans, tides, salmon, and animals were already in existence (Berman, 2004; Reid, 2004). In later parts of myth time is when supernatural beings began transforming into humans, and the stories explain how our founding ancestors had noble children who became the first Chiefs and matriarchs to carry on to describe lands that we are ordained to inherit (Berman, 2000; Boas & Hunt, 1905). The supernatural beings came from the sky, the underground, the ocean, or forests (Boas, 1895; Masco, 1995). Noble people of each 'nā'mima (clans/extended family unit/"of one kind") from each First Nation are descendants of these supernatural and spiritual beings and animals.

Below is an excerpt of a published story of the K̓w̓ik̓w̓asut'inuxw origin story. In some published stories of the K̓w̓ik̓w̓asut'inuxw origin story, T̓sek̓ame' and his wife descended from the sky as two k̓ulus, supernatural birds that have down on their bodies, and transformed themselves into humans by removing their k̓ulus masks from their heads (Boas & Hunt, 1905: 165–247, 499; Galois, 1994):

*It is said that the k̓ulus (a supernatural bird) and his wife lived in our sky. The name of the k̓ulus was Too Large. He became very lonely and said to his wife, "Oh mistress, let us go to the world beneath us, to see it." His wife answered immediately, "Oh, master, you know your name. You would then be too large in the world below us." But Too Large only said, "Go and get ready so that we may go." He put on his k̓ulus mask and his wife did, too. They flew through the door of the world above our sky. Narrated by Jim King (Galois, 1994, p. 114).*



In other published versions of the story (Rohner, 1964, pp. 47–48; Turner, 2014; V. 2., p. 231–232), the Kwikwasut'inuxw Peoples did not come from the sky; instead, they came out of a cedar tree:

*And my ancestor ts'equamey ... was told that this flood was coming, and he was told how to prepare for it. And he was told to go to look for a large cedar tree and to hollow it out.... And so that's what he did. He prepared the tree and he put all of the food and all the things he would need in the tree, and then he sealed himself and his family in the tree.... When he entered the cedar tree, his name was hawilk<sup>w</sup>ala, which means "cedar tree" but when he came out, he was told, "You will no longer be hawilk<sup>w</sup>ala; your name will be ts'equamey, which means that you will be the first person to ever perform the cedar-bark ceremony" narrated by Dr. Daisy Sewid-Smith (Turner, 2014 V2. p. 231)*

Wilkw (cedar) is prevalent in this version of the story. Hawilk<sup>w</sup>ala (cedar tree) was the name of one of the first Kwikwasut'inuxw beings, whose name changed to Tsekame'. Cedar protected our first ancestors from a flood, and cedar housed and transported the family during the post-glaciation era. For many reasons, cedar was a central part of the creation of the Kwikwasut'inuxw, so it is revealing how central cedar is to our culture.

The supernatural beings that established the Kwikwasut'inux Nation were Tsekame' and Tsekaga. While Tsekame' and Tsekaga took up human form, they retained some supernatural powers.

Tsekame' is described as a shaman and a little cedar man with supernatural powers (personal communication, July 18, 2016). Shaman strengthen themselves by going to the forests (Glass, 2021, p. 48; Halliday, 1935). Cedar protected Tsekame' and gave him strength.

Specifically, T̓sek̓ame' received great strength from the forests through large cedar bark rings worn around his neck, ankles, and wrists. To this day, many Kwakw̓ak̓a'wakw go to the forests for purification and strength; a contemporary description would be a forest bath.

In some versions of the story, T̓sekaga came down from the upper world with Too Large. In other versions of the story, T̓sekaga was already transformed from a wolf into a human. T̓sekaga is noted as becoming the first life-giver to the successive generations that now make up the K̓wik̓wasut'inuxw Peoples. T̓sekaga fed and healed people by preparing traditional foods and meals of significance for her guests and neighbours:

*Now, Winter Dance Woman [T̓sekaga] dug some cinquefoil-roots and put them down by the side of the fire, and she took a kettle. Then she dug a hole side of the fire. Then she put into it what she dug. Then she took her tongs and picked up the red-hot stones and put them into the kettle. Then the stones half-filled the kettle. Then she took the cinquefoil-roots and put them into water. Then she put them into the kettle and sprinkle them with water. Then she covered [the kettle] with an old mat. It wasn't long before they were done. Then she took them out. Then she let the cinquefoil-root steam off. Then, Winter Dance Woman said, "Oh my dear ones! Now you see what I am doing with these cinquefoil-roots. This is our food in the upper world. Now you will taste it." (Boas 1905, pg.177–178)*

T̓sek̓ame' and T̓sekaga had four (five or six in some versions) children. The children of T̓sek̓ame' and T̓sekaga grew up quickly to become the noble humans of the K̓wik̓wasut'inuxw (Berman, 2000, p. 90; Boas & Hunt, 1905).

T̓sek̓ame' found strategic places to build houses for his children and moved them to areas that would become the K̓wik̓wasut'inuxw territory. Prime locations for village sites chosen had

standard criteria. They provided shelter from inclement weather, had fresh water, and were close to where families could trap fish and harvest other wild foods from the forests, oceans, and foreshores (Boas & Hunt, 1905).

Although there is variation in the story about how they got here, how they met, their initial names, and how many children they had, it is accepted there are different versions of the same story as explained by a knowledge keeper that I spoke with:

*Different people tell different stories, depending on which 'nq'mima you are coming out of. Each 'nq'mima has a little bit of a change. You know what 'nq'mima is?*

*Family. A unit, a name, and a lineage (personal communication, July 18, 2016).*

While it is acceptable that there are different versions of a story, storytellers, individuals, and communities generally favour stories handed down to them from close family members.

The descendants of the origin stories legacies continue through genealogy. Genealogy is a topic of which the Kwakwaka'wakw families knowledgeable about heritage and culture are well informed. The Scows and the Coons are considered one of the original and true families of Kwikwasut'inuxw and are descendants of Tse'kame'. Kwakwaka'wakw 'nq'mima have cultural privileges, otherwise called “treasures” or “boxes” (treasure boxes that depict family privileges and prerogatives), depicted and derived from origin stories, other stories, dances, names, stories, and ceremonies (feasts and potlatches).

#### **4.4.2 Language Found within Indigenous Story**

An Indigenous voice is heard through story; it is an ancient voice from a long time ago. Origin stories were formed by Kwakwaka'wakw surroundings and created in Kwakwala, an Indigenous language. Stories were told for generations by our ancestors. Many published origin stories were

spoken in Kwakwaka and translated into English. When changing the stories from being orated to written from Kwakwaka to English, one should be careful to consider the original meaning, interpretations, and cultural teachings (Archibald, 2008, p. 7). Stories are not just translated words from Kwakwaka to English; stories are told to share worldviews. It was relatively recently these stories were translated from Kwakwaka to English; they hold an Indigenous way of thinking and teaching, so listening to or reading stories translated from Kwakwaka can teach us what was culturally significant to us. Where do the stories take place? What foods were being eaten? It may be necessary for the listener to interpolate meaning into stories because they are not often told in a way to answer the questions directly.

#### **4.5 Place-Based Knowledge and Oral History Found in Story**

*If you look at our origin stories, that is where you get our lands.* (personal communication, May 12, 2021).

The story of *Tsekwame* describes unique places of significance to the Kwikwasut'inuxw. Village sites are authenticated by archeology or by looking at the village sites from the ocean, many of which dramatically display our history with deep clamshell middens exceeding four metres deep. The story of *Tsekwame* lists place names that are now considered ancient village sites at Hada (Bond Sound), Meet-up (Viner Sound), Kukwapa (Insect Island), and Gwa'yasdām's (Gilford Village) (Boas, 1934, pp. 36–37).

Traditionally, extended families had access to resource sites close to their places of origin. Extended families would make seasonal rounds of resources sites throughout the year for clam beaches, herring spawning grounds, berry patches, crabapple-tree orchards, halibut banks, clover-root beds, eelgrass beds, and rivers. If resources were in abundance, First Nations shared

salmon-fishing areas (sounds, bays, and river spots) and eulachon-bearing rivers with neighbouring families and First Nations (Boas & Hunt, 1905; Galois, 1994, p. 130; Trosper, 2009).

## **4.6 Lessons About the Forests from Story**

We will read in the following sections about how, early on, T̓sek̓ame's life was challenged by another supernatural being and needed to prove himself worthy of producing a kingdom.

Below are two quotes from interviews about the T̓sek̓ame' origin story orated by a hereditary Chief, a matriarch, and a knowledge keeper about when I asked what the story of T̓sek̓ame' can teach us about the forests. The quotes helped me interpret an ancient story to answer questions about Indigenous Peoples' relationships with the forests. Notably, it is up to the listener to think about a story's meaning and the many lessons that could be interpreted from stories (Archibald, 2008, p. 16).

### **4.6.1 Quote 1**

The first quote that helped interpret an ancient story to answer questions about Indigenous Peoples' relationships with the forests was from a hereditary chief.

*Our people always used the woods or the forest as a spiritual place to go to find their, you know, either songs, especially around songs, and to find inspiration and to find who they are. Like we used a lot of around our p̓asa (potlatch), our ... where we practise our culture was always connected to the forest, right? We're one and the same. All our masks, all our ... everything we used in the big house came from the*

*forest. It came from the cedar tree, you know. And so, we've been really connected spiritually to the forest through millennium and millennium.*

*Our legend of Tsekame' goes back to the forest. Tsekame' was known as Hawilkwala and he was the cedar tree, and ... there was a message from the Creator to be given to Kwikwasut'inuxw and no one amongst the animals wanted to deliver this message .... The deer said no, I don't want to deliver the message because Tsekame' uses every part of me. He uses everything. He uses my horns. He skins me and he uses it for his clothes. He treats me really well. I don't want to deliver this message. No one wanted to disrespect Kwikwasut'inuxw. Hawilkwala [said], I'll deliver the message because I am everything he does. I am his utensils. I am his house. I am his totem poles. I am his regalia that he dances with. I will deliver this message and he delivered the message to Kwikwasut'inuxw and Kwikwasut'inuxw killed him four times. He, in no particular order, he drowned him, he buried him, ... he drowned him, buried him, threw him in a fire and cut his head off, and each time Hawilkwala came back to life. And that's when Kwikwasut'inuxw listened to him and brought him up in the front and named him Tsekame', and Tsekame' to this day has always been our crest ... from the Gilford Island people, he's always been our spiritual leader in that sense, eh. But it goes back to the forest again. It goes back to our old people's connection to the forest and ownership.*

*Yeah, the message was that Kwikwasut'inuxw was straying away from the rules of what the Creator had sent down even though he was still doing the [traditional practices correctly], like the fish said I don't want to deliver the message because when he eats me, he places my bones back into the stream. The deer said I don't*

*want to deliver it because he skins me and he eats every part of me, he doesn't waste anything. I don't want to deliver the message.*

*He was on track with that but ... I mean ... the message was how we treat one another as people, you know. He was straying away from that. Yeah, around respect, around that type of stuff. So, the message was, you know, that was in the teachings from the Creator how we interconnect with one another, right? So, Hawilkwālat delivered that message to him that we have to be more loving toward one another.*

*I: And then so Ṭsekame' was rewarded for calling out Kwikwasut'inuxw?*

*R: Yeah, and Kwikwasut'inuxw gave him the name Ṭsekame'. Yeah, and that's ... you know, that's one of our main crests from the Kwikwasut'inuxw (personal communication, July 16, 2016).*

#### **4.6.1.1 Relationality with the Forests**

In this quote, we learn that during myth time Indigenous People could talk with animals and the plants (Berman, 2000; Reid, 2004). The Kwakwaka'wakw consider plants and animals to have souls, spiritual energy, and equal footing as humans (Boas, 1921, p. 1,200). Accordingly, nature lives on its own terms (Pierotti & Wildcat, 2000). Found in Indigenous stories, we learn there is less of a distinction between humans and non-humans by Kwakwaka'wakw and many Indigenous People of North America (Archibald, 2008; Cajete, 2000; Nadasdy, 2003). Although recently, Kwakwaka'wakw may not interact the physical aspects of their territory like they used to, it is the relationships with the animals, plants, other people, and the awi'nakola that is essential for individual and community survival (Nadasdy, 2003). Certainly, Ṭsekame' was part of nature and not separate from it. Further, Indigenous knowledge found in this origin story is

about the forests is based on close observations of nature over time and includes ceremony and spirituality. The lesson is about humans being part of nature this lends itself to be more respectful and inclusive to treasure all life and surroundings as your kin. Further, being part of nature meant no hierarchy or management rights over the animals, plants, and awi'nakola.

#### **4.6.1.2 A Reciprocal Relationship and Local Decision-making**

As noted in the previous lesson, we learn that the animals, trees, and beings were connected, talking to one another and working towards living together respectfully. There is recognition that the forests and animals can sustain and protect the community. Also, that humans have a collective responsibility towards the physical surroundings and animals to perpetuate the natural world into the future (Hart, 2010; Cajete, 2000).

The teaching is that T̓sek̓ame's actions would impact others in the community that included plants and animals and vice versa, so it was about teaching a reciprocal relationship. The reciprocal relationship informs ethical forest practices and processes to ensure the animals and plants supported human actions (Langdon, 2006). In addition to that, the origin story shares the localized place-based ties the Kwakw̓ak̓a'wakw have to their surroundings, and this supports local decision-making (Borrows, 2010, p. 121).

#### **4.6.1.3 Being On Track**

If T̓sek̓ame' had not been "on track," lived a good life, and developed *good* relationships with his surroundings, he may not have survived.

The example in the quote using every part of the animal (Nadasdy, 2003). This quote teaches a powerful lesson about how to treat animals, people, and the surroundings. We learned a



lesson about the importance of respecting the animals that are harvested and how to treat one another. K̓w̓ik̓wasut'inuxw was held accountable for his treatment of the animals by not wasting them and showing respect for them and the environment. It is well documented that First Nations throughout the Pacific Northwest took their relationships with fish, particularly salmon, seriously (Cullon, 2013; Langdon, 2007, Turner et al., 2008). Many First Nations in the Pacific Northwest have lessons about taking the bones back to the rivers or ocean (Boas & Hunt, 1905, p. 390–92; Boas, 1921; M. Ignace & R. E. Ignace, 2017, p. 203; Langdon, 2007; Trosper, 2009 p. 41; Walens, 1981; inter alia). Kwakwaka'wakw believe in reincarnation for humans and animals alike, so putting fish bones back in the rivers will help their return to the rivers in future years (Berman, 2000; Masco, 1995; Walens, 1981). It was also important to treat animals well when harvesting them so their successive families might return in the following years (Nadasdy, 2003; Trosper, 2002; Walens, 1981). The belief in reincarnation shares an enduring long-term relationship with the awi'nakola. Hence, Indigenous stories include aspects of Indigenous science through a detailed knowledge of the life cycles of plants and animals in First Nations respective territories gained through observation and kinship (Cajete, 2000).

Scientists acknowledge that the salmon life cycle involves salmon returning to the same river where they were born to spawn several years later. Perhaps, Indigenous Peoples' resource practices and interactions with salmon had something to do with that. Indigenous scholars note that Indigenous science is more driven by ethics and sustainability than found in Western science (Reid et al., 2021). Looking at a definition of respect infers that an English definition of respect does not encapsulate a level of respect outlined in relationality and an Indigenous worldview that has high respect for non-humans (Nadasdy, 2003). While the example is to use every part of the animal or fish, the repercussions indicate that in Indigenous stories about the awi'nakola there

are often warnings for being exceptionally careful about how to behave. A missed step in following the teaching of respecting animals, plants, and other beings could have led to very harsh consequences.

The word closest to respect in Kwakwaka is *maya'xala*. *Maya'xala* infers a less transactional definition of respect and roughly translates to taking care of other people, property, and yourself (FirstVoices, 2022). It is a very high teaching in the Kwakwaka'wakw culture. *Maya'xala xan's awi'nakola* means to take care of the *awi'nakola* (land, sky, underwaters). Further, *Kwikwasut'inuxw* needed to obey to lesson of being loving and respectful to himself and kin, the Kwakwaka word, *galgapola* means to “strengthening one another”.

#### 4.6.2 Quote 2

I heard another summary of the same *Tsekame'* story from two family members within the community who would be considered a matriarch and a knowledge keeper. They repeat many of the exact details as the hereditary chief yet pick up on different elements of the *Tsekame'* story:

*R1: OK, I'll tell you what they do. They cut the head off, they drown you, throw you in a fire, they do four things to you, but you keep coming alive.*

*R2: K'ani'ki'lakw (the Transformer) started coming along ... and he heard this great shaman, and he liked to challenge all the different leaders of different First Nations, so of course, the raven flew in and told him that someone is coming to challenge him. The same thing happened to K'ani'ki'lakw, that somebody is there. So he said, “I've come to play with you.” He yelled at Tsekame' and Tsekame'. [They] came out and they started talking, and slaves came out and grabbed him, and all four of them jumped out of the canoe and grabbed Tsekame', quickly chopped his head off;*

*figured that was it, so they left and when they were getting way outside they were about to get off towards Blackfish Sound, and they can hear them working—that's how they say the stories—then they heard the loud noise, when they went down looking, Tsekame' was alive again.*

*R1: Can't kill him.*

*R2: Grabbed him, took him in the water, tied a rope around his neck, put a rock, and threw him over.*

*R1: Eh! [agrees].*

*R1: All the fish, whales, porpoises, and all started going around like this, all went around like this, and they made a vortex, led him back to the beach and then the third one was the fire, and I forgot how he came back, but he came back from that.*

*R2: The common people don't really wanna believe that we're supernatural, and that's how we kept control of everybody.*

*R1: Interesting, eh? That is your heritage.*

*R2: So, he was the great shaman—famous. Him and his son were famous up and down the coast back in the day. That was just the summary; it wasn't the full detail.*

*We just skimmed the top there. 'Cause we can get detailed with each dance, each story we just told you, and that's where our crests come from. "What's your crest?"*

*They'll name some animal.*

*R1: Ours is mainly the sisiutł (personal communication, July 18, 2016).*

#### **4.6.2.1 Animals and the Awi'nakola as a Council**

The fish, whales, porpoises, and surroundings saved T̓sek̓ame' by circling T̓sek̓ame' underwater and creating oxygen. Other times, it is unclear why or how T̓sek̓ame' was reincarnated. In some instances, it could have been that T̓sek̓ame's individual supernatural powers, character, and resolve secured his reincarnation. Ultimately, T̓sek̓ame' would not have survived without the help of the animals around him. This was during a time when animals talked with each other and supernatural beings. Each animal was given an equitable voice to judge how the plants, animals, and awi'nakola should be treated, and a decision was agreed upon collectively on how to proceed. If T̓sek̓ame' disrespected, misused, exploited, or acted superior to the animals, kin, and surroundings, he would be brought down significantly by not being reincarnated.

The teaching returns to a tempering of hierarchy with a teaching of reciprocity in the relationships about the forests. Even though T̓sek̓ame' is described as a great shaman of honourable character, the teaching is that some animals have special knowledge and powers. Therefore, "those with less formal power in society should also have a role in deciding how law should be interpreted and should apply to them" (Borrows, 2010, p. 121).

#### **4.6.2.2 T̓sek̓ame' Reincarnation**

*That's usually what happens; they learned their lesson first [#R1 agrees] (personal communication, July 18, 2016).*

In the above quote, T̓sek̓ame' was described as a great shaman with supernatural powers. A trait of shamanism in the Kwakwaka'wakw axiology is reincarnation (Berman, 2000). Reincarnation is a sign of a cyclical nature in life, death, and renewal. The literal translation of the story demonstrates that there are struggles in life since T̓sek̓ame' fought another supernatural being

who tried to kill him four times, but *Ṭsekame'* is reincarnated. These tests and struggles explain that life was not always easy, yet it is story of triumph and resilience. And it was *Ṭsekame'*'s strength and from his relationships with the forests and animals that saved his life. In retrospect, an origin story about renewal and strength may have been foreshadowing for the *Kwikwasut'inuxw*, as they would need these traits of perseverance and resilience for their future challenges.

Therefore, another lesson is about reincarnation and how it relates to the *Kwakwaka'wakw* axiology in people being parts of concurrently running life cycles with the animals and *awi'nakola* that surround them. The temporal nature of the life cycles is numerous. Annually, the *Kwakwaka'wakw* travelled around their territories and followed the seasonal rounds in their food collection. Salmon, an essential food, have life cycles from two to four years, and the cycles of salmon runs would no doubt be observed. Finally, human life stages and life cycles are observed in the belief of reincarnation as ancient names are passed down from generation to generation.

*Ṭsekame'*'s survival depended on him following the lessons about respecting the *awi'nakola*, animals, himself, and other beings. In doing so, *Ṭsekame'* established himself as a great shaman and a founding ancestor of the *Kwikwasut'inuxw* since *Ṭsekame'* and *Ṭsekaga's* children built houses and had their own descendants that would become the *Kwikwasut'inuxw* people. Surviving and reincarnation are essential not in one's own life but in passing on to the next generation. *Ṭsekame'*'s family, the areas they occupied, and stories they told became the *Kwikwasut'inuxw* inherited oral history and genealogy. To this day, clans don regalia with their family crests that reflect creation stories and affinity to supernatural beings from which the *Kwakwaka'wakw* descended and these relationships can be found in our origin stories, songs,

dances, and names. The crests of the Kwikwasut'inuxw include the sisiutł (two-headed sea serpent), kulus (supernatural bird), and Tseḱame' that are each referenced in the origin story of Tseḱame'. The animals, places, and foods depicted in their origin story reign supreme.

#### **4.7 Victory Through Honour**

In this section, I share how an ancient story can have contemporary meanings with the sharing of a totem pole at the University of British Columbia.

*Tseḱame' was put through many tests. He was cut into pieces and put into the fire, he had rocks and boulders attached to his legs, and he was thrown in the ocean, and so he went through these different trials, but he always returned victorious, and he always overcame all of those challenges. So, it is a really wonderful story about the human condition and about meeting great challenges and still continuing on. So, we were really happy to learn about the legend many years later and find out what she had in mind when she made the pole (Lou Ann Neel, Ellen Neel's granddaughter, UBC, 2016).*

I learned while studying at the University of British Columbia that there is a totem pole at the Vancouver campus that represents the Kwikwasut'inuxw origin story of Tseḱame'. The totem pole was carved by Ellen Neel, from the Martin family and of Kwikwasut'inuxw heritage. Ellen Neel was the first First Nations woman to have professionally carved totem poles globally. The totem pole represents the four tests of Tseḱame'.

The *Victory Through Honour* totem pole was presented as a gift to the University of British Columbia at halftime of a homecoming football game in front of 5,000 people (Ward,

2019). The presenters were Ellen Neel, her husband, Edward Neel, and K̓w̓ik̓wasut'inuxw Chief William Scow. Ellen's quoted is on the commemorative plaque that accompanies the totem pole:

*To the Native people of the whole province, we can give our assurance that your children will be accepted at this school by the Staff and Student Council, eager to smooth their paths with kindness and understanding. We need now only students to take advantage of the opportunity so that someday our doctors, lawyers, social workers, and departmental workers will be fully trained University graduates of our own race. - Ellen Neel, The Native Voice, November 1948 (Lewis, 2004).*

Ellen Neel's quote shows that First Nation's culture is ever-evolving, based on an ancient culture, and that Indigenous Peoples want to evolve or reincarnate into modernity through education.



**Figure 4.1** *Victory Through Honour* Totem Pole at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver Campus

Chief William Scow of the K̓w̓ik̓wasut'inuxw stated, "It is yours now, and if you follow the precepts accepted with it, you cannot fail" (Udy, 2021, p. 349). He delivers this message about perseverance and good sportsmanship, predicting that doing so would lead a team in the right direction. Chief Scow and Ellen Neel recount the legend of their origins and history and translate the story into one of success for students in university and athletes if they hold the character and attributes of victory and honour.

