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**Against Culture: contemporary Pentecostalism in Native American villages
along Alaska's southeast coast**

by

Kirk Dombrowski

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty
in Anthropology in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
City University of New York

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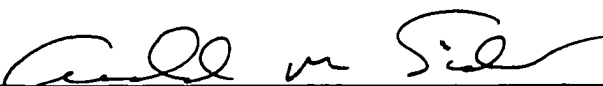
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THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

for Colleen, of course

Abstract

Against Culture: contemporary Pentecostalism in Native American villages
along Alaska's southeast coast

by

Kirk Dombrowski

Adviser: Professor Gerald Sider

Few anthropologists interested in the global spread of Pentecostal Churches have tried to understand this process in the context of equally global class formative processes. This dissertation examines the popularity of several small churches — some independent, others associate with well-known, national, missionary organizations — in primarily Native villages in Alaska's Southeast panhandle. Here Native church members have taken on a public role in denouncing both the ravages of recent development (most often at the hands of village ANCSA corporations) as well as the Native culture movement that has grown up along side this development.

Political activism based on church membership poses a challenge to traditional theories of class and classes at the periphery. Elements of a this more traditional class analysis — the ebb and flow of historical capital penetrations, recent changes in the political status of Alaska Natives (including Congress' creation of "Native corporations" in the early 1970's), and the ever-shifting political struggle for a subsistence-livelihood — are examined for their regional structural dynamics. Pentecostal church practice

is then discussed in this context. From this it becomes clear that these practices not only challenge the results of these dynamics, but more importantly, they challenge the 'structural basis' of the processes themselves.

Dissertation contents include ethnographic descriptions of: village-level political economy of the late-1980's and early 90's, the experience of wage-labor work in commercial timber production, conflicts with "the law" in the person of State and Federal Fish and Game enforcement officials, and finally descriptions of church practice and church-based salvation testimonies. These elements form the backdrop for a discussion of class that seeks to root anthropological contributions to the understanding of class forming processes in contemporary field work. A discussion of the epistemological basis for doing post-structural ethnography is included as an "Afterword."

Preface

Some initial remarks are necessary because the work that follows does not precisely follow the formal conventions of a dissertation. This monograph is based on work conducted over the past five years. My field research included three summers and one winter in Alaska, plus six months of archival research in New England, San Francisco, and Juneau Alaska over the course of two years. Much of this work was historical, little of which is reflected here — the reason for this which is discussed in the Introduction. In Alaska I lived primarily in three villages: Hydaburg, Kake, and Hoonah. Beyond this I spent time and attended church meetings in Juneau, Wrangell, and Ketchikan. I also did interviews with individuals from Craig, Klawock, and Sitka. My exposure, therefore, was to much of the region. In the villages I conducted formal interviews and “participant observation,” meaning (I guess) that I pulled the lead line and piled corks when fishing, or ate “indian food” at one of the several “doins” to which I was invited, and attended church meetings and revivals whenever possible. Most of my research on Pentecostalism, however, was accomplished during my last field season; up until that time I was more concerned with what might be called issues of political-economy — including cannery labor, “family” politics, subsistence harvests and politics, and wage labor in the timber industry. This was my research. Throughout I conducted research entirely in English, as this is the first language of virtually every village resident under the age of 1970. Indeed

few younger than this speak much of the indigenous languages of the area, though at present there are classes in Tlingit or Haida offered in the lower grades in village schools. These have met with mixed success due to a lack of commitment by most school boards, a lack of qualified teachers, and continued under-funding by the various Federal, State, and local administrations. I do not speak either Haida or Tlingit beyond simple greetings and polite formalities.

I had come to the field with a specific tactical interest which never left me. It animates much of the discussion that follows no doubt underlies (in ways that I'm sure I am yet to realize) the types of questions I asked when I was in the field. Pursuing what seems to me the central unsaid, perhaps almost unspeakable issues of Native American Studies, I went to Alaska seeking to understand the way that local, even village-based inequalities were made, perpetuated, and tied into the larger process of resource extraction that dominates the politics of the region. Behind this lay a belief still held that local forms of inequality determine both the ways that people and peoples at the margins are tied into process of global production (which is seldom in their interest) and the ways that they might potentially resist this incorporation as well. This is, I believe, how and why people so often find themselves "within and against" the systems of domination that surround them, as it is phrased by Gerald Sider (1993).