The k̓ulus (supernatural bird) represented at the top of the totem pole is a central theme in many versions of the T̓sek̓ame' story. The totem pole was presented in 1948 when the potlatch ban was still in place. However, the presentation still followed Kwakw̓ak̓'wakw protocols for ceremony: the host group's traditional privileges were presented publicly (rights to dances, songs, stories, and carvings), the hosts wore regalia, and Ellen Neel shared a gift (Udy, 2021). It was generous for the Scow family of the K̓w̓ik̓wasut'inuxw to share the thunderbird (k̓ulus) crest with the University of British Columbia. In the sharing of the totem pole and the thunderbird in ceremony, the Scow family was inviting a reciprocal relationship with the University of British Columbia (Lewis, 2004; Udy, 2021). While the sharing of the totem pole and logo that imbues a story of T̓sek̓ame' is an act of upholding Indigenous knowledge, it also demonstrates an interest that the Scow family sees value in university training of advancing youth to build various capacities for the purposes to bring these skills back to First Nations communities. Therefore, university training is valued for adding diverse skills (not in substitution for Indigenous knowledge) to the Indigenous cultural knowledge that should be passed onto to youth.

After being vandalized, the University of British Columbia replaced the *Victory Through Honour* pole with a replica pole carved by Kwakw̓ak̓'wakw artists Calvin Hunt, Mervin Child, and John Livingston. The replica pole, carved in 2004, stands on the west side of Brock Hall at



the University of British Columbia, Vancouver campus (Lewis, 2004; Ward, 2019). While it is not unprecedented, it is not common or a Kwakwaka'wakw protocol for a totem pole to be replicated. So as in the origin story, Tsekame' was reincarnated with a second totem pole.

#### 4.8 Discussion

Developing skills in listening and interpreting Indigenous stories takes practice, patience, and attention. The story of Tsekame' could be misinterpreted negatively and with a message of crisis by someone not paying attention to the teachings held within Indigenous story. At first glance, what is learned is that Tsekame' was attacked and killed four times—in true Kwakwaka'wakw style and form, our origin stories can share a demonstrative and dramatic sequence of events that define us. The Kwikwasut'inuxw origin story depicts life with significant struggle; whereas, when the story is told from a Kwikwasut'inuxw perspective, it is a story about resilience and triumph.

A point of this chapter was sharing a perspective in a meaningful way with Indigenous Peoples through interpretations of stories by community members. While there were attempts to repress our worldviews and big house culture by the federal government of Canada with the outlawing of the potlatch system, from 1885 to 1951, our culture and stories remain (Tennant, 1990). Therefore, telling Indigenous stories and oral histories that share our teachings and knowledge help Indigenous Peoples resist assimilation (Archibald, 2008, p. 139).

The stories explain our spiritual connections to the forests and remain relevant throughout our daily functions.

*Well, basically everything's connected, everything we do, everything around the forest is connected—all our dances, all of what we do in the big house is*

*connected.... Our people always used the woods or the forest as a spiritual place to go to find, you know, like especially around songs, right, and to find inspiration. Like we used a lot of around our p̓asa (to potlach), where we practice our culture was always connected to the forest. We're one and the same. All our masks ... everything we used in the big house came from the forest, you know. (personal communications, July 16, 2016).*

Forests were and are a place to gain strength, another critical reason to protect them. Topics important to community related to spirituality meant going out to the lands, especially before a potlatch (Appendix C and E).

Abundance is apparent in the story with imagery of salmon, wildlife, and cedar, but the story prioritizes life cycles and renewal higher than abundance (Berman, 2000). The philosophy around interactions with the land was highly precautionary. The lessons from stories are that the decisions about the forests are not based on the individual, but in relation with animals, plants, and the awi'nakola; collaborating benefits all, awi'nakola health, and future generations. Considering the Indigenous cultural teachings that guided the ethics around forest practices found in origins stories kept the Kwakwaka'wakw resilient for many centuries, the value and place-based knowledge held within them might be worth returning to. Although origin stories hold spirituality, mythology, and rituals meant for Indigenous consumption, stories “should not be discounted as not also holding Western-style historical accuracy” (Berman, 2004, p. 159).

Indigenous stories are not past-tense stories. I described the K̓wik̓wasut'inuxw Haxwa'mis as having a “living history” because our stories continue to be told. Another reason for the term “living history” is that the K̓wik̓wasut'inuxw Haxwa'mis continue to occupy the areas mentioned in the stories. Occupied village sites that began close to the beginning of time in

Kwakwaka'wakw axiology, including Gwa'yasdam's and Kwaxwalaawadi, could be defined as archeological sites. In fact, the Kwikwasut'inuxw Haxwa'mis are one of the few Kwakwaka'wakw to remain and reoccupy their ancestral villages.

In 1997, the Supreme Court of Canada legitimized oral tradition in making the Delgamuukw decision. In doing so, there appears to be a willingness to include Indigenous forms of knowledge production, including oral histories, into modern realities. The Secwépemc people developed an approach of triangulating information from various disciplines (archaeology, linguistics, geology, and paleoecology) to support oral histories. By cross-referencing stories with other disciplines, they follow a concept of “converging lines of evidence” (M. Ignace & R. E. Ignace, 2017, p 25–26). Certainly, the Kwikwasut'inuxw history could be supported with the deep clamshell middens that are metres deep.

Some ancient, culturally significant foods, places, and practices have endured, while others have changed. Even though knowledge systems have changed significantly over millennia, Indigenous knowledge can still inform environmental and other challenges, as they always have. Further, because it is not new knowledge and is based on an Indigenous worldview, it does not mean it cannot be used in the twenty-first century.

## **4.9 Conclusion**

Indigenous stories are recognized as a legitimate form of conveying a living culture and ancient history. Creation stories link Indigenous Peoples to this continent and the lands for millennia (Riley, 2016). By sharing our stories, our ancient culture is kept alive. In this chapter, I summarized an Indigenous story and how community members can interpret it since it is up to the listeners of stories to think about a story's meaning; many lessons could be interpreted from

stories (Archibald, 2008, p. 16). I shared some of the interpretations of an Indigenous story and quotes shared with me in interviews. I wanted to learn about what Indigenous stories said about the forests. Ancient Indigenous teachings need to continue being told to future generations and more broadly accepted locally to protect and safeguard the forests into the future. These teachings could be helpful, if known and implemented, in contemporary settings for respecting the environment.

In the story about *Ṭseḳame'*, we learn cultural teachings about respecting ourselves, our community, the animals, and the *awi'nakola*. These teachings hold our practices and teachings and are place-based oral histories held within our traditional territories that we rely on to sustain us. We learned that while *Ṭseḳame'* harvested and ate game and fish, he was held accountable for treating the animals by not wasting them and showing respect for them and the environment. Otherwise, there could have been severe consequences for *Ṭseḳame'*. The teachings are lessons about not being too greedy and the long-term goal of reincarnation to consider the impacts of current decisions for future generations. Further, people are included as part of nature and need to be loving and respectful to themselves, kin, animals and the environment.

Although stories share many lessons about the forests, the message is delivered differently from Western knowledge production suitable for Western society. This chapter did not aim to analyze the story using a "two-eyed seeing" approach that invites pluralism by comparing Western and Indigenous knowledge systems (Bartlett, Marshall, M., & Marshall. A, 2012; Peltier, 2018). Future chapters explore how monopolizing how history could be told centred on Western perspectives and the strategies of silencing Indigenous voices.

## Chapter 5: The Hidden Half: Indigenous Women and Traditional Food

### Production

#### 5.1 Introduction

*My dad used to go gill netting up River's Inlet, as did a lot of the men. They all had boats and went up to the Inlet. So, we were left with the old ladies, and sometimes we would go in a canoe and go downriver, and down to the, they called it the uxwsiwe [mouth of the river], and past outside where the government dock is and paddle along there, and we'd be picking berries (personal communication, December 13, 2017).*

Indigenous knowledge is often described as “lost” in attempts to define it as something in the past tense and something that mysteriously went missing or led astray, never to be found again. Early on, ethnographers mainly overlooked environmental studies and cultivation practices of Indigenous Peoples in North America and downplayed the interactions with the lands by labelling Indigenous Peoples as “hunter-gatherers” (Deur & Turner, 2005, p.24–26). Therefore, Indigenous knowledge, particularly from Indigenous women, deserves a more menacing definition than “lost.” Instead, there should be an acknowledgement that Indigenous women’s voices were intentionally obscured, silenced, hidden, and erased. Since the contributions to society of Indigenous women were unaccounted for, it has become the norm to not include us internally within Indigenous communities and wider societies to the point that it is perplexing to know how to reinclude Indigenous women’s positive contributions to the community and society in a meaningful way. Along the way, history makers misrepresented Indigenous women’s roles, leading to lasting detrimental effects that created violence, harm, and marginalization against

Indigenous women. This chapter argues that Indigenous women's roles in the forests and Indigenous knowledge around forest practices are either poorly understood or not up to date with the twenty-first century.

*It is important to understand what has been lost, why it has been lost, how it has been lost, what has remained, and how what has remained is manifested. I believe that one cannot defend that which one does not understand (Borona, 2019, p. 137).*

Given the absence of the role of women and their forest relationships from a Kwakwaka'wakw perspective in the literature, this chapter is necessarily broad in scope. I address the following topics: Indigenous women, forest practices, and traditional foods. This chapter will begin by:

- reviewing the literature to critique how early nineteenth-century and twentieth-century colonial policies and ethnographic literature silenced the role of Indigenous People, especially women, in the forests and food production;
- sharing quotes from Elders about what was relevant to them about the forests when they were growing up in the mid-twentieth century. (Many Elders accredited Indigenous women for maintaining intergenerational knowledge transmission of cultural forest practices.);
- examining the implications of colonization, recorded history, colonial laws and policies, and ethnography that have engendered and devalued Indigenous voices by not including first-hand Indigenous perspectives of Indigenous women's contributions to people-forest relations and traditional-food production; and
- highlight some of the Indigenous women and community-driven language reclamation, cultural, land, and ocean-based resurgence projects within the Broughton Archipelago.

Focusing on Indigenous women in this chapter is not to support binary ideals of gender but to underscore and oppose how colonialism and sexism have impacted the loss of identities in Indigenous communities (Starblanket & Stark, 2018, p. 184).

## **5.2 Methodology**

In 2016, I asked participants, “What is important about the forests?” and sub-questions, such as “How do we benefit from the forests?”; “What are we still doing on the land?”; “Who is out on the land”; and “What social and cultural benefits do we need from the forests?”

The topic for this chapter was adjusted in scope after repeated theme development with community involvement. I analyzed verbatim interview notes and elicited community input to develop research topics in 2016 and 2017. While I did not explicitly ask about women’s roles in the forests, many participants credited Indigenous women in the community for maintaining intergenerational knowledge transmission and cultural forest practices, mainly traditional food practices of gathering, preparing, storing, and sharing foods.

Quotes from the community in this chapter are from *Kwíkwásut’nuxw Haxwa’mis* and *Musgamakw Dzawada’enuxw* participants. Quotes were from interviews conducted mainly in 2016 and 2017 with 23 Elders, knowledge keepers, and traditional harvesters. In 2017, there were three workshops with 21 people. There were follow-up interviews in 2018 and 2019.

I cross-referenced interviews with nineteenth-century and twentieth-century literature about early contact with the *Kwakwaka’wakw*, ethnographic literature, and Indigenous feminist literature. While the chapter begins by looking at historical documents, it shifts into contemporary thinking of Indigenous values from the forests. It combines community interests in

traditional foods, forest practices, and Indigenous women's knowledge. These topics were universally relevant to Elders and youth.

### **5.3 Early Encounters in the Broughton Archipelago**

This section's objective was to examine how Indigenous women and forest practices were considered in the writing of history. It critically considered the issues of misrepresentation because it was primarily European men who authored history, archives, public documents, and literature (Kehoe, 1983; Smith, 2012; Wickwire, 2019).

*Travellers' stories were generally the experiences and observations of white men whose interactions with indigenous "societies" or "peoples" were constructed around their own cultural views of gender and sexuality. Observations made of Indigenous women, for example, resonated with views about the role of women in European societies based on Western notions of culture, religion, race, and class (Smith 2012, p. 8–9).*

The above quote by Māori scholar describes that the writing of history during colonialism was based on Western values and patrilineal descent and defined by Western standards.

Although minimally informed and reluctantly documented (Bruchac, 2014), it is generally understood that Kwakwaka'wakw women led several forest practices to cultivate, harvest, and cook traditional foods and medicines (Boas, 1921; Kuokkanen, 2012; Simpson, 2017). There is some limited recognition that Kwakwaka'wakw women once made economic, social, and political contributions to the community, including owning root gardens and producing traditional foods for sustenance, trading, and ceremony (Boas, 1921; Deur, 2005). Consequently, some Indigenous scholars question the validity of rigid binaries of men and



women in communities, especially when the information was gathered during contact with settlers (Anderson, 2016; Simpson, 2017, p. 128).

### **5.3.1 Ethnographers' Impacts on the Roles and Status of Women in the Forests**

Most early ethnographic fieldworkers were European-American and male, and females were discouraged from travelling to Indigenous villages for research (Kehoe, 1983; Wickwire, 2019). Further, spouses were discouraged from accompanying the male ethnographers in fieldwork (Kehoe, 1983). This attitude of excluding women from fieldwork lasted well into the twentieth century, according to the lived career experience of American ethnographer Alice B. Kehoe (1983). Indigenous women usually would not confide in male ethnographers of Euro-American descent either because they were not asked to or because ethnographers would be rude to Indigenous women (Bruchac, 2014; Kehoe, 1983). In cases where Indigenous women were informants, Berman (2014) found that women's information in the Kwakwaka'wakw language was misunderstood and misinterpreted.

Early ethnographic documentation began during the Victorian era, when the standard for the status of an English woman necessitated specific criteria, including being married, having money in the family to stay unemployed, and appearing fragile (Kehoe, 1983). By Victorian standards, married or not, working women were considered lower class (Kehoe, 1983). On the other hand, Indigenous scholars argue that from an Indigenous standpoint, gendered division of roles among the sexes was exaggerated (Anderson, 2016; Simpson, 2017, p.128; Starblanket & Stark, 2018).

There was discomfort and unfamiliarity in recognizing Indigenous women's social, political and economic leadership skills and knowledge in their respective communities (Horn-

Miller, 2019; Kuokkanen, 2012; Simpson, 2017). Women's work was discounted as the day-to-day lives of Indigenous People and a topic of little interest to early ethnographers.

*The texts are also minimally informative about the lives of Kwakiutl women. Guided perhaps by the then-prevailing concept of culture as a homogeneous body of customs and ideas, these texts note gender differentiation in activities but leave them unexplored. They chart the distinctions in the social division of tasks, as well as customs surrounding female puberty, food taboos, ritual work in food processing, and female roles in arranged marriages. They speak of women, fictitiously defined as males, holding positions of authority until their successor was old enough to take over (Boas 1966, 52), and they mention that women with the appropriate privileges performed dances as part of the retinue of the major spirit-figure of the ceremonial season. But what women did and thought was not explored in their own terms, and their informal roles received no attention (Wolf, 1999, p. 73).*

The quote above highlights a couple of issues in how Indigenous men's and women's roles within community were depicted in error when history was recorded. While the topic of rank or authority among the Kwakwaka'wakw goes beyond the analysis of this research, the point above suggests that men and women had binary roles and that some roles would only be made available to women if men were not present. In addition, the quote above also suggests that the roles of women (and men) were homogenized or the same within community, but in discussions with participants, individuals and families would be expected to contribute to the community in unique ways. Regardless of how Kwakwaka'wakw women contributed (economically, socially, politically, or otherwise), little information was explored from

Indigenous women from their own point of view, and this was only one way Indigenous women's roles were discounted.

Franz Boas and George Hunt are often considered leading ethnographic sources for the Kwakwaka'wakw from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Moreover, most of their credited informants were mainly men of noble ranking of one of the Kwakwaka'wakw First Nations (not Kwikwasut'inuxw Haxwa'mis). Further, it is well documented there was modest field time on behalf of Boas to witness the forest practices in the Hunt-Boas collaboration (Deur & Turner, 2005; Wickwire, 2019). Yet, as this section explains, Hunt garnered most of his practical Indigenous knowledge from Kwakwaka'wakw women and immediate family. Bruchac asserts that both Boas and Hunt acted as gatekeepers of information. However, it was Boas as the primary author who was responsible for filtering out Indigenous women's knowledge from the literature because of his Euro-American background, grounded within the nineteenth century (Bruchac, 2014, p.157).

*Boas downplayed the value of women's knowledge of food gathering, cooking, and marriage rites (Boas 1921, p. 45). Even after he gained fluency in Kwakwala, he made little effort to communicate directly with Native women (or with ordinary people) about everyday life (Nielsen, 2001, p. 77). (Bruchac, 2014, p. 157).*

Wrongly, it was the Kwakwaka'wakw men of noble rank that were elevated in the literature at the detriment of Kwakwaka'wakw women (Fiske, 1991). While women were noted as having significant roles in the Kwakwaka'wakw culture, they were downplayed and privileged to their male counterparts. This negates the fact that Hunt had two Kwakwaka'wakw wives, women of high rank (Bruchac, 2014; Lyall et al., 2019). Yet, Bruchac's review of unpublished works and letters between Boas and Hunt suggests the contributions of

Kwakwaka'wakw women were significant. In letters from Hunt to Boas, Hunt acknowledged a great deal of the information in his work drew significantly from his wives, daughters, and sisters (Bruchac, 2014). When his first wife, Lucy Homiskanis, from the Kwagu'ł First Nation of Tsax̓is, died, it became obvious how much Hunt depended on her input and advice since he stopped submitting work to Boas because he did not feel informed enough to do so (Bruchac, 2014). It was not until after Hunt remarried to Francine Tsukwani, from the 'Nakwaxda'xw First Nation of Ba'as (Blunden Harbour), that he began submitting work to Boas again. Even though Hunt's primary informants of Kwakwaka'wakw culture were seemingly Indigenous women within his families, it is not transparent how and to what degree Indigenous women contributed to the literature.

Lucy Homiskanis was credited for suggesting her husband write a manuscript about food-harvesting and food-preparation techniques. Hunt submitted a lengthy manuscript with Homiskanis's intellectual knowledge to Boas in 1906 (Bruchac, 2014). Boas worked on the unsolicited manuscript over a decade after Lucy died. *Ethnology of the Kwakiutl, based on data collected by George Hunt*, was published by Franz Boas in 1921. The book describes the social organization around foods and the roles of community members as they were in the early twentieth century. Women were credited as responsible for being primary harvesters of berries, and crabapples, digging clams and cockles, gathering seaweed and eelgrass, and weaving bark and fibres. Women were also noted for cleaning fish and preparing, preserving, and serving most foods (Boas, 1921). Detailed in 155 food recipes, women were responsible for most food cooking (Boas, 1921; Codere, 1957). Men were noted as responsible for hunting, fishing, and the heavy labour jobs of moving large quantities of food (Boas, 1921).

*Boas (1921) gives extremely detailed accounts of the proper procedures and rules of etiquette for serving and eating most types of plant foods (Turner & Bell, 1973, p. 295).*

An essential aspect of the Boas and Hunt 1921 collaboration was that it documented an Indigenous female perspective. Unfortunately, Homiskanis was not given credit as a co-author or had a chance to edit the manual. There are indications that, if given a voice, other Kwakwaka'wakw women would have had more to say than what was in Boas's 1921 book (Bruchac, 2014). As with many Indigenous women, Hunt's sisters, daughters, and wives were heirs to specific rights and Indigenous knowledge (Bruchac, 2014). Besides Indigenous women's knowledge, they would have been responsible for teaching the next generations. Indigenous women had rights to lands, social, and economic responsibilities that were downplayed at the time.

Ultimately, when we recognize George Hunt as necessary to Franz Boas, we must also recognize Hunt's wives and sisters.

### **5.3.2 Separating Women from the Lands by the Crown**

At the time of Confederation, the Crown of England had a superiority complex over Indigenous Peoples, especially Indigenous women. Manifestations of this imbalance included forced education at Indian Residential Schools, imposed male-dominated political structures, gender inequity within the *Indian Act*, and disruption of family structures (Coburn & LaRocque, 2020; Green, 1985; Lawrence, 2003).

*Until 1985, section 12(1)(b) of the Indian Act discriminated against Indian women by stripping them and their descendants of their Indian status if they married a man*

*without Indian status. Under Section 12(2), "illegitimate" children of status Indian women could also lose status if the alleged father was known to not be a status Indian and if the child's status as an Indian was "protested" by the Indian Agent. Section 12(1)(a)(iv), known as the "double mother" clause, removed status from children when they reached the age of 21 if their mother and paternal grandmother did not have status before married (Lawrence, 2003, p. 13).*

When women married non-Indigenous men, they were disenfranchised from enrollment from their respective families. The sexist sections 12 (1)(a)(iv), 12 (1)(b), and 12(2) were not revoked until the passing of Bill C-31 in 1985 (Lawrence, 2003)—34 years after the federal government repealed the potlatch-banning law. The *Indian Act* continues discriminating against women's identities as it assumes a patrilineal line of descent regardless of traditional Indigenous governance models. Colonialism meant Indigenous Peoples faced racism, while Indigenous women face sexism, too (Fiske, 1991; LaRocque, 1996).

The Crown conveniently labelled the Indigenous Peoples of the Pacific Northwest as hunter-gatherers and non-cultivators (Boas, 1966; Halliday, 1935; Deur & Turner, 2005; Turner, 2020). This is despite documentation in the literature that there were several eyewitnesses—explorers, travellers, and even Indian Agents—of Indigenous women cultivating and gathering resources from the forests and foreshores over the nineteenth to early twentieth centuries (Deur, 2005; Menzies, 1923). An appended table submitted to the McKenna-McBride Commission, which was an initiative of the federal government to delineate Indian Reserves in British Columbia, critiqued K̓w̓ik̓w̓asut'nux̓w H̓ax̓wa'mis as non-cultivators:

*Meetup, Viner Sound was described as "good but uncultivated";*

*Ahta, Bond Sound was described as “low, swampy and generally non-cultivable”; Kakweken, Thompson Sound was described as “good if cleared”; Alalco, Wakeman Sound was described as, “good but subject to overflow” (Canada, 1916).*

But in fact, the areas described above were prized and valued for their intertidal root vegetable gardens within the K̓w̓ik̓wasut’nuxw H̓axwa’mis territories (Boas, 1934; Deur & Turner, 2005). Besides the estuaries listed above, notable root-vegetable gardens located in neighbouring Kwakwaka’wakw First Nation territories were at the mouth of Kingcome River, Nimpkish River, and Klinaklini River (Knight Inlet). Furthermore, at the McKenna-McBride Commission, in 1914, the Kwakwaka’wakw claimed ownership of 29 root-vegetable estuary garden sites (Turner, Spalding, & Deur, 2020, p. 16). The narrative of labelling First Nations hunter-gatherers and ignoring their forest uses and forest practices began before the Dominion of Canada was asserted in 1867, but lingered thereafter:

*The prominence of the “non-agricultural” label, enshrined within and validated by scholarly orthodoxy, has taken on a life of its own. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, colonial authorities employed it as partial justification for the annulment of Aboriginal title to lands along the entire coast of British Columbia. Today, Aboriginal claims on formerly cultivated lands continue to be undermined by this persistent myth (Deur, 2002, p. 141).*

The main reason for developing blinders regarding Indigenous land use and ownership, including root-vegetable harvesting, was for the self-serving purposes of dispossessing the Kwakwaka’wakw of our lands. Besides discounting Indigenous title, Indigenous knowledge, and forest and ocean uses, a by-product of describing Indigenous Peoples as hunter-gatherers was the

introduction of strict gendered binaries in the division of roles in community that scholars argue was of colonial invention (Simpson, 2017, p. 218).

Federal laws promoted European settlers to pre-empt occupied First Nations lands in British Columbia from the late nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century. In doing so, settlers began blocking Kwakwaka'wakw people from the lands that they had occupied for millennium with signs and indications that they should not “trespass” onto settlers’ newly acquired lands in the nineteenth century to collect crabapples or tend to root gardens (Daigle, 2019; N.J. Turner & K.L. Turner, 2008). One example, early settlers cut down tsalxw’mas (crabapple trees) and blocked access by erecting fences at the estuary in Kingcome Inlet (Turner, 2014; N.J. Turner & K.L. Turner, 2008).

There seemed a complete non-recognition to the reverence of traditional foods in Indigenous communities. Settlers apparently did not initially understand what they were seeing because they did not acknowledge that Indigenous Peoples tended the land and considered the forests as “pristine,” “natural,” or, at worst, empty and free from human interactions. The abstract thought that Indigenous Peoples did not interact or have a relationship with the lands and oceans led to Europeans thinking they had superior cultivating of plant foods technologies than Indigenous Peoples:

*Primary among the causes of dietary change were European attitudes of racial superiority, introduction—and imposition—of new crops and food products* (N.J. Turner & K.L. Turner, 2008, p. 109).

In my work as a forester working for Indigenous Peoples along the Pacific Northwest Coast, I have identified domestic apple trees, including domestic crabapple trees, growing on forests occupied by Indigenous Peoples’ including previous homesteads, village sites, Indian



Reserves, or allotment sites in the United States, and even within forest stands that have regenerated following logging. This is because the cultivating and harvesting of traditional foods were ridiculed when First Nations did not cultivate European plants. Colonizers promoted European plant foods and new species of potatoes, raspberries, and apples (Canada, 1916). Early on, some of the introduced crops and grazing animals by settlers were less suited to the environment than traditional foods and practices Indigenous Peoples developed for millennia (Borona, 2019; TRCC, 2015, p. 63) and Reserve Lands were often agriculturally unproductive and required more irrigation (Borona, 2019; Dick, Sewid-Smith, Recalma-Clutesi, Deur, & Turner, 2022). Notably, early settlers introduced cows to the estuary at Kingcome Inlet, impacting root gardens and other traditional foods. Thereafter, cattle at Kingcome Inlet went feral and occupied the estuary for decades. Eventually, for a number of reasons including less tending of root gardens, crabapples, and other traditional foods, the estuary's soils were degraded, contributing to lower biocultural diversity.

On the other hand, the term “forest garden” has emerged that acknowledges First Nations tended to their surroundings, be it with indigenous, naturalized, or introduced plants (Armstrong, Miller, McAlvay, Ritchie, & Lepofsky, 2021; Dick, Sewid-Smith, Recalma-Clutesi, Deur, & Turner, 2022, UBC Forestry, 2022). It is increasingly recognized that Indigenous Peoples received many foods, medicines, and fibres that were important for food security, spiritual, economic, and cultural significance from the forests. Root gardens, berry patches, crabapple orchards, and cedar groves were owned by families and individuals and passed down from generation to generation (Boas, 1921; Drucker, 1951; N.J. Turner & K.L. Turner, 2008). Women and families tended and, in some cases, owned root and forest gardens and other patches

of plants from the forests (Boas, 1921, p.189; Deur, 2005, p. 267; Ford, 1941; personal communication, November 15, 2018):

*In the olden days, the women had their own clover patches marked with sticks on the four corners.... Clover patches are women's property, and it comes down to her daughter. If they have no daughter, the boy gets it, and then when he gets a wife the wife uses it. (Ford, 1941, p. 51–52).*

The above quote emphasizes the importance of owned clover patches. It also rejects strict binary roles in the community and implies the importance of the continuity of food production and familial responsibilities. An Elder in her 80s confirmed women-owned root gardens:

*And women, some women had their own patches that belonged to them. And if they weren't there to harvest, then others were allowed to harvest for themselves. Yeah, so sharing, you know, not letting it go to waste. (personal communication, November 15, 2018).*

The quote above denotes an ownership type by women wherein the community would know who the owner was and whom to ask to harvest from the root garden.

It was and remains prestigious in Kwakwaka'wakw culture to host feasts serving traditional foods from the forests and oceans. Women continue having a pivotal role to play in collecting and preparing traditional foods. In particular, it was auspicious if women owned traditional food sites that were productive, and it would be a clear indication of a good relationship with the lands, and further to that, family unity, if women and families tended lands that became abundant. Further, the traditional food practice activities not only fed families, but contributed in family wealth in trade relations and ceremonial trading. Certain foods of

reverence, such as long clover roots, would have elevated the status of a family by demonstrating a shared prosperity.

The generalized views of early newcomers that non-male Indigenous roles were unimportant were inconsistent with the cultures of Indigenous Peoples of North America. The Indigenous communities valued Indigenous women's contributions to food production activities and otherwise. For many living and returning to the traditional territory, going to the lands, occupying them, and tending to the forests continue to contribute to community for nourishment, spirituality, ceremony, and wealth.

#### **5.4 Mid-twentieth Century Experiences**

*One of the biggest, good memories I had of Pearl: she was a real good provider. She went clam digging one day, I forget how old I was, but when she came back, I seen men walk in front with her, holding a ladder, I think, and a deer was on the ladder. And she was coming up carrying her clams and her clam gun. She come back with deer and clams, the old lady, yeah. Apparently, when she went clam digging in the dugout, the deer was swimming across, and she was able to club it and pull it on board. Tough lady, you see. Boy, yeah. She did better than the men. Yeah.... She was a really good basket weaver. And she would do whole pile of barbecued clams outside. Pearl Smith.... She had held potlatches. Potlatches and clams here in Gilford (personal communication, December 13, 2017).*

During interviews, participants did not describe women's roles as being restricted to positions with little agency. Above, we hear that Pearl Smith was responsible for digging clams, hunting, preparing barbecued clams, and hosting potlatches in Gwa'yasdam's.

Several Kwakwaka'wakw women were seat holders (titleholders) and hosted feasts and potlatches in the twentieth century. In another instance, an Elder interviewee shared with me that her family had acquired a great deal of material wealth, and she was asked to host a small feast to share with the community. Further, Indigenous women who raised families in the Broughton Archipelago in the mid-twentieth century spoke about having to not just cut and smoke salmon, as Boas (1921) credits, but they had expanded roles, with children's help, in catching salmon, hunting deer, collecting water, and cutting firewood.

In *Indians at work: an informal history of native labour in British Columbia, 1848–1930*, Knight (1996) supports quotes from Elders regarding the role of men changing more drastically than the role of women, as some women did stay in the community to raise children, following contact with settlers. Interviewed women explained life was difficult post-contact era when women and children assumed the majority of all of the roles in the community beyond what would be considered “women's roles” in the literature about women gathering, cooking, and rearing children. As Knight (1996) points out:

*The role of Indian women seemingly changed less than did that of men. Although Indian women entered the wage-cash economy, their importance in subsistence-food production possibly even increased as more men spent greater amounts of time in wage labour. Anyone who can imagine conditions in which water must be hauled by hand, fuel wood cut and packed, clothes scrubbed, foods preserved and prepared, and rearing children will appreciate the tremendous amount of work involved (p. 127).*

The quote above acknowledges a distinct change in narrative about Indigenous women post contact, where Indigenous women efforts were ignored, into an era in a narrative that

credited Indigenous women as contributing significant to community well-being. Notably, the women in the community left an impression on children, now Elders, about forest- and ocean-based practices that were taught to them. For instance, an Elder recalls “poling” up the Kingcome river with Elderly women in the community. Poling is when the river is shallow enough to drag canoes and small boats upriver with large poles in addition to paddling:

*In the summer, I was maybe 10, 11, or something like that, and we would pole up the river and the old ladies would be steering. No one to cross the river and go into the river.... When it got deep, cross the river into the other shallow side and then keep going like that. And we'd do the poling ... and the old ladies would do the paddling. The old lady Duta was in the back. I remember quite distinctly; I turned around and I looked at the old lady Duta and I wondered what she was doing taking off her gumboots. And then I looked again, she was baling the canoe out with it. Then slips it back on and we carried on our way (personal communication, December 13, 2017).*

This would generally be an entire family job, but in the above quote, we hear it was memorable when women in the community would take children. Many stories about learning traditional practices appeared through quotes like this. Poling upriver on the Gwa'yí would happen in the fall to catch dog salmon for smoking for winter use. Catching salmon upstream had two benefits. First, many salmon would spawn downstream. Second, the salmon would have a lower fat ratio after swimming upstream, which helped keep smoked salmon's shelf-life through the winter.

An Elder in his 80s from Gwa'yasdam's credited Kwakwaka'wakw women with Indigenous knowledge about plants, including medicinal plants:

*You know where we played lotta soccer during my day, hey? Up in Kingcome? And at times you get hurt in your legs or your ankle, and the elderly ladies, they go, they just walk around the edge of the soccer field. And they pick up what they know is a medicine that grows on the sides of the field. Yeah. And they mix it up with other things that they've gathered, and they use it on your ankle. Next day, you're fine* (personal communication, July 28, 2016).

Another Elder in their 70s from Ukwānālis remembers it was Kwakwāka'wakw women who taught youth how to identify fish and their names in Kwakwāla:

*So, it was dog salmon, it was gwax'nis. And coho, it was dzg'wgn, and the big spring salmon was satsgm. And hānu'n was the pink salmon. We just called trout. We used to call them called gula, yeah. I think Baker even said that sockeye used to grow up there. I've never seen one, though. We laid them out and said, "This is this. This is this. This is that." So repetitiously, you get to know them, right? Because you see them quite regularly. The old lady Duta and Datcha had a canoe. So, they spoke the language, and they worked together same smokehouse* (personal communication, December 13, 2017).

The Kwakwāka'wakw culture recognizes individuals, including women, who held Indigenous knowledge about traditional foods, medicines, language among other topics that they passed onto the following generations. As such, many Kwakwāka'wakw women had economic contributions, including traditional food harvesting and production. Whereas the pre-contact roles of work between the sexes were likely less binary, discounting of Indigenous women's roles by limiting them in contemporary policies is an ongoing mistake. As one Elder put it, living off the land and water required travel, and we had to work together "as one" (personal

communication, April 4, 2019). The argument for this research is that the roles of women (and others) would have been recognized for their individual roles and their roles within the community.

#### **5.4.1 Joining the Wage Economy**

A capitalist economy, introduced in the late nineteenth century, led to a distinct change in the roles of Indigenous Peoples within their communities.

Many Indigenous men joined the fur trade, hand logging, and commercial fishing. The introduced roles separated families in ways that had not occurred pre-contact. A biographical account of the separation of families in the twentieth century can be found in the *Heart of the Raincoast: A life story* (Morton & Proctor, 2016). Billy Proctor, a settler who grew up in the Broughton Archipelago and raised a family in the area, remains a resident in his late 80s living independently in Echo Bay. Proctor described that in his career he worked either as a commercial fisherman, hand logger, trapper, or clam digger. Working throughout the seasons in multiple industries was necessary to earn a living wage for him and his family. Proctor explained his work took him away from his family for extended parts of the year. He estimated that for some years he worked away from home 340 days a year (Morton & Proctor, 2016). But notably, he and his family were granted hand-logging permits close to their residence that allowed them to return home at night.

Many women and children joined the wage economy and worked at the canneries in the Broughton Archipelago, and some families moved to Rivers Inlet in the summers during the prime of commercial fishing and cannery work in that area. The canneries began running in 1881, and 13 canneries were established after 1909 (Galois, 1994). By 1929, there were 18

salmon canneries in the Broughton Archipelago. The salmon canneries in the Broughton Archipelago relied mainly on pink salmon (July to August) and dog salmon (October to November) (Proctor & Maximchuk, 2015). Many canneries were short-lived with operations in the Broughton Archipelago limited mainly from the decades of 1910s to the 1920s. Canneries began closing and becoming less prevalent after the Great Depression, in 1929. Cannery work did not recover significantly after that, and salmon populations began decreasing to the point that commercial salmon fisheries began closing in the Broughton Archipelago in the 1940s (Galois, 1994; Proctor & Maximchuk, 2015; Robertson & Kwagu'ł gixsam clan, 2012). The cannery work was seasonal, but contributed to Kwakwaka'wakw women's livelihoods. Beyond wages, another benefit of working at canneries was that employees were often permitted to preserve salmon for their families on their days off.

A recent study by Smith and Knight (2021) interviewed 15 Indigenous women working in the forest and logging industry in Canada and examined Indigenous women's experiences working in the industrialization of forests. Being a double minority in the forest sector, female and Indigenous, resulted in many barriers, including outward micro-aggressions in the workplace that were racist and misogynistic. Further, participants were not confident that enough effort was placed into addressing wage gaps, supporting the costs for child care, and career advancement.

## **5.5 Contemporary Indigenous Women's Roles in the Forests**

This section highlights some of the language reclamation and Indigenous resurgence work in the Broughton Archipelago. Indigenous women run our band offices and community-based institutions, apply for funding for resurgence and language reclamation projects, teach our children our language, and run many small businesses in the Kwakwaka'wakw territory.



Importantly, Kwakwaka'wakw women strategically consider the needs and prioritize resurgence efforts to empower ourselves in our respective communities (Altamirano-Jiménez & Kermoal, 2016; Coburn, 2015; Coburn, 2020), where Indigenous feminist resurgence is the renewal of Indigenous ways of knowing and being, specifically to support the well-being of Indigenous women and girls (Coburn & LaRocque, 2020, p. 114).

Below is a list of resurgence and Kwakwaka'wakw language reclamation projects that are community-driven, usually at the grassroots level, and led by Kwakwaka'wakw women in the Broughton Archipelago:

- Soon after a gukwdzi (big house) was rebuilt in Gwa'yasdām's in 2014, three Kwikwasut'nuxw Haxwa'mis women co-ordinated events for youth for the purposes of learning their culture, including traditional dances, songs, and leadership skills. The events were named the "Spring Break/Summer Cultural Week" and a "Youth Play Potlach Weekend". Several Kwikwasut'nuxw Haxwa'mis women led fund-raising raffles and other means to raise money for food and transportation. Children and families were transported by boats from north Vancouver Island to Gwa'yasdām's. The youth Spring Break/Summer Cultural Week and a Youth Play Potlach Weekend happened for consecutive years before the COVID-19 pandemic and are expected to begin again in 2024.
- In 2016, a group of six women built a trapper shack out of split cedar for community use and to demonstrate occupation at Kwaxwālawadi. This project was led by women from Dzawada'enuxw, Kwikwasut'inuxw, and Haxwa'mis First Nations and settlers living in Kwaxwālawadi. The cabin was built based on the directions described in *Tide Rips and Back Eddies: Bill Proctor's Tales of Blackfish Sound* written by Billy Proctor and Yvonne Maximchuk (2015). Billy Proctor, living nearby, offered guidance daily during the build.

Two of the women involved in the build, Lindsey Willie and Jenni Schine, were also filmmakers for this project: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DGIJrglK6iQ&t=2s>



**Figure 5.1:** Trapper Cabin Built a Crew of Musgamakw Dzawada’enuxw and Local Residents

- Musgamakw Dzawada’enuxw women have led the Akala Outdoor Education Society for several years and hosted hands-on land and ocean-based programs in the Broughton Archipelago. “Akala Society is an outdoor education non-profit operated by a group of Musgamagw Dzawada’enuxw women” (Akala Society, 2022). The founders were Julia McIntyre-Smith, Lindsey Willie, Jessica Key, Sherry Moon, and Alana Coon.
- In 2014, I led a community-driven language reclamation project based on plant-based knowledge in the Kwakwala language from previously published materials as well as new documentation with Kwakwala-speaking Elders. The results were, the development of a literature review, a 46-page dictionary of plant names of Kwakwala words in the U’mista orthography, and a draft 100-page visual dictionary with high-resolution photographs of all the plants with the names in Kwakwala. The draft copy of the visual dictionary was shared

with speakers to help them identify plants and create audio recordings of their pronunciations of words in Kwakwaka. This image-led process resulted in the addition of 300 words to an existing online dictionary hosted by FirstVoices, a free web-based application that included pictures taken of the plants, together with an audio file of the plant name pronounced by a speaker. With the U'mista Cultural Society, I applied to the First Peoples' Cultural Council for a grant that supported honoraria for fluent Kwakwaka speakers and travel costs associated with the project (Lyll et al., 2019).

The above highlights only some of the Kwakwaka'wakw women-led resurgence and language reclamation projects over the last decade. Women continue holding and maintaining Indigenous knowledge and passing it on to the next generation, as well as leading fundraising and hosting various resurgence events.

## **5.6 Impacts and Discussion**

*Indigenous women are often seen as victims, the lowest of the low, the poorest of the poor, facing extreme violence and discrimination. But Indigenous women are also leaders, taking care of their children and their communities, seeking out education to improve themselves and their families' situations* (Smith & Knight, 2021, p. 1).

Epistemic violence and displacement of roles in the community have had lasting and deleterious impacts on Indigenous women in North America (Hunt, 2014). The impacts of colonization are reflected in the alarming statistics regarding violence against Indigenous women (Smith & Knight, 2021). Indigenous women are among the most targeted victims of violence in Canada. Although Indigenous women make up about 4% of the population, Indigenous women make up 25% of the homicides in Canada—Indigenous women are five times more likely to be murdered

than non-Indigenous women (Belcourt, 2018). The inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women described some of the root causes of colonialism felt by Indigenous Peoples, including land dispossession leading to economic marginalization, intergenerational effects of trauma from Indian Residential Schools, and ignoring Indigenous women's contributions to society (NIMMIW, 2019). Statistics also reveal that about 90% of victims knew their murderers; most murderers were Indigenous men (Innes & Anderson, 2018).

Indigenous female adults and youth are over-represented in provincial, territorial, and federal custody. Indigenous adults make up 5% of the Canadian adult population, but of the women in custody, 42% are Indigenous. While Indigenous youth comprise about 8% of the Canadian population, 62% of female youth inmates in custody are Indigenous (Canada Statistics, 2022). Further, once arrested, Indigenous Peoples are more likely to be incarcerated (TRCC, 2015, p. 110).

Indigenous children are still being removed from their families and are 12 times more likely to be in foster care than non-Indigenous children in Canada. Of the children in foster care in Canada, 48% are Indigenous (Bourgeois, 2018, p. 74–75).

The disparities in these statistics outline the enormity of the issues that need to be addressed by the government and within Indigenous communities. Intermixed with obvious violent and repressive realities are some subtleties of marginalization, stereotypes, and racial profiling that may be specific to and only realized by Indigenous women. The impacts of colonialism are indeed engendered, and to attempt to reverse such failings of Indigenous women requires solutions devised for Indigenous women.

The normalization and silencing of Indigenous women's voices began in contact with settlers. The loss of access and separation from the lands, including root gardens, berry patches,

and forest gardens, led to a decline in women's social roles and economic contributions to the community (Fiske, 1991). Some of the cascading effects effectively erased Indigenous women's identities and enabled industrial developments and policies that still allow Indigenous women's perspectives to be ignored (Burt, 2021; LaRocque, 1996).

*In many contexts “the family home” may not a place of comfort and refuge, but may be a site of oppression, violence, and surveillance; for example, the heterosexual or cisgender family home for LGBTQ2S people, or non-Indigenous foster homes for Indigenous children (Hunt & Holmes, 2015, p. 159).*

As a result of the many changes due to colonialism is that the role of women, men, and everyone within Indigenous communities is out of balance. Challenges remain from ongoing and intergenerational trauma that faces Indigenous Peoples but does not impact most living privileged lives in Canada (Burt, 2021; Joseph, 2019; Million, 2013; Smith, 2012).

To heal, Leanne Betasamosake Simpson and other scholars explain the importance of turning away from the impacts of colonialism, not by attempting to dismantle the colonial structures that have caused Indigenous Peoples harm (A. Simpson, 2014; Coulthard, 2014; Fanon, 1967), but rather to focus on the rebuilding of our own and new houses (Simpson, 2011). Therefore, in doing so, Indigenous Peoples need to consider striving for self-determination in a way that does not perpetuate harm by reproducing Western knowledge systems that marginalize Indigenous Peoples (Smith, 2012, p.44–45). In other words, reclamation and resurgence efforts need to consider the topics of self-determination and the theory and spirit of how resurgence efforts are undertaken. Note also that ancestral teachings are highly precautionary and reliant on developing good relationships with yourself, other people, animals, plants, and the surroundings.

In situations where Indigenous women advocate for equity, they are prone to be villainized by Indigenous or settler institutional structures (Coburn, 2020; LaRocque, 1996). There are concerns about referencing Indigenous feminism regarding topics from an ancient culture as being anti-traditional; however, the point of this research is that the early documentation is Eurocentric through its interpretation.

*We are being asked to confront some of our own traditions at a time when there seems to be a great need for a recall of traditions to help us retain our identities as Aboriginal people. But there is no choice—as women we must be circumspect in our recall of tradition. We must ask ourselves whether and to what extent tradition is liberating to us as women. We must ask ourselves wherein lies (lie) our source(s) of empowerment. We know enough about human history that we cannot assume that all Aboriginal traditions universally respected and honoured women. (And are “respect” and “honour” all that we can ask for?) It should not be assumed, even in those original societies that were structured along matriarchal lines, that matriarchies necessarily prevented men from oppressing women. There are indications of male violence and sexism in some Aboriginal societies prior to European contact and certainly after contact. Nevertheless, at the same time, culture is not immutable, and tradition cannot be expected to always be of value or relevant in our times. (LaRocque, 1996, p. 14).*

There is trepidation when Indigenous women challenge the accepted norms developed through colonization and literature that were developed to protect heteronormative patriarchy (Coburn, 2020). Therefore, Indigenous women need to be prepared for critique and must carefully utilize “skeptical engagement” (Coburn, 2020, p. 441) in cases where so-called

“traditions” are used as barriers to Indigenous women’s agency (Coburn, 2020; Larocque, 1996; Simpson, 2018). By not addressing the marginalization of Indigenous women’s identities and the colonial violence it has perpetuated, there is a danger in resurgence efforts within the Kwakwaka’wakw cultures when they are based on the scholarship of men from the late nineteenth century and into the twentieth century. Indigenous women would like resurgence efforts to be free of the post-contact developed norms and inflexible roles of the sexes for the sake of “tradition” (Starblanket, 2017).

Further, work is needed to reassert and re-establish the honouring of roles for Indigenous men and women. A key challenge is restoring women’s traditional roles, rights, and responsibilities after years of repression by *Indian Act* policies and misinformation (A. Simpson, 2014; Smith, 2012). While this research highlighted some of the work underway in community-led resurgence projects, the uptake of this work for the community should be recognized for the overall well-being benefits beyond the scope of grassroots movements.

*Wedlidi Speck, talked with me about what he called the “canonization of culture,” a tendency to “filter” what is remembered and celebrated about the past “because you don’t know your place in it.” He used the Kwakwaka’wakw word tsandika (fear or aversion) to characterize a selective celebration of the cultural past (Robertson & Kwagu’l gixsam clan, 2012, p. 55).*

Moving forward from the impacts of the past begins with making the invisible visible and learning and understanding the cumulative struggles since colonization. Understanding that Indigenous women have a voice connects us to our communities’ struggles and aspirations. Literature quotes in this research upheld that Kwakwaka’wakw women were respected for their roles as knowledge keepers of the forests and seat holders (titleholders) and hosted potlatch.

## 5.7 Conclusion

This chapter argued that Indigenous women's voices and traditional food production were silenced for Indigenous land dispossession. Also, early literature and written accounts about Indigenous women were based on social norms of the nineteenth to early twentieth centuries that confounded the norms for Indigenous women with Eurocentric ideals and culture. Further, a lack of representation to record history silenced essential aspects of Indigenous voices and culture and introduced food insecurity, among other issues. The impacts of the misrepresentations of Indigenous Peoples have resulted in our voices being invisible and hidden. Impacted, in particular, are Indigenous women.