I did not go to the field to look at Pentecostal churches, which, as will

become clear in the remainder of the monograph, is indeed what I ended up centering on there and here. The shift to look at “radical christians” required, then, some certain changes in my overall approach to the way I thought differentiation to both work and be potentially resisted. As discussed in Chapter 1, this was not a small shift, and it had important implications for the sorts of dynamics I would now include under the heading “local differentiation.”¹ None-the-less the focus on specific forms of village-level inequality remained at the center of my fieldwork and remains at the center of the anthropology I now propose. This is a risky undertaking, for local forms of inequality are apt to be understood in personal terms, especially if people who read this recognize themselves in any of the discussions that follow. For this reason, all of the names of individuals have been changed² and all place names omitted. This is unlikely to fool anyone who recognizes themselves or who took part in any of the events discussed, but it does make it very difficult for an outsider to discover just who did what, and that is my purpose. To those of my friends who might have hoped to see their names mentioned as a record of their time-consuming, difficult, and perhaps risky help, I apologize and try to discharge some debts in the acknowledgements

¹ Some of the implications of this shift — and my own efforts to understand and justify them in academic or intellectual terms — are discussed in the “Afterword” that follows the concluding chapter.

² Other than those that were published in popular sources like newspapers. These have been left in their original published form.

below.

Beyond local inequality, three concerns underwrite the text that follows. The first is a concern for ethnography as a way of knowing. This is discussed mainly in a theoretical section that follows the main body of the work, but it is apparent throughout the work in the form and approach revealed. What follows is, in a sense, an “old fashion” ethnography that sees part of its purpose to be simple description. But, without going into what is better left for the end, this is consciously so and as such, perhaps quite different than description that is not so.

Second, as discussed in Chapter 1, this is intended to be a “post-structural” ethnography in so far as it centers on what I consider to be a form of anti-structural practice, i.e. that carried on by Pentecostal church members. Thus it is not “post-structuralism,” as the term is generally conceived in anthropology today, which has largely concerned itself with ways of knowing and writing. Rather, the focus here is on a “post-structural approach” that finds structure (as conventionally defined) to be an issue of social life, not its foundation. Those parts of social life which bring this to the front, then, play a special role in that they tend to propose not just anti- or post-structural ideas, but anti- or post-anthropological ideas as well. This marks them as critical points in changing anthropological practice specifically, and likely other forms of political practice more generally. This ethnography is doubly

critical, then, for it seeks out, and in its own way seeks to mimic, the anti-structural, anti-political, and indeed anti-anthropological practice of those who are its subject.

Third, there emerges from the first two large sections of this work (Parts 1 & 2) the observation that structure (whether it be states, laws, work processes, or even “culture”) are sources of disorganization and disruption in the lives of ordinary people. This too is introduced in Chapter 1 and mentioned here only to alert the reader to its place in the narrative. This disruption is seen to be a general characteristic of ostensibly ordering forms of domination in general, and thus not limited to the cases discussed here. Never-the-less it is, in the cases discussed here, only the context of the events and stories that make up the chapters; *it is not their cause*. This point is critical because I want to be clear from the beginning that I do not see the importance of Pentecostal churches to lay with the fact that “religion” tries to bring order to an otherwise chaotic universe (regardless of its source [see Geertz 1973]). Such an approach presumes people seek order, which is to my mind an untenable proposition. In what follows the issue is not causes but contexts, not structuring but making. These differences, though subtle and at this point still undefined, are critical.

Acknowledgements:

The debts accumulated in the five years since I began this project are numerous. My hosts for several long stays were Joe and Anna Frisby and Owen and Betsy James — to them I owe the deepest gratitude because they took a chance on me, and wise people that they are, they know that even now it is unclear whether or not it was worth it.