This research argued that colonization and imperialism introduced gender bias. In doing so, it hid values from the forests critical to the Kwakwaka'wakw. Forest practices, food, and medicine collections were deemed unimportant, discouraged, and undocumented.

Participants in this research noted there was interdependence between men, women, and everyone to contribute to the community events and culture. And participants in the community did not speak of Indigenous women as a lesser sex. Instead, they spoke of them with reverence for their rights to lands, contributions to food production (and therefore wealth), and carrying and sharing many intergenerational traditional knowledge lessons with them. Indeed, the accounts from Indian Agents and early ethnographers studying the Kwakwaka'wakw were gendered and hierarchal. Outmoded ideals that are irrelevant or no longer serve us should be rethought. Otherwise, the remaining obsolete standards that support the ongoing hegemonic patriarchal structures presented as unbiased and objective knowledge remain harmful (LaRocque, 1996).



Despite considerable challenges and changes, all is not lost. As described by participants, Kwakwaka'wakw women's roles in the forests and oceans remain significant. Women are regarded for carrying Indigenous knowledge of traditional food production, medicines, and the Kwakwaka'wakw language. The roles of Kwakwaka'wakw women did not remain static through time. Instead, the role of women expanded post-contact when many men joined the wage economy to women catching salmon, hunting, and hosting feasts.

It was by upholding women's roles—and everyone's contributions—that the Kwakwaka'wakw not only survived but thrived in the forests surrounding us. Ignoring or having those roles invisible is a severe barrier to the resurgence of Kwakwaka'wakw roles in the forests. In the Kwakwaka'wakw culture, family strength is demonstrated when families work well together and are successful in food production; a place when this is especially important is sharing traditional foods during the ceremony. A way to develop wealth from the forests was by individuals collaborating with their extended families and demonstrating respectful practices to the animals and awi'nakola.

Regardless of the challenges we face, Kwakwaka'wakw women are active in resurgence efforts in the community, selectively drawing on tradition and reinstating and maintaining our cultural roles, responsibilities, and values for ourselves. Further, there is a growing number of Kwakwaka'wakw scholars, many women, writing, creating, and advocating for our own purposes and in topics most relevant to our respective communities.

## **Chapter 6: Seasonal Rounds and Traditional Food Practices**

This chapter followed a traditional food collection and preparation cycle through a season and was written in collaboration with Elders and traditional-food harvesters. Traditional foods are an essential part of the peoplehood model (Holm et al., 2003) since they follow the life cycles through the seasons and are place-based, and many times the Indigenous language Kwakwaka'wakw is still used to explain the practices used for collecting and preparing traditional foods.

### **6.1 Introduction**

Most of the foods listed in the interviews were those still eaten in family households or especially important in the living memory of Elders from their youth. Elders were in their 70s to 90s and many remember growing up eating traditional foods. At that time, technology was more straightforward in First Nation villages, without electricity, refrigeration, or running water. Strikingly, there was a profound lifestyle change, not least of which was their diets—switching from mostly traditional foods to store-bought foods. Besides simply providing nutrition, traditional foods continue to mean many things to the community, including cultural heritage integrity, healthy living, intergenerational transfer of knowledge of forest practices, economic values, and ceremonial sharing.

Collectively, the community of Gwa'yasdam's holds a continued and collective practice of harvesting most of the wild foods tied to food sovereignty and livelihoods.

This chapter outlines the following topics:

- Changes in diet;
- Contemporary challenges accessing traditional foods;
- Significance of traditional foods to the community;

- Protocols to respect traditional foods; and
- A season of traditional food with the Kwakwaka'wakw 'ma'mak'wayu, the Kwakwaka'wakw calendar, co-developed with Elders.

## 6.2 Methodology

The objective of this chapter is to focus on recent praxis-based activities from the 1940s to today. I understood that traditional foods were important from the forests, foreshores, and waters from open-ended questions used in interviews from community members living at Gwa'yasdam's and with two analyses in 2016. This chapter resulted from group analysis workshops that recommended the traditional foods was a priority. Further, I was instructed by community to triangulate interviews, workshops, and relevant literature. I specifically asked about traditional foods during two workshops in 2017, in 'Yalis, with eight Elders. In 2017 and 2018, there were follow-up interviews with 23 Elders and traditional harvesters. After that, I spoke with aunts and uncles about traditional foods. I also was asked to check with others about salmon-run timing in the area. I spoke again with traditional harvesters, fishers, Elders, local residents, and groups that monitor salmon in the Broughton Archipelago. Interviews and workshops were cross-referenced with local and community-based literature and academic disciplines of food sovereignty, ethnoecology, geography, and ethnography. Finally, this chapter used a methodological approach to centre community-driven based research to accordingly considered ways to critically understand and challenge the underlying assumptions, tenets, and methods of documenting history and Indigenous knowledge and ways of being.

The Kwakwaka'wakw word 'ma'mak'wayu translates to English as “calendar”; it is a contemporary word developed post-contact to align with English months of a year. The

'ma'mak'wayu follows the seasonal cycle of traditional foods. Individuals and extended families could develop their own version of the 'ma'mak'wayu based on the forest and ocean resources they accessed throughout the year. Two versions of a 'ma'mak'wayu from the U'mista Cultural Society were shared with Elders at a workshop for discussion purposes. The Elders were confident in their discussions about their lived experiences and co-developed an agreed-upon 'ma'mak'wayu from growing up and living in the Broughton Archipelago (Appendix D).

### **6.3 Changes in Diet**

Many researchers who have developed long-term and collaborative relationships with Indigenous Peoples on traditional-food production have highlighted the cumulative reasons Indigenous People became separated from the lands (McIlwraith, 2012; Nadasdy, 2003; Nelson, Natcher & Hickey, 2005; N.J. Turner & K.L. Turner, 2008). Elders described the cumulative reasons that had separated them from the forests and oceans specific to the K̓w̓ik̓w̓asut'nux̓w H̓ax̓wa'mis territories and how that impacted access to traditional foods. In parallel, many Indigenous scholars and allies of Indigenous Peoples have begun employing Linda Tuhiwai Smith's methodological approach to critically assess how colonialism, imperialism, Western science, and contemporary colonial laws and policies have marginalized Indigenous Peoples (Smith, 2012). Further, there is a growing amount of literature about the impacts of natural resources policies on Indigenous Peoples' access to traditional food and food security and food sovereignty (Curran, Kung, & Slett, 2020; Dick et al., 2022; Daigle, 2016; Daigle, 2019; Diver, 2017; McGregor, 2021; Raibmon, 2018).

*We never starved, never, not through the year. Never had to go get hamburger or pork chops (personal communication, April 4, 2019).*

An Elder in his 80s explained that not going to the grocery store when he was a young man meant that the Kwakwaka'wakw fed themselves from the lands and oceans and did not rely on stores for food as much as they do today. As recent as the 1960s, the diet of the Kwakwaka'wakw was primarily traditional foods from the forests, foreshores, and the waters (fresh and salt waters). Besides staple foods bought in bulk (rice, flour, sugar, salt, and powdered milk), food was primarily sourced by travelling around the Broughton Archipelago. A second Elder, also in his 80s, added that the Kwakwaka'wakw moved through the seasons to access food and other resources, "We did not stay anywhere for very long" (personal communication, July 28, 2016).

Younger Elders reflected on the wealth from the forests and oceans, especially before the economic depression of the 1980s. Notably, in the 1960s, the villages had several fishing boats at Gwa'yasdām's; now, there are only a couple out of 'Yālis (Pinkerton et al., 2014). This marked a switch from old technology to new technology for transportation. Pre-contact families made canoes by carving one from a single wilkw (western red cedar). Eventually, they purchased boats.

There has been a complete lifestyle change, especially in food production, that impacts the health and well-being of the Kwakwaka'wakw. The change in diet has often meant replacing traditional foods with high-calorie store-bought foods that are much less nutrient dense. A result is a huge spike in diabetes, obesity, and heart disease (Wilk, Maltby, & Cooke, 2017). Many Elders spoke about how their diet changed from eating a majority of traditional foods in the summers while not attending Indian Residential Schools to eating traditional foods only a couple of times a month. Hence, diets have changed drastically over the past 50 to 60 years and in the last few generations of Kwakwaka'wakw.

Reasons for harvesting and eating less traditional foods was not discussed extensively; however, Nelson, Natcher, and Hickey (2005) assessed the social and economic barriers for subsistence hunting and harvesting of wild foods for the Little Red River Cree, a remote First Nation in northern Alberta. The reasons for eating fewer wild foods than store-bought foods for the Little Red River Cree were cumulative and complex, but the most significant barriers to harvesting and eating traditional foods is that many First Nations live in urban settings now for work, so traveling to collect food is time prohibitive. While many of the traditional harvesters live within the Kwakwaka'wakw territory, but need to travel back to the area to collect traditional and wild foods. On the other hand, for those still living surrounded by forests and oceans, the most significant barrier to accessing traditional foods is often the cost of technology (fuel, guns, and transportation by motorboat or motorized vehicles) (Nelson, Natcher, & Hickey, 2005; Tobias, 1995).

*When I was a kid, Gilford Island was a thriving community. They ... could go and get ling cod or other things. Clam beds or crabs, you know. They could feed themselves. It was a sustained community. And when the churches come in, alcohol and drugs come in, and forestry and fishery companies come in. You know, all of a sudden, they don't have any livelihood. Well, whose fault is that? You can blame the white people, but it's basically our fault for accepting that, that kind of treatment. We didn't have to take that kind of crap* (personal communication, October 11, 2017).

In the quote above, we observe agency, but we also perceive a sudden and sharp decline in livelihoods from the forests, foreshores, and oceans.

Land dispossession and natural resource policies excluding Indigenous peoples have resulted in power imbalances and impacted Indigenous Peoples' human and economic well-being (BC Assembly of First Nations, 2020). Indeed, changes in diet from local and traditional harvested foods to store-bought foods have been to the detriment of Indigenous Peoples. Indigenous Peoples have realized significantly reduced health indexes with fewer traditional foods in their diet (Wilk et al., 2017).

#### **6.4 Cumulative Effects**

During this research, many Kwakwaka'wakw individuals raised concerns about the ecosystems being degraded, damaged, transformed, or destroyed from the cumulative impacts of climate change, fish farms, forestry, commercial fisheries, and other industrial activities within the Broughton Archipelago and beyond. I heard concerns that the Broughton Archipelago has shifted from having healthy ecosystems towards decreased food security of traditional foods. I especially heard different versions of this quote below:

*There was so much dog salmon in the river, it seemed like you could just walk right across the river on top of them* (personal communication, December 13, 2017).

The reduction and drastic transition of local eulachon and salmon runs were of grave concern. Salmon stocks in the Broughton Archipelago are gravely unstable, and these last few years were at record lows, with fewer than one hundred salmon returning to most streams from 2020 to 2021. Eulachon runs are plummeting, and there have not been enough to make *łi'na* (eulachon grease) for several years. According to ecotourism participants, reduced stocks impact grizzly bear populations—grizzly bears appear thin due to a lack of salmon. Another presented

reason for a loss of access to traditional foods were policies that criminalize food collection, including Kwakwaka'wakw being fined for digging clams:

*Last year [name removed] got charged for digging in a closed area. They fined him \$2,000. He hasn't paid it yet. I don't know why he didn't approach any of the organizations to fight that case because he doesn't have to pay that \$2,000. He was digging for home clams (personal communication, February 25, 2017).*

Good quality clams are harvested from January to February each year because the clams have white meat during the coldest months of winter. However, human-caused and cumulative industrial impacts have meant some once-thriving beaches are now void of clams.

*But these fish farms are a big thing on our clam beaches. They are wrecking them. I don't like them. I remember clam digging all these, like I clam digged for 15 years with my dad, and it was a big difference after the fish farms came in. It was like muck. Because the one over here [in Health Bay] used to be full all the time with little necks and crabs. Then they put a fish farm there and everything died, dead, and stink. It is gross, yeah. And then they would clean it too, the nets, and the water you could see the brown junk floating. We were children and my dad would not allow us to swim in it for a week and it would stink really gross. You would see it hanging up there and with big barges of stuff. You see it is a big difference. That beach over there, we would just go over there and get a couple sacks [of clams] to eat. And over here where it goes way in there [Grebe Cove] (personal communication, August 5, 2016).*

Community members are concerned about the environmental impacts caused partly by the high concentration of fish farms near clam beds and the benthic waste from food pellets.



Supporting this concern was research in the Broughton Archipelago that tested and found an increase in the concentration of heavy metals in the ocean adjacent to fish farms, including high levels of zinc and dangerously high levels of copper (Sutherland, Petersen, Levings., & Martin, 2007). The Department of Fisheries and Oceans completed fieldwork and a summary report that described the clam meat on some beaches as brown and green from algae and containing worms (Dunham, Koke, Gillespie, & Meyer, 2007). Gosling's (2008) explanation for increased algae are that while clams filter the water, their filtration systems are taxed by the high concentration of fish farms in the area. Shellfish, including clams, filter the organic waste from the ocean, but they become less effective with an increase in algae, a component of fish-farm food (Gosling, 2008). There were increasing concerns for a rise in sea lice from fish farm fish being transferred to wild smolts in recent decades (Marty, Saksida, & Quinn, 2010). Another concern about fish farms was that they were spreading disease to wild salmon (Morton et al., 2017; Reid, Young, Hinch, Cooke, 2022). An Elder, also a clam beach surveyor and fisheries expert, shared a letter with me that he wrote for a local newspaper about the closure of several clam beaches because of fish farms contaminating clam gardens at Harbledown Island (Mound Island Bay), Midsummer Island (Potts Bay), the clam beach between Cedar Island and Midsummer Island, Port Elizabeth beach, Bonwick Island (Carrie Bay), Monday Anchorage, Bonwick Island (Betty Cove), Eden Island Bay, Broughton Island (Deep Harbour), and Broughton Island (Sir Edmund Bay) (Coon, 2017). The impacts from fish farms and other industrial developments in the area, along with climate change, have resulted in restrictions during the clam-digging season. Learning from our neighbours to the south, the Coast Salish, it is challenging to restore clam gardens once beaches become unproductive (Morin & Evans, 2022). Participants noted changes in the ecosystems due

to changes in weather due to climate change, including fewer bees and faster snow melt in the spring, causing changing dynamics in the Kingcome River during the eulachon season.

The K̓w̓ik̓wasut'nux̓w Haxwa'mis First Nation has partnered with neighbouring 'Namgis and Mamalilikulla First Nations to advocate for removing fish farms in the area of Broughton Archipelago. After decades of advocacy work by local First Nations, 14 fish farms have closed within the Broughton Archipelago (Living Oceans, 2022). Notably, fish farms on or nearest to Gilford Island have closed at Potts Bay (2019), Upper Retreat (2020), Wicklow Point (2021), Burdwood Group (2020), Glacier Fall (2019), Port Elizabeth (2021), and Midsummer (2022) (Living Ocean, 2022). The K̓w̓ik̓wasut'nux̓w Haxwa'mis First Nation, along with neighbouring 'Namgis and Mamalilikulla First Nations are advocating for the closure of the remaining seven fish farms in the Broughton Archipelago (Cruikshank, 2023).

## 6.5 Significance of Traditional Foods

*But, they [youth] need to know culture, dancing, Kwakwaka, how to preserve our Indian food.... I used to do barbecue clams. I jarred fish with my parents all the time, crabs, different times of year, when to get it with seasons, you know. Winter time is hunting, clams all that. Summertime you go berry picking, make preserves, right? So, you got the clam digging from October to April, and hunting too; you can't hunt in the summer—it is too warm. Summertime is when you get the salmon and the berries (personal communication, August 5, 2016).*

The K̓w̓ik̓wasut'nux̓w Haxwa'mis 'na'mima would move to areas they knew had traditional foods throughout the seasons. Food collection and preservation were primarily completed in the spring to fall so Kwakwaka'wakw could spend the winter seasons in the K̓w̓ik̓wasut'inux̓w

village, on Gilford Island. Gwa'yasdām's was the chosen winter village location because it is well sheltered from the winds and strategically located next to many clam beds and other essential fresh food during the winter.

It is vital to continue going to the lands to collect food. Even though there have been barriers, the Kwikwasut'nuxw Haxwa'mis have a built-in resilience developed over the millennia. Traditional foods have developed wealth through a circular economy; we wish to continue eating traditional foods for health and sharing them in ceremony as an essential part of our culture.

### **6.5.1 Kwakwala and Traditional Food**

The Kwakwala language is an ultimate reflection of the landscape because the forests, foreshore, and oceans that surround the Kwakwaka'wakw were depended upon for millennia. The Kwakwaka'wakw have always lived on the foreshores, between the forests and the ocean. There were no stores, so the Kwakwaka'wakw gathered food from their surroundings. Trading of traditional foods and sharing through the p̓asa (potlatches) dictated a circular economy. While maybe not relied on for livelihoods for many, the trading and sharing of traditional foods is still a polite Kwakwaka'wakw protocol. And it is the Kwakwala language that explains how the Kwakwaka'wakw traditionally acquired their foods from the forests and waters because our ancestors and Elders would have initially explained these practices in Kwakwala. Hence, Kwakwala explains a place-based knowledge through interactions with their surroundings over thousands of years and transmitted from generation to generation. The language was developed around the foods, food production, land-use protocols, and sharing food in ceremony. Places were not named after people, but more often where foods, spiritual places, and other places of

significance could be found. Moreover, Kwakwaka'wakw describes cultural relationships with traditional foods through seasonal rounds since the Kwakwaka'wakw travelled to places for hunting, fishing, and gathering of foods and medicines when and where they would be available.

The English language word alternatives have shortcomings to describe traditional foods since traditional foods, and the practices to collect them, were unrecognized and ignored by settlers (see Chapter Five); accordingly, they were not given a vocabulary in English. Because traditional foods are based on pre-contact practices, one interview about traditional foods was spoken almost entirely in Kwakwaka'wakw and translated into English. In general, during interviews about traditional foods, many participants described foods, harvesting techniques, or cooking practices using the Kwakwaka'wakw nomenclature because either the interviewee did not know the English name or there was no English name to describe what was being talked about. For example, First Nations continue picking wild berries, but because this was not a skill taught at Indian Residential Schools there would be no English vocabulary to replace this type of information for the participant. As a result, vocabulary would be described and remembered in Kwakwaka'wakw and, for some, represented happy memories and cultural pride that surrounds foods and language (Lyll, 2016). While the role of Indian Residential Schools was to replace Indigenous languages with English and Western ideals, it could not entirely replace some of the language because the forest practices continued without a better way to describe them than in Kwakwaka'wakw.

A reason topics like traditional foods and Indigenous language were prioritized for this research during interviews is that these were not taught at Indian Residential Schools, so the knowledge was considered “intact,” giving these topics a clear significance and priority to teach to the next generation.

### 6.5.2 Traditional Food and Ceremony

The Kwakwaka'wakw culture is famously demonstrative, and food is no exception. Though the Kwakwaka'wakw culture has evolved, what has remained a constant is that traditional foods are served at ceremonies.



Figure 6.1 Gukwdzi at Gwa'yasdam's

Several community gatherings and p̓asa (potlatches) have been hosted at the newly rebuilt gukwdzi (big house), beginning with the gukwdzi reopening on August 2, 2014, at Gwa'yasdam's. The meal served at the gukwdzi opening was halibut, barbequed salmon, baked salmon, halibut fritters, clam fritters, clam chowder, usa (fish soup), seaweed, bannock, salads, and desserts. Gilford has several good cooks, and the community works together to share their wild and traditional foods. Everyone is generous with their traditional foods, even if it is not the prime diet for most. Feasts are primarily seafood, but with lower salmon and eulachon returns

there is a concern about the cumulative impacts on the availability of traditional feasts during ceremonies.

Sharing traditional foods during ceremonies is anticipated, if not expected. A marker of a successful gathering is one where traditional foods are plentiful and diverse. Further, traditional foods are often gifted at the end of *p̓asa*, including preserved berries, salmon, and, in the past, *łi'na*. This reciprocal sharing of meals at feast remains an excellent way to share valuable resources and traditional foods.

### **6.5.3 Continued Practice**

At a workshop that began with a catered meal, the cook summarized the community's culture around food:

*Pretty much everything we do together in the community revolves around food* (personal communication, December 5, 2017)

The community of Gwa'yasd̓am's wanted recognition for its resilience in maintaining traditional practices. This meant, for some, a determination to remain within the territory despite the pressures to move to urban centres. In fact, for many of the citizens born, raised, and living within the traditional territory, carrying out day-to-day activities in a traditional Kwakwaka'wakw fashion was both a way of life and an act of resistance. This continuity went hand in hand with a determination to continue collecting and processing traditional foods. When there is an ability to live more traditionally and not depend on wage economies, many citizens do not see themselves as marginalized. For this reason, traditional foods were a part of continued cultural identity and subsistence.

Of great continued importance are catching salmon and other fish and smoking or jarring it; picking berries; digging and cooking clams; collecting cedar bark, medicines, and seaweed; fishing eulachon; and making eulachon grease. Less prevalent was hunting duck, seal, or deer and trapping.

There is a living memory of Indigenous practices of harvesting foods by fishing, trapping, and collecting. There have been technological changes in food production. For example, it is common now to jar and freeze salmon and other traditional foods. The community appeared to welcome the new technologies. The youth wanted to relearn less prevalent traditional harvesting practices such as how and where to hunt and trap and grow-root vegetables, and currently less prevalent food preparation techniques such as barbecuing clams. A list of things that the community wanted to teach the next generation can be found in Appendix E, most revolve around traditional food gathering and preparation.

*I think a good thing would be, you know, how Musgamakw used to travel to all different areas throughout the seasons. That is something that we should do one year. Especially for the younger generation. I would like to go clam digging, the lakastan (edible seaweed). I know that in Kingcome, people come here for hunting and we would go up to Kingcome for eulachon. I am not sure what we did with Hqxwa'mis and Village and Turner Island. I would like to know. I know that Village is known for their berries and their fruits. Viner for coho salmon in the fall, end of fall, and we would trap. I would love to go explore Wakeman. I would love to go visit all streams and the creeks that are there, especially the herring. Each year the run is getting bigger and bigger (personal communication, August 2, 2016).*

Since the viability of Indigenous knowledge is achieved by passing it to future generations, parents wanted their children to learn traditional practices from Elders:

*From Elders, language, dance, protocol in the big house. That is one thing that we really need from our Elders: how things are right in our big house. We did things a certain way, you know. But I think that is what we need to learn from our Elders and get as much as we can from them for as long as we can, about our culture and the big house* (personal communication, August 5, 2016).

The K̓w̓ik̓w̓asut'nuxw H̓axwa'mis living at G̓wa'yasdam's collectively hold a continued practice and responsibility to teach the next generation how to collect, prepare, and preserve traditional foods. These practices have endured partly due to the remoteness of the Musgamakw Dzawada'enuxw traditional territories combined with a stubborn resistance to change. During this research journey and talking with Elders about the maintenance and resurgence of Indigenous knowledge, an Elder described the feeling of almost forgetting Indigenous knowledge or a Kwakwala word in our conversation. An Elder respected for his fluency in Kwakwala explained it simply with the word for a boat which drifts away after a tied knot becomes loose: gaxo. Like a drifting boat, Indigenous knowledge can still be recovered (Lyll et al., 2019). Regardless of barriers to accessing natural resources, a solution from the community, especially the generation with young children, was to reoccupy the lands, continue traditional practices, and remobilize some of the practices that have been in hibernation for a while to uphold the relationship with the forests. A hereditary Chief advocates for cultural resurgence by building more infrastructures throughout the remote areas of the traditional territory:

*So anyway, that's kind of my goal, and my dream is to [re]build in our territories and to empower our youth and to utilize our territories for the purpose of healing*



*our nations once again through just being on the land and traditional teachings that we still have. I think it's a good combination—really, really, really powerful.* (personal communication, December 14, 2017).

Parents discussed things that need to be taught to the Kwakwaka'wakw children, including the importance of traditional foods and where to collect them throughout the territory, favouring a learning-by-doing pedagogy on how to prepare traditional foods (Meyer, 2001; Simpson, 2011; L.B. Simpson, 2014; Simpson, 2017). Praxis-based learning is an essential Indigenous pedagogy because it is more like First Nations oral traditions and an excellent way to get out on the forests, foreshores, and oceans (Natcher, 2008; Meyer, 2001; Simpson, 2011). Also important was teaching the culture (stories, dances, songs, and place names), teaching Kwakwaka, and visiting the territory. Further discussed was the need for more community members to own boats to travel the territory and to bring schools and jobs back into the traditional territory so youth and their parents could live closer to their lands.

## **6.6 Traditional Resource Uses and Forest Practices**

Ethnobiologists widely accept that First Nations in the Northwest Coast “tended the wild” (Anderson, 2005) and developed traditional forest practices with their surroundings that enhanced their natural ecosystems that surround them (Turner, 2014). Further, Indigenous Peoples developed complex and in-depth relationships and trading economies based on, and depending on, their in-depth Indigenous knowledge about their surroundings.

### **6.6.1 Forest Practices that Increased Biocultural Diversity**

In Chapter Five, I explained that Kwakwaka'wakw tended root vegetable gardens. They prepared rich, plentiful grounds in the Kwakwaka'wakw territory (Deur, 2005). While these plant technologies may not become commonly used as food sources again in the future, it is now recognized that Indigenous knowledge informed forest practices that promoted biocultural diversity (Deur, 2005; Pilgrim & Pretty, 2010). The plants eaten by First Nations were also a food source for birds and other animals, so the ecosystem as a whole benefitted from Kwakwaka'wakw tending to and eating traditional foods. Rather than ecosystems being degraded from extraction, Deur reported that portions of the estuaries cultivated by Indigenous Peoples in the Pacific Northwest produced some of the most productive soils in the world:

*Such soils are typically much higher in nutrient composition than the majority of the region's rain-leached soils and are characterized by pronounced seasonal plant growth (Deur, 2000). Northwest Coast peoples appear to have learned how to subtly modify the salt marsh in order to maximize the productivity of these unique areas (Deur, 2005, p. 313).*

Because traditional gardens are no longer being cultivated, these plants, once in abundance, are now hard to find in Kwakwaka'wakw traditional territory.

### **6.6.2 Indigenous Peoples as Part of the Ecosystems**

An Elder in his 70s talked about being a healthy child at Gwa'yasdam's because of the prevalence of traditional foods in his diet. Further, he recalled how he participated in the hunting of seals and ducks. It was the children's role to deliver fresh seal meat to the community of Gwa'yasdam's:

*Kraft dinner and bologna and wiener, rather than seal. So, that's the cause of a lot of our problems with this imbalance. We used to eat merganser, and amongst the ducks, [they were] really big fisher of small fish coming out of the river. They would scale the river and just gobble up fish, steady, steady. And the seal's gobble up fish. We probably in the old days were able to keep them in check, in numbers, because we ate seal. Now, no one eats it so there's predators galore eating our fish. So, it's partly our fault for not eating the predators. Next time you get a chance. You eat a seal (personal communication, December 13, 2017).*

This quote characterized an intuitive understanding of Kwakwaka'wakw's interactions with a Kwakwaka'wakw worldview of a holistic ecosystems by not siloing traditional foods from people and natural resources. This control of seals is a crucial example. Further, the quote explains how the dispossession of lands has separated people from traditional foods. Consequently, the younger generation is not hunting seal and duck. Accordingly, this would introduce a two-fold problem: a diet with less nutritious and more processed foods and not keeping the environment in check. Keeping predators in check was undoubtedly a part of how traditional food harvesting affected the forest's system resilience.

### **6.6.3 Protocols to Retain Population Resilience**

*He could have hog himself with the fish, but he didn't. He only took 400 and he let the rest of the fish spawn, so they come back the next year (personal communication, April 4, 2019).*

There were many protocols to keep the most prevalent traditional foods resilient. Importantly, Trosper made a case that First Nations within the Pacific Northwest lived primarily on salmon, a

common pool resource amongst First Nations who managed not to overexploit salmon stocks. This was in spite of the technology for at least two centuries that might have caused depletion of salmon stocks if not managed properly (Trosper, 2009). Observably, there are lessons to be learned about not degrading the favoured common pool resource, salmon, from Indigenous teachings about respect, sharing, and reciprocity.

Another example raised in interviews was the management practices around clam digging protocols. For locals from Gwa'yasdām's, it was stated "you were on your own" to decide where you picked clams, but this came with the provision that communicating with other clam diggers was necessary to discuss protecting clam beds. It was a customary protocol that clam diggers would follow common stewardship goals to maintain clam populations by collecting larger clams, leaving smaller clams for the following years, and rotating clam beds since clams live for about four years.

An interviewee who was raised in neighbouring village of 'Yālis discussed "going further out" from Gwa'yasdām's with his boat so community members could dig clams at beaches closer to the village. Other protocols for neighbouring First Nations were to stop in at the village because it would be rude to pass by Gwa'yasdām's without stopping to acknowledge you were digging in the area.

*I went there, I was a teenager, and they just accepted me in the village. Said, "Oh, you're related to me." Peter Smith and Alice, Aba's mum. When I went down the village here, they said, "Oh, yeah. You're related." Because I went from here [Yālis], my grandmother's from here Wakeman (personal communication, December 1, 2017).*

There are remaining protocols about acknowledging traditional territories of First Nations and making communication with other traditional harvesters. Residents of Gwa'yasdam's expected traditional harvesters not living in the community who harvested foods close to the village and perhaps stayed in the village while harvesting foods would share traditional foods with the community. Additionally, clam diggers from neighbouring First Nations would share with Elders and take out local clam diggers as reciprocal acts and for food security of the villagers at Gwa'yasdam's.

## **6.7 The Kwakwaka'wakw 'Ma'mak'wayu (Calendar)**

This section was co-developed in two workshops with eight Elders. It followed a season of traditional food harvesting, preparation, and preservation with the Kwakwaka'wakw 'ma'mak'wayu. The 'ma'mak'wayu explains when traditional foods are harvested by month throughout the year. This section also describes some of the techniques for preparing and preserving traditional foods. While place-based knowledge is an important aspect of traditional food production, specific locations are not shared to protect this information.

### **6.7.1 Clams**

To this day, clams are collected as a significant food source during the fall to early spring (November to early April). First Nations of the Musgamakw Dzawada'enuxw would move their families to Gwa'yasdam's and other village sites in the winter to be closer to the clam beds when other traditional foods, such as salmon and berries, are in short supply. The Kwakwaka'wakw are known to have eaten four species of clams: gulgulum (littleneck clam) (*Protothaca stamina*), matani (horse clam) (*Tresus nuttallii*), gawiganux (butter clam) (*Saxidomus giganteus*), and joli

(cockle) (*Clinocardium nuttallii*) (Deur, Dick, Recalma-Clutesi, & Turner 2015, p. 204).

Gawiganux and joli were clear favourites and the only two mentioned in interviews. However, it was noted that gulgulum were rarer and harder to access in recent years.

There were many stories, from recent times and the past, of clam digging in the many islands surrounding the southwest of Gwa'yasdām's. Clam diggers would go out at night when the tides were shallow and the water cold, which produced the best clams.

The best clam diggers, or dzikinuxw (someone good at digging clams), are those who led crews of clam diggers out on boats, seine boats, or canoes with engines, and some could navigate the traditional territory by the silhouette of the mountains and islands in the dark.

Clams are steamed, dried, jarred, frozen, or barbecued on a stick over an open fire. Barbecuing clams on a stick was an incredibly time-intensive, but coveted, treat. The barbecue stick is made out of three thin red cedar withes (withes are the branches at the tips of the branch that are still flexible, so they were used for rope). A few people in Gwa'yasdām's still know how to barbecue clams, and this is something the youth wanted to learn.

Contemporary recipes for feasts are clam fritters and clam chowder. Cockles would be eaten raw and alive in the winter. The siphon part of the white meat of the horse clams would be pan-fried.

There are approximately 350 clam beds northwest of the general vicinity of Gwa'yasdām's (Williams, 2006). Yet, it has been only over the last two decades that academics and resource managers have identified the number of clam beds in the Broughton Archipelago and begun recognizing these clam beds have been tended by First Nations for generations. As a result, a new academic name for clam beds tended by First Nations is clam gardens (Deur, Dick, Recalma-Clutesi, & Turner 2015; Williams, 2006).



**Figure 6.2 The Author Digging Clams During a “Day Dig”**

### **6.7.2 Wa’ne’ (Herring) (*Clupea pallasii*)**

Wa’ne’ (herring) (*Clupea pallasii*) were caught for their eggs in March and April, when large schools of herring spawn are close to the shoreline. Herring eggs were a welcome addition after eating dried and smoked foods all winter, supplemented with clams, cockles, black cod, red snapper, halibut, and on occasion ducks and seals. It is easy to tell when herring are spawning by the large group of seagulls flocking along with many other wildlife species around the ocean and the ocean looks white and milky. When herring spawn next to the shore, hemlock tree branches with smooth leaves are tied to the end of cedar poles. One side of a cedar pole are tied to the rocks on shore, while the hemlock branches are tied to the other end of the cedar pole and placed towards the ocean. The ocean side of the cedar pole with hemlock branches is sunk into the ocean. The hemlock branches are anchored out into the ocean with a rope and retrieved by boat.

The branches are left in the water for four days or after the herring have finished spawning (Boas, 1921, p. 185). In some cases, herring are collected on hemlock branches within fish weirs by placing rock walls next to the shore and then trapping the herring there for a few days while they spawn.

Herring eggs are still collected by some traditional harvesters, but less prevalent in the contemporary Kwakwaka'wakw diet.

Herring eggs would be cut up and served on hemlock branches and eaten fresh. Otherwise, herring eggs would be air-dried on the branches. Now, they are frozen, baked, or pan-fried with a bit of oil and served with soya sauce.

One Elder I spoke with said herring was only eaten on occasion as it was not preferred because of the bones.

The population of herring fluctuated with the introduction of commercial openings and dropped substantially during the 1960s. One traditional harvester noted the last time he remembers a commercial opening for herring in the Broughton Archipelago was in 1978. Although, herring populations are becoming more abundant in the area in recent years due to fishery closures.

### **6.7.3 Dzaxwān (Eulachon) (*Thaleichthys pacificus*)**

Dzaxwān (eulachon) (*Thaleichthys Pacificus*) would be caught at the mouth of the Kingcome River in mid-April. Though this is the territory of the Dzawada'enuxw First Nation, families from the Kwikwasut'inuxw, Haxwa'mis, and Gwawa'enuxw would fish at the mouth of Kingcome River, as well, setting nets on the beach that would be pulled by hand to the shore.



Some families would separate the male and the female eulachon from each other. Males would be used for smoking, called *tsamdaḡ* (smoking eulachon).

*In the old days, they dried everything or salted it. I remember eating salted eulachons with my grandmother. That's how they kept it, eh? Then they would smoke the hell out of it until it was like bone dry, and then that would last through the winter. They had all the little tricks, eh? Salt, smoke. Even our fish they get out of Viner and Kingcome. They would wait for the fish to get off the river because then all the fat's burned off of them and they could smoke it and keep it* (personal communication, December 1, 2017).

The females have smooth skin and would be used for making grease. The elaborate process of making *ṭhi'na* would begin early May. The fish are put in a pit to ferment, depending on the temperature outside. Eulachon would be cooked in a giant vat, being mindful of keeping the temperature low so it doesn't burn. It would be filtered a few times to render the fat from the fish.

*ṭhi'na* was eaten as a condiment with many foods: seaweed, dried halibut, eelgrass, salmon, and berries. Other uses were medicinal, trading, and for ceremony. *ṭhi'na* was a prized trading item since it is such an essential food to not just Kwakwaka'wakw, but First Nations along the British Columbia coast and beyond. Potlatches that served and gifted *ṭhi'na* would be held in high regard. *ṭhi'na*, like many wild caught and processed traditional foods, is nutrient dense, and a tablespoon or two would be served when someone caught a cold. As a celebration for this prized food, a ceremony would take place after making the grease and storing it for the winter.

Since 2014, there has been a drastic decrease in eulachon populations, plus a fluctuating river level has decreased the eulachon catch at Gwa'yi. Some have caught small amounts of eulachon for pan-frying or smoking, but not enough are caught to make t̓i'na.

The number of times t̓i'na and its uses were mentioned in the workshops, as well as its cultural importance, makes the absence of t̓i'na notable. The disappearance of vital traditional foods such as t̓i'na is a major factor in the emphasis on other traditional foods and traditional foods overall.

#### **6.7.4 L̓ak̓ast̓an (Edible Seaweed) (*Pyropia abbottae*)**

L̓ak̓ast̓an (edible seaweed) (*Pyropia abbottae*) is collected for a few weeks in May, when the plant turns from green to a brown. Plants are harvested at low tide. L̓ak̓ast̓an grows on the foreshores and rocky outcrops in a few known places throughout the Broughton Archipelago.

Seaweed remains a common food source. It is often traded with the Heiltsuk, a First Nation to the north of the Kwakw̓aka'wakw, who continue the practice of harvesting and drying seaweed. Heiltsuk Elder Helen Clifton (Turner, 2006, p. 73) found that l̓ak̓ast̓an was healthier when seaweed was consistently harvested. The harvesting and trimming of seaweed made it grow better for eating. Climate change has influenced rain and tide patterns in the spring, making it more challenging to harvest edible seaweed (Turner, 2006).

Seaweed could be cured by sun drying it on white sheets for several days until it is black and crispy. There were more elaborate ways to cure the seaweed, including rewetting l̓ak̓ast̓an with saltwater after it dried the first time (Boas, 1921). A contemporary recipe is to rewet the l̓ak̓ast̓an with chicken stock to make it a better consistency and flavour (personal communication, July 18, 2016). L̓ak̓ast̓an is sprinkled on top of salmon or halibut soup before serving. A

contemporary soup recipe is canned cream of corn, water, and *łakastan* heated up together and topped with *łi'na*.

#### **6.7.5    *Po'yi'* (Halibut) (*Hippoglossus stenolepis*)**

*Po'yi'* (halibut) (*Hippoglossus stenolepis*) can be jigged for year-round in the Broughton Archipelago area and caught in close proximity to the village of *Gwa'yasdām's*. An ideal time to jig for halibut is in spring (March to May) after clam digging season because it is not as easy to catch halibut during the big tides of winter or summer.

Halibut meat would be dried in the sun and called *'māl'ma'dzu*. The skin and the centre bones would be dried in the sun. The half-dried bones with the leftover meat would be boiled to make a broth. A contemporary way to dry bones involves baking them in the oven. Halibut head would be eaten in soup called *usa*. *Usa* is made with simple and fresh ingredients: halibut broth or water, halibut meat or a halibut head, potatoes, and onions.

*Usa* is topped with *łakastan* (seaweed) and *łi'na*. While halibut is coveted, fishers would often catch ling cod or snapper. These fish are cooked the same way.

#### **6.7.6    *Tsatsa'yam* (Eelgrass) (*Zostera marina*)**

*Tsatsa'yam* (eelgrass) (*Zostera marina*) grows in meadows in calm estuaries, bays, and inlets. Eelgrass beds are essential ocean plants responsible for bicultural diversity. Eelgrass protects juvenile fish species and feeding birds. Eelgrass would be picked at the lagoon at Gilford Island and other sandy beaches. These areas would be preferred and more accessible to collect than rocky bays (Boas, 1921; Cullis-Suzuki, 2007). Eelgrass would be harvested early in spring until May. After spring, eelgrass would turn too woody to eat (Cullis-Suzuki, 2007).

Eelgrass would be harvested by *kālpaxa tsātsayammi* (twisting off eelgrass with poles), usually from a boat at low tide (Turner, 2020). Western hemlock saplings, about five centimetres in diameter and four metres long, would be made into two-pronged poles for harvesting (Cullis-Suzuki, 2007). It would be the roots (actually rhizomes), not the leaves, that would be eaten (personal communication, December 15, 2017).

An Elder shared that eelgrass rhizomes “look like green onions” and are nicknamed “Indian sprouts” when harvested (personal communication, December 15, 2017). The upper leaves would be peeled and whitish rhizomes would be eaten raw and *tsapa* (dip it in grease) in *tli’na*.

Eelgrass is not a contemporary food type and an endangered plant species. Elders reported that local restoration efforts to restore eelgrass meadows were successful. Industrialization such as seine boats dragging nets along the bottom of estuaries (Menzies, 2016, p. 115–116), fish farms, log dumps, and other human interferences have reduced eelgrass meadows in the Broughton Archipelago and along the Pacific Northwest Coast.

#### **6.7.7 K’utala (Salmon) (*Oncorhynchus sp.*)**

Family groups would move to rivers during the summer months to collect salmon until autumn. K’utala (salmon) is a significant source of food for the Kwakwaka’wakw and has been for the last 4,000 years (Cullon, 2013). Juvenile salmon pass through the Broughton Archipelago from late March through to early July. Sockeye and chinook visit many of the streams, but are less prevalent in the Broughton Archipelago. Salmon runs have diminished in the region for decades, so deciding where the *kutala* fit within the *’ma’mak’wayu* was difficult. However, there was optimism that salmon runs of 2022 had increased from the previous two years.

**Table 6.1 Kútala (Salmon) Names and Seasons**

Kwakwala	English	Time of Year
hanu'n	pink/humpback ( <i>Oncorhynchus gorbusha</i> )	July to August
dza'wan	coho/silver ( <i>Oncorhynchus kisutch</i> )	August to September
satsam	spring/chinook ( <i>Oncorhynchus tshawytscha</i> )	
gwax'nis	dog/chum ( <i>Oncorhynchus keta</i> )	Summer run and fall run August and again October to November
małik	sockeye ( <i>Oncorhynchus nerka</i> )	

Elders remember the smokehouse going all summer with all species of salmon caught throughout the territory:

*Because we didn't have fridges in those days, all we had to do was dry fish* (personal communication, April 4, 2019).

Without refrigeration, food storage and preservation techniques for all five salmon species were an essential part of food production and nutrition.

Elders remember “poling” up the Viner and Kingcome rivers in late fall, after the spawning season, to catch and smoke several hundred dog salmon to eat during winter. The reason for catching dog salmon further upriver was that there would be less fat on the fish so they would dry quicker and stay preserved longer. Another benefit of this type of food procurement was that it allowed many fish to spawn downriver from the harvest area, which ensured salmon runs would return in successive years (Cullon, 2013).

To preserve for the winter, salmon would usually be cut into thin strips and dried in a way similar to beef jerky. This was called *x̱a'mas* (dry-smoked salmon), and it would be dipped in *ṭli'na*. Another method for preserving salmon was called *kawas* (smoked salmon). The fish would be filleted, dried, and smoked. A pleasant memory for Elders was that partway through the drying of the *kawas*, children would help pull out the bones of the partly dried salmon with their teeth.



**Figure 6.3 Barbeque Salmon (*ṭhuḇkw*)**

Barbequed salmon is called *ṭhuḇkw*. Salmon is filleted in half and barbecued on an open fire with cedar barbecue sticks for approximately half an hour on both sides. When barbecued salmon is dipped in *ṭli'na*, it is a meal called *ṭs̱apa* (to dip food).

Salmon is now often preserved in mason jars or frozen.

### 6.7.8 ʔlu'ʔlapimas (Berry Plant with Ripe Berries)

ʔlu'ʔlapimas (berry plant with ripe berries) includes the suffix *mas*, meaning “plant.” (The suffix *mas* has other meanings, but at the end of a plant it indicates the bush of the plant, rather than the berry or other parts of the plant.) (Boas, 1921; Boas, 1948; Grubb, 1972). It is a similar word to ʔlu'ʔlap̄anx (season of ripeness), where *anx* is a suffix for “season” (Boas, 1948, p.448). Thus, these two Kwakwala words emphasize the importance of berries to the Kwakwaka'wakw throughout the growing season. Beginning in March, the sprouts of salmonberries would be collected and eaten like celery sticks. A sentence shared with me about harvesting salmonberry sprouts was “ʔatʔants k̄wa'la” - we are going to pick salmonberry sprouts (personal communication, November 18, 2018).

Berry harvesting begins in the spring with salmonberries and runs through to the fall with bog cranberries. There are 21 berries with Kwakwala names and 17 listed as food (Lyall et al., 2019; Turner & Bell, 1973). The most revered berry patches garnered 'na'mima ownership and forest management practices by families (Boas 1966, p. 36; Deur & Turner, 2005, p 164). Berries mentioned in interviews, k̄amdzakw, tsagaʔ, gwadam, naḵ'waʔ, tsixina, and k̄isina, are in the table below:

**Table 6.2 ʔlu'ʔlapimas (berry plant with ripe fruit)**

<b>Kwakwala</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Latin</b>
k̄amdzakw	salmonberries	<i>Rubus spectabilis</i>
tsagaʔ	thimbleberries	<i>Rubus parviflorus</i>
gwadam	huckleberries	<i>Vaccinium parviflorum</i>
naḵ'waʔ	salal	<i>Gaultheria shallon</i>
tsixina	red elderberries	<i>Sambucus racemosa</i>
k̄isina	stink currants	<i>Ribes bracteosum</i>

Berries were eaten fresh throughout the summer on their own. Fresh berries would be eaten with *t̥hina*, especially salmonberries; otherwise, eating too many salmonberries on their own would cause constipation. Berries would be dried and preserved for the winter by making berry cakes—mashing them with water and storing them in wood boxes. Berries made a prized dessert like a fruit roll-up with salmon berries, called *t̥aka*:

*You know, we dried berries. My grandmother, she had a rack and then she would—you know skunk cabbage leaves are huge—she lay skunk cabbage leaves on her rack. It just had slats on it, I guess you know for the air, a wooden rack, with wooden slats. It would be about this width [hands outstretched in front of her about 50 cm apart] and the length of this table here, and she would put skunk cabbage leaves over the slats, and she would pour out, gradually, and it would spread out, and then let it dry. Once it was dried, how many days. Then, she'd roll it up, roll up the dried salmonberries, until it was all rolled up, if you can imagine. In the winter, she would cut off an end for my sister and I would eat dried salmon berries in the winter* (personal communication, November 15, 2018).

How long the berry cakes were dried varied on berry moisture, weather, and recipe used, but was usually a few days.

Kwakwaka'wakw folklore says that if there are many red salmonberries in spring instead of their alternate colours, yellow or orange, it will be a good salmon season.

Traditionally, berries were an extremely important food for trading and eating. There remains a current knowledge of where to find berries throughout the territory and neighbouring territories through trading. Berries are now eaten fresh or frozen or made into jam and preserved in jars.



### **6.7.9 Tsal̓xw' (Pacific Crabapples) (*Malus fusca*)**

Tsal̓xw' (Pacific crabapples) (*Malus fusca*) season is late summer to early fall, approximately August and September. A favoured place to pick tsal̓xw' was at Kingcome Inlet and Knight Inlet because the fruit was large and not rotten (Boas, 1921, p. 213). Apples were picked when they were not quite ripe and green because they would preserve better earlier in the season (personal communication, April 4, 2019). Crabapples were stored in water in sealed cedar boxes and became sweeter the longer they were stored (N.J. Turner & K.L. Turner, 2008).

These days, tsal̓xw' are often jarred whole, with their stems removed, in water with a bit of sugar.