In Kake I would like to thank the entire Jackson clan, especially Mrs. Mona Jackson, Mike Jackson, and Larry Jackson. The people at OVK were always receptive and open and their guidance was appreciated. Willis Jackson and Archie Cavanaugh gave me my first introduction to churches in Kake, and for their guidance and understanding I am indebted. In Hydaburg I offer special thanks to Lisa Lang and “Pugie” Sanderson, important and busy people who both found time to talk with me about the way villages work, despite the fact that they had little reason to believe my reasons for wanting to know. Algie Frisby was a good friend who helped me get my feet wet and steered me clear of obvious trouble I still managed not see even after three summers in the village. The late Sylvester Peele offered several open and sincere interviews, for which I am grateful. Adrian and Vicki LeCornu were more than helpful and consistently challenging. In Hoonah I wish to thank Paul and Mary Rudolf and the crew of the Inian Queen, who put up with my questions and non-observations. Also in Hoonah, Carl Larson and Harold Dick accepted with patience and good humor my many questions.

Many of the church members who I spoke to asked not to be named, especially in villages where there has been conflict. To them I say thank you, and note that while the interests portrayed here are not their interests, the representations that follow are made with the hope that they be seen as "fair." If perceived otherwise, my hope is that the failure is attributed to ignorance or poor research, and not a lack of concern. Of the several ministers and prayer group leaders who I spoke to I would like to thank Pastors Charles Bovee and Glen Wilson and Lieutenant Trickle of the Salvation Army.

Most of the historical work that is included here is the result of archival work in Juneau carried out in or through the State Historical Library. Special thanks to Kay Shelton, Head of Collections, and India Spartz, Librarian, for their patience and guidance.

The majority of my field work, including three separate trips in 1995 and 1996 were paid for by a grant from the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research (Grant # Gr. 5876). Without this support, earlier and subsequent research would have lacked any foundation; so to Wenner-Gren, much thanks.

I would like to thank my dissertation committee for the *carte blanche* they gave me in deciding what sort of dissertation I would write, and with what goals. This is obviously not a conventional dissertation, either for the field of anthropology or for the department in which it was written. Their understanding and guidance in my attempt to chart my own path through

the process never flagged. Special thanks to Professors Jane Schneider, Shirley Lindenbaum, Abe Rosman, and Paula Rubel. Eric Wolf remained throughout a source of inspiration and personal encouragement.

Most special thanks go to Gerald Sider, mentor, advisor and friend. Most of the good ideas in what follows were prompted by him, to say anything else would be dishonest. This is probably not the book he would have had me write, regardless of which he always sought to help me make it better in ways that presumed my project, not his.

And finally for Colleen — who knows what sorts of things are caught up between these page — praise, thanks, and love.

Hi Nate.