### **6.7.10 Hunting and Trapping Season**

Early fall to winter is usually the best time for hunting season. Animals hunted were ducks, grouse, and giwas (deer). 'Məl̓xt̓lu (mountain goat) (*Oreamnos americanus*) hunting was not mentioned in interviews, 'mə̓l̓xt̓lu but could be found at Wakeman Sound. Pre-contact hunting would often take place by boat. Migwat (seal) (*Phoca vitulina*) would be hunted and eaten fresh for their meat and fat winter to spring, though they could be eaten year-round. Trapping fur-bearing animals is a winter activity. Traplines have tenures to Kwakwaka'wakw, who sometimes limit other people from trapping their areas.

Hunting has been less common in the last two decades within the community of Gwa'yasdam's. There are a few hunters who go out specifically for deer or elk on Vancouver Island. Participants did not describe seal and duck as what could be considered a culturally

significant traditional food, but may have been sourced as a bycatch while we were on the lands and waters more frequently and not depending on store-bought foods.

Although hunting has become less prevalent, youth are interested in learning about less-common food practices.

In the story of 'Tseḡame' we learn that using all parts of the animal is crucial. Contemporary hunters favour collecting meat. The First Nations that I have lived amongst in the Pacific Northwest, including the Kwakwaka'wakw have spoken about eating the organs, marrow, and fat, which offer great nutritional value. Kwakwaka'wakw traditionally used a cedar log as a large drum; ungulate hides are now used for drums, a borrowed skill from neighbouring Indigenous Peoples. The feathers, pelts, atəm (sinew), and antlers are used for regalia and other uses.

Participants explained that deer were plentiful on Gilford Island a few decades ago. Currently, the population are noted as low. A Kwikwasut'nuxw Haxwa'mis forestry worker with over a decade of work experience has seen only four or five deer in his career on Gilford Island. There are many theories why the deer population on the island is low, with the leading theory being it is the result of an increased number of cougars.

#### **6.7.11 Root Vegetables**

The Kwakwaka'wakw harvested and cultivated "roots" (actually rhizomes, bulbs, and roots) (Lantz & Turner, 2003), including taxwsus (springbank clover) (*Trifolium wormskioldii*), dłaxsəm (Pacific silverweed) (*Potentilla egedii*) and xuxw'mas (northern rice root) (*Fritillaria camschatcensis*) in estuaries and salt marsh areas (Turner & Kuhnlein, 1982).

The soils became easier to cultivate with repeated years of gardening (Turner & Kuhnlein, 1982). Organic soil was generated, deepened, flattened on tidal flats and enhanced by families (Deur, 2005). Kwakwaka'wakw Adam Dick acknowledge a word for human created soils:

*“Most commonly, the Kwakwaka'wakw called their gardens “t'aki'lakw” or a [place of] human-manufactured soil.” Some Kwakwaka'wakw Elders still know the former term. Adam Dick (personal communication 1998) explains that they used the term “t'aki'lakw” because you made that soil.... It's yours! (Deur, 2005, p. 315)*

Further, tending for the root gardens included weeding, transplanting, selective harvesting, replanting, moving of rocks, mounding, fertilizing with seaweed, soil augmentation to make it more diverse, and terracing the beds with rock walls to make larger areas for planting roots (Deur, 2005). Rich in soils, in turn, created nutrient dense foods. Roots were harvested in late summer or fall after the leaves died back. Pegs, about two metres high, would delineate plots owned by each clan (Deur, 2005, p. 310; Deur, Turner, Dick, Sewid-Smith, & Recalma-Clutesi, 2013).

One Elder remembered eating roots steamed in a pan in her 80s that she no longer has access to, but ate as a child:

*They harvested the roots of clover, which was stringy, long, fine, stringy things, and the way my grandmother would prepare it for eating, she would wrap a few, maybe two or three, around her finger and make spools out of it and stuck it in a pan so that you could see the hollow through to the bottom. Add a little bit of water, and I guess she must have steamed it. We had it as a side dish when I was a child (personal communication, November 15, 2018).*

Clover roots were the most prevalent plant cultivated and harvested; they are described to have tasted like bean sprouts (Turner & Kuhnlein, 1982).

Pre-contact cultivated plants were important in the diet, especially during years of low salmon runs (Deur, 2005). Pre-contact feasts would be held specifically for roots, and nobility and Chiefs were the only ones permitted to eat exceptionally long roots. Trading with First Nations to the north, who have fewer estuaries, made cultivating plants for their roots an essential economic activity (Boas, 1921; N. J. Turner & K.L. Turner, 2008).

Clover would be eaten fresh after drying for a couple of days. Alternately, they would be dried, stored, and then steamed. Drying clover rhizomes for a few months made them taste sweeter (Deur, 2005).

Roots vegetables are no longer a traditional food that is cultivated. Even though root vegetables are not contemporary foods, Elders who were familiar with eating this traditional food when children wanted to impart their knowledge about *taxwsus*:

*What is important is things that we are losing, like, taxwsus, you know, because nobody is harvesting it anymore. If you have a good description of it, maybe they can start. It was one of the vegetables that we have* (personal communication, November 15, 2018).

## **6.8 Discussion**

I was reminded in discussions with Elders that food is a powerful representation of Kwakwaka'wakw culture. There were multiple significant reasons traditional foods were prioritized by the community that surpassed the nutritional value that traditional foods have provided for millennia. If I had not asked open-ended questions and completed a group analysis, this chapter may not exist. When I asked participants and Elders what they wanted contemporary

natural resources managers and policy-makers to know about the importance of seasonal rounds to collect traditional foods, the response was short: “they should just know.”

During meetings, ceremonies, and feasts, sharing traditional foods is a central part of coming together. Talking about collecting, preparing, and eating traditional foods brought back happy memories to the Elders I spoke with.

Lessons I learned from being on the land taught me about our practices, seasons, and life cycles. I saw the life cycles of the forest resources by travelling extensively throughout the territory.

*Thus, although the idea of a cycle, or circle, of life is an integral part of Native spiritual beliefs, this is not a mystical concept based upon great mysteries, but a practical recognition of the fact that all living things are literally connected to one another* (Pierotti & Wildcat, 2000, p. 1336).

An example of the practicality of life cycles and interconnection demonstrated in this chapter was that the Kwakwaka'wakw calendar is expressed in the Kwakwaka language the months traditional foods can be collected, demonstrating an in-depth, intimate knowledge of the surroundings provided by praxis-based knowledge.

There were some foods listed that are still readily available, but not harvested because it is perhaps not a preferred traditional-food delicacy as in past generations. In these cases, Elders and youth raised the topic of food security and the resurgences of collecting traditional foods as a priority; youth wanted to learn traditional foods, as well. That noted, a change in technology, including freezers, refrigerators, and canning, was welcome.

In Chapter Four, we found there are teachings found in stories about having maya'xala (respect) for the traditional foods that were collected as an indication of a good relationship with

the lands and waters and to ensure these foods would return. Cross-referencing these stories with the literature, we find that traditional forest practices and estuaries developed incredibly rich soils and bioculturally diverse ecosystems (Deur, 2002; Deur, 2005).

The K̓w̓ik̓w̓asut'nux̓w H̓ax̓wa'mis community was interested in cultural continuity, the health of people, and supporting their connections with the forests, wildlife, medicines, and fish. Participants were becoming increasingly concerned about man-made impacts to the environment and those impacts on traditional foods. Further, the K̓w̓ik̓w̓asut'nux̓w H̓ax̓wa'mis want the traditional food resources to be protected and considered in forest planning.

## **6.9 Conclusion**

The relevance of traditional foods remains paramount. It means more than nourishment, enjoyment, or nostalgia of eating culturally significant foods. Elders want to teach the next generation about traditional foods, and the youth want to learn traditional food practices.

In Chapter Five I noted that day-to-day practices were not considered important to record at contact by early settlers. However, the activity of occupying the lands was considered an integral part of the culture. In interviews, Indigenous knowledge about food sovereignty included detailed interdisciplinary knowledge, forest practices, food production, eating and sharing foods, and economics. The primary importance of the seasonal rounds was food production and eating and sharing of foods. Indeed, anybody who caught a large number of fish, hunted a large animal, or picked a large basket of berries knows the work does not end with harvesting the food, but there is work afterward to prepare the food. And more work was involved in times before modern conveniences.

Promoting traditional foods has obvious positive impacts on Indigenous communities. Furthermore, many of traditional practices tending to traditional foods had resulted in a healthy and vigorous bioculturally diverse awi'nakola.

## **Chapter 7: Impacts of Forest Policy on First Nations Cultural Use of Cedar**

### **7.1 Introduction**

A recently published federal government report by the Canadian Forest Service highlighted the prominence of western red cedar in the forest industry, especially in the coastal region of British Columbia (Gregory, McBeath, & Filipescu, 2018). The report's focus was on the importance of cedar as a commodity. However, there was a lack of consideration for the role cedar plays in supporting First Nations, even though cedar plays a fundamental role in Kwakwaka'wakw culture for economic, ceremonial, spiritual, and medicinal uses.

This chapter is dedicated to the existential plants, the wilkw (western red cedar) and dixw'mas (yellow cedar), combined as “cedar” for this chapter. Chapters Five and Six explained a shift in the roles of First Nations and diets and overall life transformations that began in the nineteenth to mid-twentieth centuries. This chapter shifts into how the policies and colonial frameworks, as dominant governing structures in the forests of British Columbia, impact First Nations' cultural uses of cedar.

The Kwakwaka'wakw have a living culture that includes multiple forest resources—not only cedar—that they wish to protect for future generations. But in this chapter, I chose to demonstrate how timber is prioritized over First Nations' cultural uses of cedar. The objective of this chapter was to focus on cedar because it is a valued commodity in the forest industry and is managed by the Province of British Columbia with robust forest policies and regulations. I argue that timber is heavily protected in forest policy and that though there are measures to protect Aboriginal values, they are mainly ineffective. To do so, I use a case study of cedar.



## 7.2 Methodologies

This research aimed to critically understand and challenge the underlying assumptions, tenets, and methods of contemporary colonial forest policies (Smith, 2012). A justification for this chapter was that First Nations forest-resource uses and forest practices remain obscured in the current forest policies in British Columbia. Accordingly, this chapter examines how current forest policy impacts First Nations' cultural and relational values and Indigenous rights. In the introductory chapter, I introduced myself as a "boundary walker" (Caverly & Offet-Gartner, 2021) with a foot in two worlds, with entirely different languages about the forests. As one of the only known Kwakwaka'wakw professional foresters, I am afforded authority by a professional association to have an opinion about forest practices and policies in British Columbia. What I learned as a forester about cedar's cultural, structural, and spiritual uses did not occur at school or by working with the industry but by working for and with First Nations. In my career and while doing this research, I was invited to participate in procuring cedar for traditional use, and as pointed out in section 3.2.3, Indigenous knowledge honours individual and collective contributions. It was a praxis-based learning style that involved listening to community needs, walking on the lands, and doing the work to deliver logs for cultural use to the community for canoes, totem poles, big houses, cedar bark, and firewood. Further, Kwakwaka'wakw individuals are expected to give back to their communities' overall well-being and cultural continuity.

Methods included a combination of semi-structured interviews with carvers of cedar, weavers of cedar, cedar-bark collectors, board members from the economic development forestry board, elected Chiefs and Councils, and hereditary Chiefs. I cross-referenced these interviews with my experience as a forester, peer-reviewed literature (mainly Indigenous STEM literature)

and grey literature, including public documents, forest policy, and community documents, especially about cedar and the so-called Great Bear Rainforest.

### 7.3 K̓w̓ik̓wasut'nuxw H̓axwa'mis Uses of Cedar

*I think you don't even have to go back. ... Well, even now it's still important, but I mean just 100 years ago the trees were everything, right, for our transportation.*

*Used it for our homes, our clothes* (personal communication, June 4, 2016).

In Kwakwaka, there are innumerable words to describe every part of the cedar and the many uses for cedar structurally, spirituality, technologically, medicinally, and even for food (Boas, 1948; Grubb, 1977; Pasco et al., 1998). The Kwakwaka'wakw depended on red cedar trees daily for shelter, transportation, clothing, food, medicine, ceremony, and creative art forms (Stewart, 1984). There are also differentiated uses for dixw'mas (yellow cedar) for structural and medicinal uses, and some favour the bark since it is much softer than red cedar bark (Turner & Bell, 1973).

R1: *Cedar bark is really sacred to us.*

R2: *Really, really sacred, yup. It's supposed to make you happy* (personal communication, July 18, 2016).

Our first ancestor and noted shaman, T̓sekame', attributed his power and strength to the forests. In the K̓w̓ik̓wasut'inuxw origin story from Chapter Four, we learned about T̓sekame's many challenges and that some of his strength came from a cedar ring he wore around his neck. The K̓w̓ik̓wasut'nuxw H̓axwa'mis continue benefitting from the determination of our ancestor T̓sekame' and the wealth of the forests, particularly cedar. Specific ceremonial uses of cedar are imbued throughout a potlatch with the big house structure itself, house posts, bent boxes, masks,

headbands and other regalia, and sometimes firewood. To prepare for winter ceremonies, ḵwax'as and cedar are used to cleanse and prepare for our cedar dances (personal communication July 18, 2016). Cedar is so essential during winter ceremonies that one part of the potlatch is named the cedar-bark ceremony. The Ḷwḵwasut'inuxw are noted to be the first Kwakwaka'wakw First Nation to do the cedar-bark ceremony (personal communication July 6, 2016; personal communication July 18, 2016; Turner, 2014), which involves displaying genealogical connections with the first supernatural beings and ancestors and sharing inherited privileges (Holm, 1990).

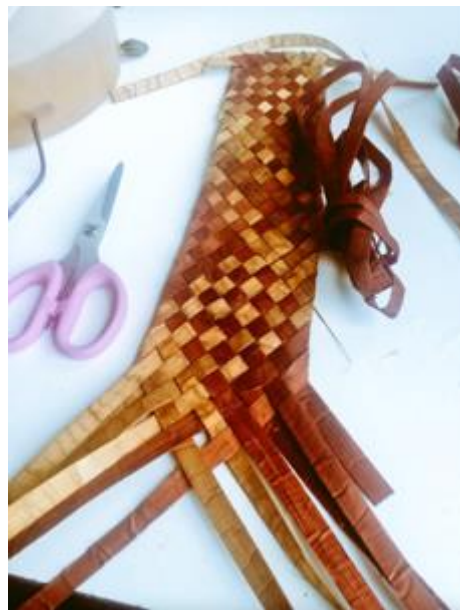


**Figure 7.1** Gwa'yasdam's (Gilford Island) Gukwdzi (big house) and Xwakwana (canoe)

Cultural uses of cedar are not limited to historical uses. The Ḷwḵwasut'nuxw Haxwa'mis living in the village of Gwa'yasdam's have a population of about 40 people; eight of

them were carvers of cedar. During this research, there were several K̓wīkw̓asut'nuxw H̓axwa'mis descendants, both living or recently deceased, who were credited with the title “master carver.” These are carvers acknowledged for their ability to carve canoes and totem poles from a single western red cedar tree, on their own or with a team.

A communally owned canoe made from a red cedar log exists in G̓wa'yasdam's. In 2014, there was an opening celebration for a reconstructed gukwdzi (big house). The gukwdzi used reclaimed house posts from the Johnson family of H̓axwa'mis and was built using primarily cedar.



**Figure 7.2 A Headband Weaved for Regalia by the Author at a Workshop Lead by Donna Cranmer 'Namgis Nation at G̓wa'yasdam's**

Further, several community members were weavers of cedar bark, weaving hats, baskets, bracelets, and headbands for ceremonial use. In 2016, while I was in the community, there was a

two-day red cedar weaving workshop led by Donna Cranmer of 'Namgis First Nation, where participants made headbands for regalia, baskets, and bracelets.

Most residents in Gwa'yasdam's were involved in some fashion, carving cedar for masks or totem poles, repairing and repainting a cedar canoe, resurrecting a gukwdzi, collecting cedar bark, and weaving cedar for regalia. To continue our heritage in carving and weaving cedar, we need access to cedar—now and into the future.

#### **7.4 Forest Policy Background**

Regionally in 2016, and unbeknownst to most K̓w̓ik̓wasut'inuxw H̓axwa'mis (and most of the public in the area), they now live in what is called the Great Bear Rainforest which the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge endorsed as part of the "Queen's Commonwealth Canopy" (Lyall & Borona, 2019; Province of BC, 2018). The Great Bear Rainforest is 6.4 million hectares on the coast of British Columbia (Howlett et al., 2009). The Great Bear Rainforest employs an adaptive management framework meaning that there would be adaptations over time based on what is learned (Province of BC, 2019a). In 2019, the Province of British Columbia enacted the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (Declaration Act)*, which enabled the provincial government to establish “the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN Declaration) as the province’s framework for reconciliation, as called for by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Calls to Action” (Province of BC, 2019b). Although the current British Columbia policy is evolving, it will take time to insert local-level decision-making, Indigenous knowledge, and Indigenous rights and values into forest policy by policy-makers and resource managers (Caverley et al., 2020; Molander, 2014). With these evolving

provincial forest policies, there appears to be an invitation to renegotiate co-management forest models (Thielmann & Tollefson, 2009).

## **7.5 Planning, Inventories, and Research Approaches for Conserving Cedar**

*We decide the fate of our lands, or someone else will decide that for us.*

*We determine how we will live our lives, or someone else will determine that for us.*

*We plan for our future, or someone else will plan for us.*

- Guujaaw (Takeda, 2014, p. i)

The quote above by a Haida leader shares a sentiment shared by other BC First Nations: there is a need for community-based local planning. There are various options for how First Nations plan the futures the forests and oceans that surround them (Robitaille, Shahi, Smith, & Luckai, 2017). What is clear is that First Nations are seeking alternatives for sustainable forest practices that recognize Indigenous human rights, inherent rights to our lands, values, and knowledge (Simpson, 2017, p. 80; Vásquez-Fernández & Ahenakew, 2020). While alternatives are fundamentally future oriented, they are based on the ontologies of ancient cultures (Menzies, 2018). First Nations now have the agency to make strategic decisions to develop co-governance and co-management partnerships regarding the forests (Menzies, 2018). Moreover, co-governance and co-management models are developed from the ground up to recognize First Nations' unique cultures in said agreements (Robitaille et al., 2017).

Detailed in this chapter was a concern for adequate management of the future need for quality cedar logs for cultural use. It has been an increasingly difficult job to obtain these trees for other First Nations; the scarcity of this resource is a provincial problem, particularly for canoe logs or large cedar logs for traditional use. Monitoring the sustainability of forest

resources, including cedar, would include redoing the inventories from decades past at the territory level to ensure adequate protection of cedar, specifically for cultural use. Most people living in the Broughton Archipelago are First Nations, and they have witnessed and borne the brunt of extractive industrial developments over the last centuries since the development of the *Forest Act*. So, when First Nations reject the forest management framework in British Columbia, it is often because they see our inherent rights and relational values being commodified or ignored. They are leaning away from ideals that separate people from the forests and are overtly based on applied sciences.

### **7.5.1 Planning**

Many individual First Nations are developing strategic and tactical traditional territory-based forest management plans to protect the forests since there is a gap in forest policies (Diver, 2017; Vaughan, Thompson, & Ayers, 2017). The objective of developing territory-level plans is to insert First Nations' inherent rights, Indigenous laws, values, and knowledge into forest-management structures at the First Nations territory level. Developing these local-level plans from an Indigenous perspective for most First Nations' is often at their own expense. Although it should be noted that the co-governance models that have stood the test of time are funded with specified and ongoing approved budgets (Clogg, 1999), and not all First Nations are afforded these budgets to the same degree. Accordingly, First Nations are developing these plans based on various human and financial resources. As a result, inserted First Nations territory-based forest plans are not uniformly implemented from one First Nation to another (Robitaille et al., 2017).

Cedar, especially old-growth cedar, of quality for cultural use, is increasingly harder to access. Consequently, I drafted an Aboriginal Tree Use guidelines report for the

Kw̓ik̓wasut'nuxw Haxwa'mis First Nation (Lyall, 2020) because of the cumulative impacts of clear-cut logging and the unknown amount of cedar trees for cultural use within a First Nations territory. An outcome of the report was recommending the need to set aside trees and areas for cultural cedar in the Kw̓ik̓wasut'nuxw Haxwa'mis First Nation traditional territory for current access to cedar and ensure there are trees and areas set aside for cedar's long-term cultural uses. A key message was that "ALL old-growth cedar should be protected unless judged unsuitable for Aboriginal Tree Use" (Lyall, 2020). The document is considered a living document for the protection of cedar within the Kw̓ik̓wasut'nuxw Haxwa'mis First Nation's asserted territory. While the implementation was beginning, the Aboriginal Tree Use document was helpful at the site and tactical levels. Following the first summer of development, foresters and forestry crews from multiple companies walked proposed logging areas where foresters heard from master carvers about attributes of a cedar tree that were desirable to carvers.

Specific reasons for protecting cedar are because it has many uses and specific characteristics that need protection. For instance, many carvers do not favour second-growth cedar for carving, especially for making canoes.

It should be noted that tactical plans are placeholders in First Nations as a temporary means to protect forest resources, including cedar, which is essential to them.

### **7.5.2 Inventories**

The quote below references the Musgamakw Dzawada'enuxw tribal council manager from the late 1980s and early 1990s, who supported the collection of forest inventories within the First Nations' traditional territory:



*And, basically, what the idea was that we would combine the forest and the sea resources and all the other natural resources to see if we could create a sustainable economy. And we hired a couple of foresters and we had a marine biologist as a consultant. We went to Fisheries and Oceans and the other people that, are supposed to, that should know this information, and asked them the unit possibility for harvest, what was the safe amount, and we asked Fisheries and Oceans what was the inventory in regards to clams and crabs and prawns and all the other things in the sea, and we found out that they didn't know either. Like, what would the ideal cut be per year for forestry, given the forests .... First of all, we had to do the inventory. How much forest is there left to cut? What stage is it at? You are a forester; you know what you have to do .... What we found out was that the forestry service didn't know, Indian affairs sure as hell didn't know, [and] the Department of Fisheries and Oceans didn't know. Anyways, we put together a way we could find out and started getting information and even meant having people like yourself, foresters, go out and count trees. Whatever you do, go estimate the yield of the forest (personal communication, October 10, 2017).*

Currently, initiatives for protecting forests are based on GIS-mapping exercises within the guidelines of the provincial government's land-use plan in the Great Bear Rainforest and old-growth forests. These guidelines are to manage the forest spatially at the six-million-hectare level or provincial level; the K̓w̓ik̓wasut'nuxw Haxwa'mis First Nations asserted traditional territory is 223,796 hectares. Unfortunately, for many First Nations, the resources, both time and human, are limiting factors for developing local-level plans. Since the scales of forest stewardship and management do not align with the asserted First Nations' traditional territories,

including the K̓w̓ik̓wasut'inux̓w H̓ax̓wa'mis', it is not easy to know if the provincial mapping exercises for conservation would achieve sustainable results at the local level. Although the Great Bear Rainforest approach and protecting old-growth forests by using GIS and mapping exercises to set aside areas for conservation may have biological and ecosystem benefits, it is limited in knowing if enough cedar trees are available for cultural uses. In addition to inventories for cedar, there is an interest in ground truthing for large cedar for cultural uses; due to past overharvesting, there are now few areas to retrieve canoe or totem-pole logs in K̓w̓ik̓wasut'nux̓w H̓ax̓wa'mis traditional territory.

### **7.5.3 Research**

*As TallBear (2013) points out, the decisions that Indigenous peoples make in using dominant scientific frameworks are “political acts” forwarding Indigenous self-determination (Diver, 2017, p.9).*

More Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers have begun taking on advocacy roles with Indigenous Peoples and communities in the last couple of decades. The objective is countering power imbalances in academia and proving First Nations forest uses and occupancy of the lands in our traditional territories (Armstrong & McAlvay, 2019; Armstrong et al., 2021; Harmsworth, Awatere, & Robb, 2016; Joseph & Turner, 2020; and TallBear, 2013).