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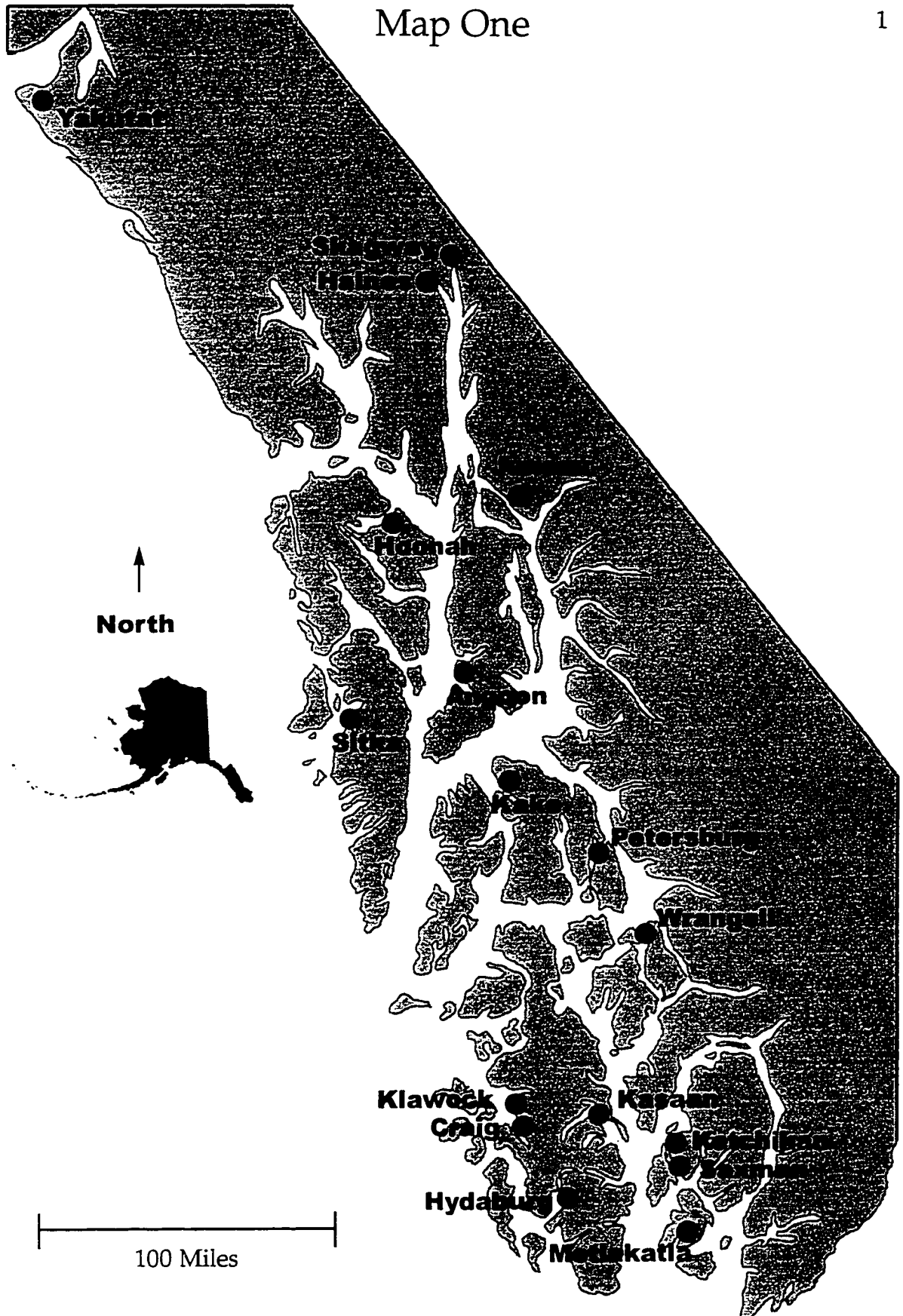
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Map One

1



*How does newness come into the world? How is it born?
 Of what fusions, translations, conjoinings is it made?
 How does it survive, extreme and dangerous as it is? What
 compromises, what deals, what betrayals of its secret nature must it make to
 stave off the wrecking crew, the exterminating angel, the guillotine?
 Is birth always a fall?
 Do angels have wings? Can men fly?*

Salman Rushdie, *The Satanic Verses*

How does newness come into the world.....

.....newness that pretends to oldness in cut-rate threads made available (largely, if indirectly) by commercial timber companies who can turn wood to pulp to rayon to cloth — good cheap cloth — purchased with timber worker wages, that can be made into a button blanket with acrylic buttons drilled instead, maybe, from North Slope oil....stitched together, metamorphasized into Native culture. Or, conversely, the newness of a new sign of an old sign, a neon cross, on a new building of corrugated walls and aluminum roof, no windows, new carpets, a satellite dish, and an electric and expensive sound system, metaphored into the village by the poverty and lack of direction that makes all such villages good prospects for Pentecostal preachers. Or, yet again, that perpetual yet still perpetuating newness, the vacuum of development “naturally” abhorred by states everywhere and consequently stuffed with resources — fish, timber, minerals, oil — that metatheorizes its own place at capital’s frontier, and simultaneously its resistance through the desperation inflicted on those in its path....

Chapter 1 — Introduction: Flo Ellers and Post-Structural Anthropology

Of all the histories that emerge in the postwar reconceptualization of world order, Edward Thompson's *Making of the English Working Class* remains among the texts most directly relevant to anthropology. For historians, Thompson's discussion of class dynamics in the day to day realm of custom, belief, and local variation opened new avenues of analysis that paralleled the familiar subjects of prewar anthropological research. For anthropologists, it renewed and strengthened the idea that anthropological data could speak to world shaping processes like class-formation in a world suddenly and irreconcilably global. For the most part this task was taken up by historical anthropology, which renewed American anthropology's interest in class processes, and marked an important (if brief) movement of the discipline as a whole to the left. Yet it was in so doing that there emerged a problem in historical anthropology that I would like to draw out — one that, though seldom articulated, has actually led some anthropology away from class analysis the way Thompson proposed it, and moved others away from the type of anthropology that Thompson might have found useful.

My argument is as follows. Perhaps the most critical of Thompson's analytical insights appears in the first few paragraphs of the "Preface" of the *Making of the English Working Class*. In discussing the naming of the text, Thompson notes the overriding importance of *class* — in the singular, and

hence specifically not *classes* — to his purposes.

This book has a clumsy title, but it is one which meets its purpose. *Making*, because it is a study in an active process, which owes as much to agency as to conditioning. The working class did not rise like the sun at an appointed time. It was present at its own making.

Class, rather than classes, for reasons which it is one purpose of this book to examine. There is, of course, a difference. “Working classes” is a descriptive term, which evades as much as it defines. It ties loosely together a bundle of discrete phenomena. There were tailors here and weavers there, and together they make up the working classes.

By class I understand an historical phenomenon, unifying a number of disparate and seemingly unconnected events, both in the raw material of experience and in consciousness. I emphasize that it is an *historical* phenomenon. I do not see class as a “structure”, nor even as a “category”, but as something which in fact happens (and can be shown to have happened) in human relationships.

More than this, the notion of class entails the notion of historical relationship. Like any other relationship, it is a fluency which evades analysis if we attempt to stop it dead at any given moment and anatomise its structure. The finest-meshed sociological net cannot give a pure specimen of class, any more than it can give us one of deference or love. The relationship must always be embodied in real people and in a real context. Moreover, we cannot have two distinct classes, each with an independent being, and then bring them into relationship with each other. We cannot have love without lovers, nor deference without squires and laborers. And class happens when some men, as a result of common experiences (inherited or shared), feel and articulate the identity of those interests as between themselves, and as against other men whose interests are different from (and usually opposed to) theirs. [Thompson 1963:9]

The clarification is meant to counter a potential misreading of the narrative, for in his text Thompson does in fact trace the development of a host of working class groups, union movements, religious movements, etc., all quite distinct and all noticeably plural. Yet Thompson makes clear that what makes them class, and not classes as they might appear on the surface —

and what allows for the abstraction of a single struggle from a host of smaller struggles — is the historical approach itself. Put plainly: “If we stop history at a given point, then there are no classes but simply a multitude of individuals with a multitude of experiences. But if we watch these men [sic] over an adequate period of social change, we observe the patterns in these relationships, their ideas and their institutions” (1963:11) It is only over time, i.e. historically, that class emerges from classes and class process become recognizable as the motor of social change.

The anti-structural implications of this idea — that history, not logic, is the place where the class struggle plays itself out and where its analysis begins and ends (even if it involves other strategies along the way) — were great inspirations for marxist historians and anthropologists. Most anthropologists until then had ignored class altogether. Yet for many Thompson confirmed what had been suspected for some time, that anthropology must do history to do class. And so we did, both individually and institutionally, the trend peaking in the early 1980's but continuing today. During this time history became a cause within anthropology and some began to create genealogies of historical anthropology, and to advocate the methodological (if not entirely the theoretical) course set by Thompson and other marxist historians (see Roseberry 1989). In this endeavor few anthropologists were or are troubled by the fact that we are not trained as historians, or that the methods employed in our historical work are often cursory, slippery, or worse. Instead, Thompson

had shown that anthropology had a certain amount of theoretical currency to spend on history, and the promise of new "ethnographic" methods for history encouraged historians to turn a blind eye toward the glaring methodological problems of a "historical anthropology." Across the board, left-leaning anthropologists and historians embraced the cross-disciplinary creativity promised by this hybrid, never asking what might be lost in such a merger (Medick 1987; Eley 1987).