For instance, the Kitasoo Xai'xais First Nation from the Village of Klemtu found they needed to conduct their own research and inventories to protect relational values not considered in natural resources policy. In the case of the Kitasoo Xai'xais First Nation, they were concerned about the protection of bears in their territory. The Kitasoo Xai'xais First Nation, with academic partners, undertook community-informed research and inventories and demonstrated eco-tourism

had a greater value than hunting in the territory (Artelle et al., 2018). This led to more protection of bears in the Great Bear Rainforest (Artelle et al., 2018). This research was conducted because the provincial government could not tell Xai'xais First Nation how many bears there were in their region to support the rate of bear hunting in their territory. The provincial government defended the rate of hunting bears based on economics (Artelle et al., 2018). On the other hand, academics working with the Kitasoo Xai'xais First Nation research findings concluded that protecting bear populations for ecotourism had greater economic benefits than the hunting of bears, and was a preferred solution locally. Although more academics are partnering with First Nations to answer community-based research questions, the provincial government is lagging behind on implementing community-based research findings (Popp, 2022).

## **7.6 Policy Barriers Realized by the Community**

*Well, nowadays we have to go get a permit to go get a tree. Hey, but I mean it is ours, but you still have to get a permit, which is full of shit. When did we have to start getting a permit?* (personal communication, July 18, 2016)

An Elder who has lived in the traditional territory her whole life shared concerns about regulations that limit access to resources for First Nation use. Many Elders were concerned that traditional practices allowing for safely gathering forest resources are no longer honoured due to state permitting. While “free use permits” issued in British Columbia under the *Forest Act* allows access to small volumes of cedar for First Nation use, the quote above infers little confidence that provincial policies guarantee access or will protect cedar resources for cultural uses into the future. From a First Nation perspective, there are no perceived benefits in policies and Western governance structures that have long excluded them:

*Ironically, many of the foods, like salmon, eulachon, herring, rockfish, and abalone, that had been sustainably used and managed by generations of Indigenous stewards were, under the newcomers' watch and policies, drastically reduced, sometimes to the point where conservation measures imposed meant that Indigenous people were no longer allowed to harvest these foods at all (cf. Fisheries and Oceans Canada, 2011, on northern abalone), and children have had no opportunity to even taste them (Joseph & Turner, 2020, p. 7–8).*

The quote above infers a skepticism toward the institutional structures that have previously demonstrated a lack of capacity to protect First Nations resources and helped lead to the demise of First Nations resources.

## **7.7 Forest Policy in British Columbia and Cedar**

Existing forest policy frameworks in British Columbia were developed over one hundred years and have engrained protectionist models for logging companies with a premise of Western science. Forest policy is overly prescriptive and outlines legal minimums of protection for non-timber forest values. In forestry operations, the current forest policy frameworks to protect the cultural use of cedar from logging can be found in the *Forest Act*, *Forest Range and Practices Act*, the *Forest Planning and Practices Regulation* (including the *Special Tree Protection Act*), the local and land-use plan, and tactical and site-level plans. In the case of the K̓w̓ik̓w̓asut'inu̓xw H̓axwa'mis, the applicable land-use plan is the Great Bear Rainforest Order. There is also a paralleling initiative to protect old-growth and ongoing changes to provincial forest practices policies. The point of this chapter is not to define the litany of the ever-evolving forest policies that impact First Nations but to point out that these policies are currently similar in that they are

under-resourced for First Nations participation. Further, fundamental power dynamics within forest policy ignore Indigenous voices within policy development, despite opportunities to engage in forest policy.

### **7.7.1 Forest Practices Policy and Cedar for Cultural Use**

In British Columbia forest policy, Cultural Heritage Resources (CHRs) are defined as “an object, a site or the location of a traditional societal practice that is of historical, cultural or archaeological significance to British Columbia, a community, or an aboriginal people” (*Forest Act*, 1996). Cultural Heritage Resources are among the 11 values managed in British Columbia forest practices. The other values protected in the practices are timber, fish/riparian, biodiversity, recreation, resource features, foraging for cattle, visual quality, soil, water quality, and wildlife. Therefore, logging and forest practices for Indigenous values are managed through “Cultural Heritage Resources.” However, a recent Forest Practices Board (FPB, 2019) report claimed that “many Cultural Heritage Resources results or strategies do not address the identification of Cultural Heritage Resources, nor do they commit to protecting or conserving Cultural Heritage Resources” (p.5). The report went on to note that the point of the legislation guiding forest practices was meant to have strategies and results that are well-defined so they might be implemented in forestry operations.

Further, the *Forest Planning and Practices Regulation* outlines that the province has “an objective set by government” to protect Cultural Heritage Resources (FPPR, 2004). One of the criteria for protecting Cultural Heritage Resources is based on the abundance or scarcity of the resource (FPPR, 2004). However, the province does not complete inventories for the scarcity or abundance of cedar for cultural use.

### 7.7.2 Great Bear Rainforest Order and Protection of Cedar

Problematically, there are expectations to enable the ignoring of Indigenous values by including the terms “economically unviable” and “lack of objection,” specifically for Indigenous values, within the Great Bear Rainforest Order (Lyall, 2020). For instance:

*Objectives for Historical Culturally Modified Trees*

*(4) Despite subsections (1), (2) and (3), a Historical Culturally Modified Tree and the adjacent Management Zone may be altered or harvested if there has been First Nation Engagement with Applicable First Nations;*

*alteration or harvesting is required for road access, other infrastructure, or to address a safety concern and there is no practicable alternative; or*

*protection of all of the Historical Culturally Modified Trees in the cutting permit area or timber sale licence area would make harvesting **economically unviable***

*(Province of BC, 2016, p. 15)*

*and*

*Despite subsection (3), a Monumental Cedar and its windfirm buffer, or a Cultural Cedar Stand, may be altered or harvested provided that there has been First Nation Engagement with Applicable First Nations; and*

*(a) it has been determined that the Monumental Cedar or Cultural Cedar Stand is not suitable or is not required for a cultural cedar use;*

*(b) the Monumental Cedar or Cultural Cedar Stand will be provided to the Applicable First Nation;*

*(c) the harvesting is required for road access, other infrastructure, or to address a safety concern and there is no practicable alternative; or*

*(d) retention of all of the Monumental Cedar and Cultural Cedar Stands in the Cutblock area would make harvesting **economically unviable*** (Province of BC, 2016).

In the Great Bear Land Use Order, “economically unviable” is wording only used for Aboriginal Tree Use, historical Culturally Modified Trees, Monumental Cedar, and Western Yew trees. It is a forest licensee’s overall goal to make economic profits; the term “economically unviable” puts the forest professionals working for them in conflict regarding safeguarding large cedar, culturally altered cedar, and cedar for First Nations cultural use (Lyll, 2020).

The second term, “Lack of Objection,” is a reason not to protect Culturally Modified Trees and Aboriginal Heritage Features:

*Aboriginal Heritage Feature and the Reserve Zone may be modified with the support of, **or lack of objection from**, the Applicable First Nations.*

*and*

*Culturally Modified Tree and the Management Zone may be modified with the support of, **or lack of objection from**, the Applicable First Nation* (Province of BC, 2016b). (Emphasis added by the author in the bolded sections above.)

I disagree with multiple sections of forest policy in the Great Bear Rainforest Order that put the onus on First Nations to “object” to protecting the forests on a case-to-case basis. If First Nations don’t object on a case-to-case basis, there is potential for values to be discounted. Instead, the Great Bear Rainforest Order should offer base-case measures to protect those values

and the forests. Exceptions could be brought forward, but First Nations could consider the standards relative to the base-case scenario (Lyll, 2020).

Because cedar is a valued timber commodity, the protection of cedar for cultural uses directly conflicts with licensees' profits. The *Forest Range and Practices Act* and the *Forest Act* are standalone and considered separately by foresters and the Province of British Columbia. In reality, one impacts the other. The *Forest Act* that manages the licensee's tenures (rights to logs standing on trees) and allowable annual cuts (rate of logging per year) should be adjusted to protect cedar for cultural use. First, logging rates should be reduced based on inventories and cultural uses of cedar. Secondly, the rights to access cedar should be prioritized or at least equal to the rights of licensees to access cedar for timber used in the *Forest Act*.

All aspects of provincial forest policies that undermine the protection of cedar and Indigenous values should be removed. Too much discretion and rationales undermine the goals of protecting and maintaining First Nations forests and cultural values. Further, since the planning regulation sets out to protect Cultural Heritage Resources based on scarcity or abundance, the protection and inventories for cedar as a cultural use should not be the responsibility of individual First Nations alone. GIS mapping, inventories, and ground truthing for cedar require multi-year funding to support K̓w̓ik̓wasut'nuxw H̓axwa'mis interests and protect areas and specific trees for future uses and cultural continuity.

Overall, the provincial forest policy is becoming increasingly and unnecessarily complicated, relying on Western science and thought in recent policy changes. Employing Western science and applied science forest policy does not make space for Indigenous knowledge and compartmentalizes Indigenous knowledge, rights, and values into discreet sections of the legislation. Policy-based integration models that attempt to "braid" Indigenous



knowledge and values into highly prescriptive forest policies based on Western science have limitations and are ineffective (Bohensky & Maru, 2011; Copes-Gerbitz, Hagerman, & Daniels, 2021; Menzies & Butler, 2021).

## **7.8 Protection of Forest Resources versus Forest Actors**

Another barrier in protecting cedar for cultural uses is how First Nations Peoples and their rights to the forests and lands are separated in forest policy. First Nations should not be categorized as “actors” in the forests with equal weighting to stakeholders. First Nations are rights holders, not “stakeholders” or “actors” (Smith & Bombay, 1997). First Nations are considered to have epistemological “values,” “traditional ecological knowledge,” and “rights.” Therefore, the people-forest relationships in forestry have been compartmentalized, polarized, politicized, and racialized in the British Columbia forest-policy literature, especially since the 1990s. John Lewis (2006) found that the people-forest perspectives were based on how people used the forests and that forest uses often transcend their positionalities, such as ethnicity, gender, and age. A recent study by Zahn, Palmer, and Turner (2018) found many like-minded people who transcended user groups when they interviewed First Nations, foresters interested in ecosystem-based management, and ecologists with similar concerns about cedar stewardship. These two studies counter a prevalent account that began in the 1980s and 1990s in forest policy, which politicized various groups of actors in the forests in British Columbia and made famous by the “war in the woods,” an environmental movement involving a series of forestry protests in British Columbia within Haida Gwaii, Stein Valley, and Clayoquot Sound (Davis, 2009; Page, 2014; Takeda, 2014; Wilson, 1998).

Making a seemingly slight distinction between the demographics of forest users, but instead considering forest uses, the Forest Practices Board (an independent watchdog of forest practices in British Columbia) considered how to protect a forest resource based on the resource use (2004). They found that when more than one user type—Indigenous, non-human, commercial non-timber forest products, and industrial logging—were interested in the same forest resource, there would be a conflict among the multiple forest users and the impacts of the forest resource. For instance, in the southeast part of British Columbia, within Ktunaxa First Nations territory, there was a conflict when commercial berry pickers, local First Nations, and grizzly bears all vied for wild blueberries (*Vaccinium membranaceum*) (FPB, 2004; Turner, 2001). Although non-timber forest products are not regulated in British Columbia, an exception was made for wild blueberries in the southeast part of the province. Consequently, the British Columbia government developed a policy to restrict the commercial picking of wild blueberries in some regions to protect grizzly bears and First Nations' rights (Province of BC, 2019).

This analogy about wild blueberries is similar to conflicting resource uses of cultural use and industrial logging. A difference, in this case, the study of cedar, is that cedar has monetary value to the Province of British Columbia via royalty payments and complex forest policy.

## **7.9 Discussion**

Although this chapter switched to Western terminology, the continuation of marginalizing First Nations in state policies remained the same. The issues of silencing or deprioritizing First Nations rights raised in the history sections (2.3) and Chapter Five of this dissertation continue into forest policy and the protection of cedar for cultural uses. Indeed, “in privileging colonial systems of classification and representation, western interest, remain dominant (Smith, 1999)”

(Fisher, 2022, p.20). With the Province of British Columbia enacting the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (Declaration Act)* there seems an invitation to co-manage the forests, this chapter argued a need for Indigenous Peoples to insert their priorities in management (Fisher, 2022).

First Nations are finding they need to develop inventories, ground-truthed inventories, local forest and land management plans, and community-led research projects and insert them into provincial forest management to have their cultural resources safeguarded. The scale of planning should be at the territory or landscape level. For the case of cedar, this chapter argued a need for inventories and ground truthing to protect long-term access to old-growth cedar for cultural uses. This chapter argues the onus should not lie entirely on First Nations alone but in partnership with the province so that forest policy could be more effective for non-timber forest values in the *Forest Range and Practices Act* and its regulations.

There seem to be future opportunities for co-management, which should be funded and consider First Nations values. It must be clear that First Nations don't use policies to govern. First Nations use big houses, discussions, and knowledge keepers—people who go out on the land and are given high deference and great responsibility. Stories say you need to be responsible and accountable, or it won't work. Many First Nations do not have the human resources to participate in policies that do not represent them or protect their values.

I have lived and worked in urban areas of the Pacific Northwest (in the lower mainland, Puget Sound, and south Vancouver Island). While working with First Nations in urban areas, I learned hands-on that access and availability of cedar have diminished. A detrimental result was that there were fewer cedar carvers in urban areas. Hence, there is a need to identify characteristic values for cedar and areas and trees to protect.

## 7.10 Conclusion

Cedar was used as an example of an essential forest resource and an essential part of people-forest relationships. I chose cedar because it remains a paramount part of the culture; Tse<sup>h</sup>kame', one of our first ancestors, was a little cedar man.

This chapter involved one resource and fewer entities in consideration than Chapters Five and Six, which involved cumulative impacts and multiple decades of impacts on forest resources and resource management in demonstrating some of the inbuilt barriers to effect change.

Although the provincial government has made efforts to work with First Nations as resource managers on the lands, opportunities offered have not been successful in supporting the needs of most First Nations communities because the current provincial model is based on complicated laws and an industrial model of resource extraction that do not serve First Nations communities surrounded by forests.

A more drastic impact will be needed if enough cedar is not protected for future generations. Several western red cedar carvers are in the community of Gwa'yasdám's, but many have limited forest access. As a result, fewer people would practice carving and weaving cedar as an essential part of our heritage.

Future co-governance models should be funded. Further, attempts to address relational values, rights, and knowledge should be considered in future forest policies and legislation, including the need to protect cedar for cultural uses. Ultimately, protecting cedar for long-term abundance and supply, especially large cedar for canoes, totem poles, and house posts, requires First Nations-led land-use planning and inventories.

## **Chapter 8: Discussion**

This research examined the interconnections of people-forest relationships from geo-political and socio-ecological viewpoints. The timeline was ancient to contemporary because it aimed to conduct research with Indigenous Peoples with a living culture.

### **8.1 Summary of Chapters**

The following section outlines this dissertation's thesis summary and contributions. The chapters were organized around a peoplehood model adapted from Holm, Pearson, and Chavis (2003) to centre the Kwikwasut'inuxw Haxwa'mis's oral traditions—in particular, Indigenous stories, forest practices, place-based Indigenous knowledge, and connection with the lands and oceans by participating in the life cycles of the traditional territory.

The research chapters took on modest topics and scales of comprehensiveness from the peoplehood model, and while distinct, they were chosen to complement each other.

#### **8.1.1 Chapter Four**

I asked what a Kwakwaka'wakw origin story meant about the relationships with the forests. The worldview held in stories sustained the Kwakwaka'wakw for millennia and can be adapted into twenty-first century lessons. From two quotes from origin stories orated by a hereditary Chief, a matriarch, and a knowledge keeper and by cross-referencing these quotes with published literature, I interpreted several lessons about people-forest relationships from the Kwikwasut'inuxw origin story:

- People are part of nature—the physical aspects of the territory. This is described as relationality and includes individuals, communities, the wildlife, forest and water and all physical and spiritual energies that surround us;
- That people have reciprocal relationships with our surroundings; what we do impacts our surroundings and vice versa;
- Having good relationships with the surroundings is essential. Therefore, being part of nature means that there is a responsibility to nature meant that resource uses include but go beyond transactional paradigms of “only take what you can use” or “eat local.” Therefore, the term and teaching of “respect” is an overarching teaching that guides longevity and long-term community well-being by recognizing the axiology that people are responsible to nature. If the relationships with nature are bad or responsibilities and teachings are not followed, there can be harsh consequences;
- That the Kwakwaka'wakw are surrounded by nature and observe the life cycles that surround them at multiple scales. There are annual cycles with the seasons, wildlife cycles (especially salmon), and human life cycles. Participating in these life cycles and honouring them aided Kwakwaka'wakw resilience because it connected us to the lands and livelihoods; and
- Ultimately, the Kwakwaka'wakw believe in reincarnation, so even while they may have been surrounded in abundance, the long-term goal would be to be part of natural life cycles annually, collectively, and for generations to follow.

Oral histories are a foundational and overarching component of the peoplehood model (section 1.3) because stories were initially told in the Kwakwaka'wakw language. Secondly, origin

stories tie 'nā'mima to the places where the stories were told. Thirdly, in more extended versions of the stories, stories conveyed traditional resource practices by upholding the forest resources and places most important to us. Finally, the K̓w̓ik̓wasut'inuxw origin story explained the axiology of cycles in life in multiple temporal scales, including the life cycle of salmon, an essential food source, and the belief in reincarnation.

The telling of stories is an active role for the teller and the listener, and there is an ongoing responsibility of current and future generations to pass on the Kwakwaka'wakw epistemologies and ethics through intergenerational transmission of knowledge through telling and retelling of origin stories. Other information to pass on to the next generation includes cultural privileges such as dances, names, songs, and ceremonial practices.

### **8.1.2 Chapter Five**

This chapter highlighted how Indigenous women's roles have been hidden. The research synthesized quotes from Elders about women's knowledge and contributions in the forests that were cross-referenced with Indigenous feminists and female ethnographers. The time period was from contact with settlers in the late nineteenth century, the mid-twentieth century, and current resurgence projects lead by Kwakwaka'wakw women.

This research explained that during contact, early settlers misinterpreted the roles of Indigenous women, either because they did not know what they were looking at—the lens and narrative the authors were writing about at contact during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was during the Victorian era based on Western ideals (Kehoe, 1983; Smith, 2012)—or for the overt malicious objective of land dispossession. Assiduously, the role of Indigenous women, from day-to-day practices to our prerogative rights to the forests, has been critically left

out of history and literature, homogenized, and misrepresented. The results are intergenerational and ongoing.

I used a peoplehood model to organize empirical chapters for its recognition that Indigenous cultures still exist despite colonialism (Corntassel, 2012). Further, the peoplehood model “provides a useful way to think about the nature of everyday resurgence practices both personally and collectively” (Corntassel, 2012, p. 89). And a primary research outcome from Chapter Five and Seven was the need to look at the literature and policies critically to consider the “pervasiveness of misinformation that travels through time” (Glass & Everson, 2022) and consider how to contemporize inaccurate narratives when it comes to Kwakwaka’wakw women and forest practices. Much work was put into shaming and marginalizing Indigenous Peoples at contact. The same rigour has not been generated to correct these wrongdoings and there are ongoing and cascading issues. Further, the important point was that the issues of the marginalization of Indigenous women is ongoing within Indigenous communities and the wider society. Making the invisible visible is often a first step in change.

### **8.1.3 Chapter Six**

This chapter looked at traditional foods that are relational and tied to places. A contribution from the research found in this chapter was a ’ma’mak’wayu of traditional foods specific to the region of the Broughton Archipelago, co-developed with Elders from the Musgamakw Dzawada’enuxw who had grown up collecting these foods (Appendix D). I received the most feedback and willingness for repeat interviews for this chapter.

While talking to the community about traditional foods, I learned that Indigenous knowledge is held collectively within the community, therefore it is not and was probably never



monolithic (Lyall et al., 2019). This means that everyone did not have to know how to do every single traditional or cultural activity for the community to consider that traditional knowledge to be intact. Some community members knew how to dig clams and others how to collect cedar. Chapter Six and the section on authenticating Indigenous knowledge (3.2.3) supported that the community relied on each other to share traditional foods. So, a sign of community resiliency is being able to count on each other for sharing traditional foods, traditional harvesting skills, and Indigenous knowledge.

The reliance of traditional foods is less since the mid-twentieth century for most, but many forest resources are still revered and relevant during ceremony. There was an ongoing interest in teaching youth about practices and remobilizing some traditional food practices that were not used.

Chapters Six and Seven demonstrated that industrial developments had impacted the accessibility of several forest and ocean resources, including cedar, salmon, and eulachon, amongst other essential forest resources. If forest and ocean resources are not available in the future because they have not been managed sustainably, it would negatively impact the maintenance of First Nations' heritage and culture, including forest practices, place-based Indigenous knowledge, oral histories, and life cycles. In the case of natural resources, this research points out that the goal should be maintaining resources before they are depleted rather than trying to restore them since it is difficult to restore ecosystems or to find resources to do so after the fact. In Chapter Seven, the impetus is to be proactive to ensure this essential forest resource isn't completely depleted. It would be tough to replace cedar since the best cedar for carving is old-growth cedar that is hundreds of years old.

#### 8.1.4 Chapter Seven

Chapter Seven drew upon my career as a professional forester. This chapter considered the impacts of forestry on cultural uses of cedar by First Nations. It cross-referenced interviews, literature, and grey literature, including British Columbia forest legislation and practices. An essential contribution were insights into a forest land use plan and the Great Bear Rainforest from one of the 15 First Nations not involved in constructing of this policy, highlighting the lack of protection it affords to cedar and the barriers such policy poses to managing in a way consistent with cultural needs, practices, and knowledge.

This research delivers several elements and recommendations for change in the British Columbia Great Bear Rainforest Order, *Forest Act*, and the *Forest Range and Practices Act* and its regulations. The literature suggested a need for First Nations to insert community-based plans (Artelle et al., 2018; Diver, 2017) and that there are limitations in integration models and that these limitations should be noted (Bohensky & Maru, 2011; Menzies & Bulter, 2021).

Chapter Seven argues a need to develop territory-based plans, inventories, and ground truthing to protect cedar for cultural use. While more comprehensive and strategic plans are needed to protect First Nations' self-determination than a tactical plan for safeguarding cedar, it is a worthy forest resource to be proactive in protecting into the future. For many First Nations, the inventories of western red cedar for cultural use in the future are incomplete. Inventories are lacking or not specific to the quality and specific attributes of cedar needed for cultural uses, and the priority in forest management has been for timber, not cultural use inventories. This chapter also points out that the *Forest Range and Practices Act* aims to protect cedar based on the scarcity or abundance of this resource. So, the onus should not be on First Nations to protect cedar on their own; it should be a shared responsibility.

The main point of the chapter was shedding light on some of the ongoing barriers and limitations found in current state policies regarding forest resources on which First Nations depend. I argue that forest practices policies are overly complex, combined with the weakness that they are too lenient and protect the rights of commercial logging and prioritize this over other forest uses. Specifically, the *Forest Act* firmly secures forest licensees' rights to log and the allowable annual cuts (logging rate). The rights to log are prioritized over non-timber values through the strength of the *Forest Act*, so to protect cultural values, both the *Forest Range and Practices Act* and *Forest Act* need to be adjusted.

## **8.2 Key Findings**

The following section outlines some of the key findings across the research chapters.

### **8.2.1 Calling Upon the Ancestors - Living Culture, Based on Ancient Roots**

A primary insight from this research is that the Kwakwaka'wakw heritage is based on an ancient culture and living history. I opened this research by dedicating this work to my ancestors, Ṭsekaga and Ṭsekame', that guided this research and the descendants of. Further, I explained that chapters moved from ancient to contemporary, therefore the ancient culture and living history are expressed accordingly in layered ways throughout the chapters. In Chapter Four, this means that the ancient culture has lasted from the beginning of time; through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in Chapter Five; the mid-twentieth century in Chapter Six; and today in Chapter Seven. Below are some of the various ways I called upon ancestors before and while I wrote.