Scarcely commented on in either discipline (and perhaps never suspected by historians) was the fact that anthropologists interested in class had stopped doing ethnography — the very practice that made them interesting and useful to Thompson in the first place.¹ They had, using a favorite term of anthropologist Barbara Price, swapped their birth right for a mess of pottage — ethnography for history — without much methodological justification or even, it seems, consideration. For a time this hybridity passed for creativity, until recently when the novelty of an anthropology of the medium durée ceased to capture the imagination of a wider audience. Lately anthropologists have, for the most part, stopped doing history, and as a result class-based analysis has virtually disappeared from the discipline. This was not Thompson's intention, of course, that anthropology become history and, frustrated with the implications of this turn, stop doing class analysis. Indeed,

¹ There are, of course, important exceptions — June Nash (1979) and Gavin Smith (1989) immediately come to mind.

I would argue that Thompson's work remains central to class-based anthropological research, but more for the problems it raises for anthropological methods than the answers it supplies.

Most useful as a way out of this muddle might be a version of his original question. How are anthropologists to speak to the centrality of class, not classes — Thompson's crucial insight — using the methods of research and representation we know better? In short, how do we do an ethnography of class, given that most field work is limited to two years or less of actual participation / observation?

My answer to this question is that it can be done (of course), though from the beginning we must realize that this does not mean a return to a simple empiricism in research on class. As both Thompson and Levi-Strauss would seem to agree, things are often not what they seem, and the tectonics of class and culture often remain invisible to those whose feet are most firmly planted on the ground (see "Introduction" in Asad 1993). So the question becomes: lacking the time span so necessary for such a geologically inspired (and essentially backward looking) historical theory of class, how are anthropologists to resolve the diversity of groups and interests around whose complexities the dynamics of class indeed must form, but whose present appearance belies the idea of a singular class process?

Here I propose that the key to seeing class in the classes and groups we encounter in the field is to understand that class itself is built around a

contradiction. Such a notion comes to us mostly from Marx himself, though here too Thompson remains far ahead of many theorists. From both we learn that *class* happens — fleetingly, even momentarily, but continuously over time — when *classes* seek to exist in situations where they cannot, and in so doing reach out (and in) to friends, enemies, companions, god (or gods), hopes, fears, and even sometimes those who would take away their lives. History, for Thompson, provides of record of the failures to overcome this contradiction, and with each failure the need to try again. In essence it is this recurrent trying whereby *class* (only emerging through this recurrence) simultaneously makes itself and is made by those around it; this is how it can be “present at its own birth.” And it is here, I would argue, that anthropology can seek an understanding of class in a much more present sense as well.

I argue that it is through this contradiction — the multiple ways that people and groups simultaneously *must* and *cannot* come together to make a future (or sometimes even a present) — that an anthropology of class becomes possible. Further, I would argue that many of the people anthropologists speak with in their limited time in the field have a sense of — and often know quite clearly — this dilemma and the virtual impossibility of its resolution. This knowledge, fundamentally both local and larger, cultural and practical, often lies at the center of anthropological work not specifically aimed at class analysis — work aimed (instead?!) at ritual, social organization, or identity. Classical anthropological methods assert

themselves when one realizes that a careful ethnography can catch a glimpse of this knowing and see in it the presence, in the here and now, of the *musts* and *cannots*, of the class process itself. And while such a shift means not doing history, it must be noted that this is a methodological step and not an advocacy of parochialism.² Anthropological subjects remain historical entities and an awareness of this is crucial, but it does not dictate that we become historians to understand them.

2

The current structural contradictions of village Southeast Alaska are discussed in Part 1 of the work that follows. Here we begin with a discussion of the large bilateral “families”³ whose maneuvering strategies and resulting

² Note here this is also *not* an argument against theorizing history (e.g. White 1973, Leyotard 1984) see Callinicos (1995) and Palmer (1990). Theories of history, and marxist or marxian theories of history in particular seem more crucial as other, increasingly naive forms of history (like Fukuyama’s [1992] ‘end of history’) rise in popularity.