In Chapter Four, I considered the importance of the storytellers to remember the story and to tell it; and the role of a listener to listen and to make meaning from the story (Archibald, 2009). I thought about our first ancestors and their children. I thought about where they “came out” and where the first people began and built houses that became village sites. I thought about these places when I wrote, and I visited some of these places over the years of conducting this research. I thought about the ancestors’ names and the foods they had revered. I heard lessons that tied people to places, names, foods, and practices. Being part of the community, I learned that these stories are dramatically displayed when we dance in the big house and show our guests who we are and where we are from. In Chapter Four, we learned that the Kwakwaka’wakw believe in reincarnation and that names are passed down to successive generations, as are other treasures such as stories and dances.

Chapter Five was about the gap in literature about Indigenous women and traditional food practices. Therefore, when I wrote, I thought about the specific women mentioned in quotes and what they were doing, how they were doing it, and why they were doing it. I considered why this information was considered “lost” and the reasons why women were considered either a threat or unimportant enough to look over during the writing of history. I considered the impacts of that oversight. I also remembered specific quotes from ancestors that were passed to me. Once, Dr. Shelly Johnson told me that my Aunt Freda Shaughnessy, with Kwikwasut’inuxw heritage, told her, “Out of bad comes something good.” This idea reminded me about the Indigenous resurgence literature that advocates that out of something bad—something good *should* happen—with effort and community-driven efforts to rebuilding our own houses (Simpson, 2011, p. 32) in a way that takes careful consideration of “not reduplicating the oppression we’ve learned at residential schools” (Simpson, 2018, p. 228-229).

In Chapter Six, I listened and talked with Elders repeatedly and I wanted to learn how they described that they were taught by the “old people,” our ancestors. They often spoke in a combination of English and Kwakwāla about the things they learned, the practices to collect, harvest and preserve traditional foods, the technologies to harvest traditional foods, the places, and the times of the year.

Chapter Seven was about contemporary forest legislation and their impacts on cultural uses. I return to the idea of a “lived culture based on ancient roots,” since red cedar remains vital to the culture and the current generations of Ṭsek̓ame’ and Ṭsekaga—this has been a constant through time. Ṭsek̓ame’ was a little cedar man; therefore, western red cedar was featured prominently in the most “ancient” chapter, Chapter Four, and the most “contemporary” chapter, Chapter Seven. I also considered the current and future generations of Ṭsek̓ame’ and Ṭsekaga and a need to safeguard cedar for future generations, otherwise our cultural heritage would be damaged.

### **8.2.2 Essential Forest Resources**

In Chapter Five, this research explained that during contact with settlers, the Kwakwāka’wakw were labelled as hunter-gatherers, and this stereotype had lasting impacts on First Nations’ self-determination (Deur, 2002). However, academics within the last two decades have begun to honour ancient resource management practices with terminology like clam gardens, forest gardens, and root gardens. I demonstrate there had been a change in the diet of traditional foods. Yet, some people who remained in the community carried on with harvesting and processing foods. These people were responsible for keeping much of the Indigenous knowledge of traditional foods intact. While traditional resource-management practices may not be in a place

like they once were, the traditional forest practices found within Indigenous knowledge systems are increasingly recognized by academics for contributing to biocultural diversity (Deur, 2002; Pilgrim & Pretty, 2010). Many community members and academics seek ways to remobilize these resource-management practices (Section 5.5; Joseph, 2020; UBC Forestry, 2022).

### **8.2.3 Kwakwaka'wakw – Forest Relationships. The Forests are Our Cupboards; The Ocean is Our Refrigerator**

*RI: There is a real connection between the salmon and the forests, right?*

*I: M-hmm*

*RI: Because they go up the streams and fertilize the forest.*

*I: So, protecting the forests for salmon.*

*RI: And salmon for the forests.*

*I: And vice versa (personal communication, August 2, 2016).*

Returning to the title of this research, “The Forests are Our Cupboards; The Ocean is Our Refrigerator,” this research described a holistic view of the people-forest relationships. Research questions were about the forests, but responses from interviews, workshops, and analysis sessions were about the forest and the oceans that surrounded the Kwikwasut'inuxw Haxwa'mis. The Kwakwaka'wakw have lived at the ocean's edge and in the forests since the beginning, so a view of interconnectedness between the forest and ocean is not surprising. Marianne Nicolson (2013, p. 263, 268–273) explained that in Kwakwaka'wakw geographical directions are not only described as north, south, east, and west. In addition, there are Kwakwaka'wakw verb suffixes that describe the directions in Kwakwaka'wakw as going either into the forests or going out into the ocean. It is intrinsic to think about the oceans and forests together, instead of siloing them. While

there is a growing recognition of Indigenous knowledge because it is noted for its strength in considering ecosystems holistically, in some cases, there is still a need to advocate for the application of Indigenous Knowledge in applied science disciplines, especially on its own terms.

Another description of the holistic view held by Indigenous Peoples is from Turner, Davidson-Hunt, and O’Flaherty (2003). These three scholars have developed research partnerships with Indigenous Peoples about how traditional ecological knowledge intersects with resources management and ecology. They have noted that Indigenous Peoples are interested in the intersections between ecosystems.

While the argument that everything is connected can seem like an unreasonable scale to manage, it is the point of this research that siloing ecosystems by state agencies for forests, oceans, wildlife, and fish have not been helpful or successful for the environment. Indigenous knowledge specializes in not compartmentalizing knowledge when thinking about the awi’nakola (Berkes, 2012). So, there might be times to decompartmentalize knowledge more often or at least recognizing the incompatibility in compartmentalizing Indigenous knowledge into resources management.

#### **8.2.4 Community Resilience and Resurgence**

What was clear from participating in this research was that the Indigenous communities within the area collectively wanted recognition for our individual and collective resilience in maintaining forest practices. This meant, for some, a determination to remain within the territory despite the pressures to move to urban centres. In fact, for many of the citizens born, raised, and living within the traditional territory, it was not a stretch of the imagination that they would continue carrying out day-to-day activities and place-based knowledge in a traditional

Kwakwaka'wakw fashion as both a way of life and resistance. When there is an ability to live more traditionally and not depend on wage economies, many citizens do not see themselves as marginalized.

It is appropriate to have the community leading the research so that research is not extractive of peoples' time. The aim is to have research outputs to be additive to Indigenous Peoples' knowledge and also following the "no research about us without us" current mantra. This seems obvious, but it is still not always the case. Some Indigenous People have protocols to lead research approaches and research governance structures and staff to facilitate community-based research.

### **8.3 Research Strengths and Limitations**

A research strength was the approach to include community input in the research design, including influencing questions, analysis, and research topics, including chapter topics.

A research weakness was also the research approach. I envisioned the research topics becoming more evident and focused following the first year of interviews. However, the reverse happened as I learned there are many prevalent topics of interest to the Kwikwasut'nuxw Haxwa'mis about the forests. Aptly, four distinct empirical chapter topics share information about Indigenous knowledge. Hence, a limitation is that I did not have a deep analysis of any one topic in the four distinct chapters. Further, this research took longer since I did not have a complete handle on the research topics for the first couple of years of community collaboration.

Further, regarding timing, an explicit limitation was that a global pandemic began during this research. I was visiting Gwa'yasdām's and staying there for a few weeks when the global pandemic was announced in 2020. After that, I did not visit Gwa'yasdām's and felt



uncomfortable attending community events. While I dropped in on family, I did not stay as connected with the community as I had hoped. Although, a final presentation was offered at Gwa'yasdām's in March 2023.

## **8.4 Future Research**

This research about people-forest relationships with the Kwakwaka'wakw revealed many areas of further research. To manage the scale of this research topic, I limited my analysis to a small number of topics in four chapters.

In Chapter Four, I wrote about one story, but there are many more to draw upon: the Animal Kingdom about the forest people, the Haxwa'mis origin stories, the undersea kingdom dance, and others. I interpreted quotes into lessons. More community analysis is needed to see if these interpretations could broadly apply to forest-people relationships and forest stewardship.

Chapter Five identified a research gap in the literature about women's roles in the forests. I outline that Indigenous women have been and continue to be marginalized. Indigenous feminists have been writing about these topics for decades; clearly, more work needs to be done to combat the root causes of marginalization by the government and within communities. Much work is still required to learn about how power imbalances and history have impacted Indigenous men, women, and everybody within our respective communities (Corntassel & Scow, 2017). Further, there is a need to take stock of everyone's roles in the community and update the perspectives to contemporary times from early accounts from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in research. As pointed out, "land is at the center of resurgence" (Simpson, 2018, p. 215); many Kwakwaka'wakw women are leading community-based, land-based, and grassroots resurgence projects. The community could further support these to move forward.

Chapter Six was about traditional foods and would not have been included without community input. I spoke with Elders and traditional harvesters about forest-resource use from when they were growing up and learning from “the old people” and our ancestors. Because many participants were Elders, research topics began in the mid-twentieth century. There are many examples of burgeoning and established Indigenous scholars researching food security and food sovereignty to draw upon. A way to contemporize future research would include youth—for example, by employing praxis-based and resurgence-based research on the land with youth (Akala Society, 2022).

In Chapter Seven, I write of a need for forest inventories of cedar. In addition, other inventories would be helpful. Further, I completed an analysis of forest policy and its impacts on First Nations, with the example of cedar. Many upcoming forest policy changes exist in the Province of British Columbia and the Great Bear Rainforest. Ongoing analysis of the evolving forest policy and its impacts on First Nations and local communities would be useful for forest-people-relationship research. In Chapter Seven, I raised the issue about the scale of forest management in British Columbia and that it was for First Nations to know if industrial logging was “sustainable” at the local level. Hence, this research suggests a need for researchers and policy-makers to consider the physical land base scale relevant to First Nations territories. On the other hand, larger-scale research areas are relevant for topics such as species extinction and climate change.

Besides the research topic or discipline, the research approach is also essential. In recent decades, researchers have found tools within Indigenous paradigms and Western frameworks to consider how research could be relevant to Indigenous Peoples. Indeed, a community-based

research approach makes a difference in the research's relevance and outputs (Menzies & Butler, 2021).

## **8.5 Final Thoughts**

I was afforded the opportunity to spend time in my traditional territory, my homelands—a goal of mine for a long time. I met people in my community through this research who I have probably known my whole life, but this research gave me an excuse to talk with them and get to know them more. In my opinion, research should not be about personal gain or the establishment of one's career, and for me doing research with the community was the goal. Yet, this was a highly personal experience for me as an “insider,” and it wasn't easy for me to know how to proceed at times. Although the community guided me, I often hesitated about how to proceed. As a result, Chapters Four and Six acknowledge that Indigenous Peoples' time needs to be respected to heal ourselves, keep our cultures alive, and remobilize lost knowledge. Chapters Five and Seven addressed some of the root issues before “transformative” change could occur since, as pointed out, power structures and imbalances are not easily dislodged (Wilson-Raybould, 2021).

## Chapter 9: Conclusions

This research about people-forest relationships was interdisciplinary and drew upon natural resources, language reclamation and Indigenous studies. I garnered community priorities for this research in two group analysis workshops in 2017. There were stand-alone and overarching topics that included Indigenous knowledge, oral histories, forest practices, and seasonality of traditional foods.

Challenges for the people's forest relations were the impacts of ongoing colonization, which have evolved into forest policies that gave strong forest tenure rights to the forest industry. The forest uses, practices, and resources the K̓w̓ik̓w̓asut'inuxw H̓axwa'mis's prioritized as significant for future generations were traditional foods and western red cedar. This research also considered how colonialism and imperialism intentionally marginalized Indigenous women and that the impacts of silencing women's voices are ongoing. With priorities set by the community, several calls to action are raised throughout this research to maintain our culture and heal internally and within the broader society.

The Kwakwaka'wakw are sometimes considered one of the most studied Indigenous Peoples in the world. Consequently, key challenges are that some documented histories ignored or misinterpreted Indigenous knowledge, which impacted peoples' roles within the community. To correct the centuries of misrepresented Indigenous knowledge, this research used the approach of asking K̓w̓ik̓w̓asut'nuxw H̓axwa'mis some of the community-driven research questions and prioritizing topics co-developed with them. In recent decades, more Kwakwaka'wakw authors have emerged, so the pendulum is shifting from where we had long been readers of our histories to being the writers of our histories. We have the agency to

rewrite a history from our own perspective that is sometimes considered static from the nineteenth century.

Our First Nations populations are growing, and youth are learning about our culture due to grassroots-based resurgence projects. These teachings were less accessible during my generation because of the lasting intergenerational effects of Indian Residential Schools, the *Indian Act*, and my urban upbringing. Therefore, the twenty-first century brings many reasons for hope for the Kwakwaka'wakw. Those living in the territory were proud to have held onto Indigenous knowledge and expressed a keen interest in transmitting knowledge to the next generation. I learned that the Kwakwaka'wakw's heritage and cultural identity remain resilient, even defiant, including in our resolve to want to continue benefitting from the forests surrounding us.

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## **APPENDIX A - Research Questions**

### **Authenticating Indigenous Knowledge:**

What are markers of authenticity for Indigenous knowledge?

### **Stories:**

What does our creation story tell us about our relationship with the forests and oceans?

### **Practices:**

What are the resources from the land and sea that are most important to us?

What are our traditional harvesters doing?

What does a season of collecting food look like?

What are we still doing on the land? Who is out on the land?

### **State of the forests:**

How do we benefit from the forests?

How do we go about getting long-term economic growth?

What social and cultural benefits do we need from the forests?

What needs to be protected at the traditional territory level?

What if there were no *Forest Act*?

### **What do we want to teach our children?**

What do we want to teach to the next generation?

How do we reconnect with the lands?

How do we learn about the land and forests?

How do we teach about the forests and land?

## APPENDIX B - Collaborative research scoring rubric

Collaborative research scoring rubric for projects with Indigenous Peoples (Developed by Dr. Ronald Trosper et al., 2014)

Category	Criteria	Scoring: Evidence that the criteria have been met
1) Community-centered control –Joint Planning	<p>1.A) Community working with or conducting its own research.</p> <p>1.B) Community plays prominent role in determining outcomes and goals of research.</p> <p>1.C) Community has provided free, prior and informed consent for the project</p> <p>1.D) Political and Legal context understood.</p> <p>1.E) Breadth of Community Participation (Participation of marginalized people i.e., gender, age, income, class, etc.)</p>	<p>___ (5) Community plays an active role in the study by working with their own community and conducting research.</p> <p><b>X</b> (3) Community plays a role in the study beyond research participant (serving as a researcher; interviewing, consulting, etc.)</p> <p>___ (0-1) Community plays no role beyond research/ study participant.</p> <p><b>X</b> (5) Community members are able to decide or change the study outcome, goals, and priorities before the researcher visits.</p> <p>___ (3) Community members know about and agree with researchers' pre-determined study goals, outcomes, and priorities.</p> <p>___ (0-1) Community members find researchers' study goals, outcomes, and priorities to be of minimal interest/ not important/ or not necessary.</p> <p>___ (5) A formal agreement with informed consent exists between the community and researcher</p> <p><b>X</b> (3) Some type of agreement exists between the community and researcher (IRB; Tribal Permission; Interview Consent, etc.)</p> <p>___ (0-1) No agreement exists between the community and researcher</p> <p><b>X</b> (5) Outside researchers are aware of and discuss the political and legal context with the community's representatives, and changes plans as required.</p> <p>___ (3) Outside researchers demonstrate awareness of the political and legal context.</p> <p>___ (0-1) The political and legal context is not discussed.</p> <p><b>X</b> (5) Community participation is broad and inclusive of all members. Dialogue with all parties continues throughout the research project</p> <p>___ (3) Community participation is diverse in some aspects (gender, age range, income level, etc.)</p> <p>___ (0-1) Community participation is limited to one category (gender only; age only; etc.)</p> <p>Total: <b>21</b></p>

Category	Criteria	Scoring: Evidence that the criteria have been met
2) Joint methodology implementation	2.A) Shared Control of Information or data gathered	<p>___(5) Control over the data/information is balanced. The researcher and community equally manage data and develop protocol for use, storage, processing, disposal, etc.</p> <p><b>X</b>(3) Community has some control over study related data/ information. Researcher follows community's standard research protocol, but community input is not unique to the study.</p> <p>___(0-1) No shared control over data/ information or protocol for management.</p>
	2.B) Community members as researchers: Data gathering	<p>___(5) Community members help design data gathering templates, questionnaires, and other tools. Community members also participate in data acquisition.</p> <p>___(3) Community members gather data following procedures that are determined by the external research team.</p> <p><b>X</b>(0-1) No community members are hired to gather data.</p>
	2.C) Community members as researchers: analysis	<p><b>X</b>(5) Community members participate in discovering the significant results of the research, including any findings that are surprises.</p> <p>___(3) Community members help interpret results. Researcher may compute statistical tests, but the results of the tests are discussed with community members in the process of determining what the data show.</p> <p>___(0-1) Researchers do all of the analysis.</p>
	2.D) Communication	<p><b>X</b>(5) Communication between researcher and community continues regularly throughout duration of project. (Annual reports, meetings, town hall, etc.).</p> <p>___(3) Communication occurs only at major project milestones,: start, end, etc.</p> <p>___(0-1)</p>
	2.E) Mutual trust between researcher and community	<p>___(5) Researcher is confident in the abilities and knowledge of the community. Community is comfortable with the researcher/or institution, who respects the needs, views, and morals of the community.</p> <p><b>X</b>(3) Community and researcher/institution appear to have some degree of mutual trust (measurable through previous collaboration; community has extensive relationship w/ institution, i.e. University students work on projects every summer, etc.)</p> <p>___(0-1) Researcher is legally permitted to work with community, extent of mutual trust is unclear.</p>
		Total <b>16</b>

Category	Criteria	Scoring: Evidence that the criteria have been met
3) Outcomes-- Community Benefit	Community Benefit	
	3.A) Material Benefit	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (goal) (5) Food security enhanced; land tenure increased; new economic opportunities developed ___ (3) Positive material benefit, but small scale (Grants, Return of cultural materials, etc.) ___ (0-1) No material benefit was attained by the community
	3.B) Control over publication	___ (5) Full veto power; Co-authorship <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (3) Complete review of drafts ___ (0-1) Informed of the publication; Received a copy after published
	3.C) Empowerment	___ (5) Membership on examination committee; changed procedures by government agencies which move the community to higher levels of Arnstein's ladder <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (3) Community experienced financial, educational, etc. empowerment ___ (0-1) Study did not empower community
	3.D) Capacity Building	___ (5) The community creates a research office or museum which stores all data collected and is capable of negotiating new projects with new researchers. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (3) Capacity for community members to work/hold authoritative positions ___ (0-1) Community capacity building was not encouraged/ No capacity building took place
	3.E) Research questions answered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (5) Were the questions that the community developed answered; and there is one or more surprising finding from the community's viewpoint. ___ (3) Findings were something previously unknown or surprising. ___ (0-1) Findings were not new or surprising; Community questions were answered.
	3.F) Sustainability of outcomes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> [goal](5) Outcomes of the study demonstrate long-term effectiveness through implementation of policies, programs, etc. ___ (3) Outcome offers assistance in attaining sustainability, but does not implement a solution ___ (0-1) Outcomes of the study are not sustainable
Category	Criteria	Scoring: Evidence that the criteria have been met
) Outcomes - Researcher Benefit	Researcher Benefit	
	4.A) Publications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (5) Journal accessible to non-scholarly readers; is it widely distributed; or does the publication fall into gray literature such as technical reports, etc.? ___ (3) Publication is scholarly and has academic audience primarily

	<p>4.B) Degree Attainment</p> <p>4.C) Long term relationships</p> <p>4.D) Number of loops in the learning</p>	<p>___(0-1) Non-publishable</p> <p><b>X</b> (5) MA, MSc, or Ph.D. awarded to the researcher if a student.</p> <p>___(3) BA awarded</p> <p>___(0-1) Degree sought but not awarded based on shortcomings of study.</p> <p><b>X</b> (5) Community and researcher successfully collaborate on study, move forward in working together again over an extended period of time. Relationship does not end upon finalization of current project.</p> <p>___(3) Community and researcher maintain contact after study, possibility of future work but no solidified project known.</p> <p>___(0-1) Community and researcher end relationship upon finishing current project.</p> <p><b>X</b> (5) Triple loop: fundamental, unrecognized assumptions are recognized, causing a revision of worldview.</p> <p>___(3) Double loop The structure of an existing model is changed; new equations used with the same set of variables.</p> <p>___(0-1) Single loop: parameters in an existing model are changed (improved) based on more data.</p> <p>Total: <b>20</b></p>
	<b><u>Total Score:</u></b>	<p><b>Part 1: 21</b></p> <p><b>Part 2: 16</b></p> <p><b>Part 3: 27</b></p> <p><b>Part 4: 20</b></p> <p><b>Grand Total: 84 / 105 = 80%</b></p>

**Self-Assessed by UBC partner: Andrea Lyall, R.P.F., Ph.D. Candidate**

**Areas for improvement:** interview ownership discussions, research agreement, hire K̓w̓ik̓w̓asut'inuxw H̓axwa'mis First

Nations members for interviews

**January 30, 2008**



## APPENDIX C – Ranked Research Topics with Community Input

Topic Theme	Feedback, ranked by community
Heritage and traditional priorities	Kwakwaka language 31 Traditional foods 26 Potlatching and ceremony 23 Medicines from the forest 18 Getting on the land 11 Prayers 10
Stewardship priorities	A monitoring “guardian” program 40 Discussion with industry 31 Close clam beaches 30 Signs and shacks 29 Stop relocating wildlife 9
Awi’nakola priorities	Aboriginal rights 46 Traditional foods 38 Spirituality 26 Young people 18
Teaching the children	Learning by doing (hands on) 48 Elders as teachers 43 Courses 35

## APPENDIX D – 'ma'mak'wayu - Kwakwala calendar

Kwakwala calendar	Month	Activity
Wa'yānx – herring spawn season	January	Clams, cockles
Dzadzā'wānx – first eulachon run time	February	Clams, cockles, herring spawn
K̓wīk̓wa'lānx - everything is sprouting time	March	Eulachon, salmon berry sprouts
'Ma'wā'eṭlānx – time to move to eulachon fishing season grounds	April	Making eulachon grease
K̓am̓k̓amdza'k̓wānx – salmon berry season	May	Seaweed, halibut, eelgrass, salmon berry, cow parsnip
G̓wagwat'ānx – red huckleberry time	June	Salmon, red huckleberries, thimbleberries
Ninak'wānx – salal berry time	July	Salmon, salal berries, thimbleberries
X̓amsx̓amsdi – time of empty fish storage box	August	Salmon, blackberries
'Lix̓am – wide face moon	September	Crabapple, hunting
'Magwabo'yi – round moon	October	harvest root garden, hunting, smoking coho, dog salmon
G̓waxs̓an – dog salmon time	November	Clams, hunting, dog salmon for smoking
Ło'yānx – leaves fallen time	December	Clams, cockles

## **APPENDIX E – Intergenerational Transfer of Indigenous Knowledge**

K̓w̓ala'yu (you are my reason for living), speaking of the importance of youth in resurgence projects.

Below, in no particular order, is a list of answers to “What do we want to teach to the next generation?”:

- Bring young people out on the lands
- Going out on the land with youth: picking cedar bark, fishing, hunting, traplines, seaweed, eulachon
- Training for being on the lands. (e.g., gun safety)
- Barbeque clams and fish
- Smoke houses
- Jarring fish and making preserves
- Cedar bark weaving
- Carving cedar
- Medicines – all about them. Where to pick, how to make, where to get
- Kwakwaka language
- Picking berries
- A prayer while in the forest before collecting anything
- Going into the forest before a potlatch
- Job fairs
- Play potlatches