³ Throughout this work the term “family” will be used for these large bi-lateral groups, defined more precisely in Chapter 3. The term “household” will be used for what most non-Native visitors would call a family, meaning something closer to a nuclear family. Alaska Natives in the Southeast use the term “family” to mean both, depending on the context of the discussion to specify in which sense it is being used at any given time. For reasons of clarity two separate terms are used here.

tensions dominate most politics in every village.⁴ Discussed specifically in chapter 3, these groups have little relation to past kin collectivities once dominant in the area (whether clan or house-group), and are instead a contemporary form of local organization rooted in the three axes of village life: 1) state patronage accessed primarily through institutions of popular vote; 2) local inequalities which make even limited patronage a potential form of alliance and control; and 3) village-larger inequalities and gaps that make the purveyors of this patronage often the only avenue for some individuals or households to remain in the village. Two of the three of these axes specify geographical relations and contradictions — the second entirely within the village and the third between the village and the outside world. The other, “state patronage,” notes the dependence of these

⁴ Throughout the dissertation the term “village” will be used for the small rural settlements throughout the region (on the map: Yakutat Hoonah, Angoon, Kake, Klawock, Hydaburg, Saxman, Kasaan, Metlakatla) to distinguish them from the somewhat larger “towns” (Craig, Wrangell, Petersburg, Haines, Skagway) and “cities” (Sitka, Ketchikan, and Juneau). This is to give the reader an automatic sense of scale, but it is important to note that this does not match local usage, which is much more eclectic. Most of the “villages” are in fact officially designated “Cities” by the State of Alaska, and they have “City Councils” and “City Offices,” not “village councils” and “village offices” as referred to in the text. Likewise most people in the villages refer to their own village as a town, and people not from that village as people from “out-of-town.” Again, the only reason for this change is to allow the reader to more easily keep track of the type of location being discussed.

It is important to note, however, that more is lost than simply “local usage.” In some sense the lack of a clear term of reference for location is part of the very fluid and politically ambiguous nature of contemporary social organization. This confusion is part of the ethnographic scene, and the clarity achieved here, though necessary, is also essential a lie.

contradictions on continued interference from outside power. These issues are taken up specifically in the chapters that follow.

The second structure of critical importance is ANCSA, the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, along with its subsequent revisions. At present, all “family” politics and most village politics take place within a political landscape created almost entirely by ANCSA,⁵ which dates from the early-1970’s. This act by the US Congress created “Native corporations” in almost every rural village in Alaska. Through it, tribal and village members were made shareholders in corporations and large tracts of sometimes commercially valuable land were given to these corporations for development. In Southeast Alaska this meant 23,400 acre parcels of old growth forest per community from which the corporations were expected to produce income for themselves and their shareholders. Created almost entirely for primary resource development, it is not surprising that many of these corporations have by now fallen before the juggernaut of international capital. Yet the problems they face are not very different from what might have been expected almost thirty years ago: divisions within their own communities between development and conservation, jobs versus subsistence habitat, shareholder hiring versus stockholder demands for dividends, or profit orientation versus social welfare projects. These

⁵Sources and discussion for ANCSA are detailed in the notes to Chapter 3.

tensions, like the tensions that come in the making and unmaking of large families, dominate local social life and are the cause of multiple divisions within the village.

Yet with ANCSA, and perhaps unlike “families,” the contradictions that emerge are more complex because they involve temporal, rather than a geographical sorts of conflicts. As discussed in Chapters 4 and 5, through ANCSA Alaska Natives are given the option of participating in the political systems as Natives (i.e. as someone whose participation is based on aboriginal claims to ownership of an area) only in ever diminishing fashion. At present they can play a role as timber producers, but the timber reserves they are given are necessarily limited. Once cut, corporations may be able to exchange the land for other more usable lands, but inevitably these are smaller parcels, and as such the inevitable diminution continues in prolonged fashion, but it continues none-the-less. What’s more, these new parcels will inevitably be near other villages, thus decreasing the ability of others (and hence of the Native community as a whole) to remain participants in this way. Such a contradiction is common to Native American groups; they participate in the larger economy often in very important ways, but always in ways that limit future participation. In short, Native Alaskans must, like Native Americans everywhere, participate in ways that deny a future rooted in continuity.⁶

⁶ A previous example of this is discussed briefly in Chapter 2, where, as anthropologists Steve Langdon notes (1989), fishing goes full circle from being private property in the form of streams owned by clans; to being common

These two issues of family and ANCSA are, I argue, the central *logical* contradictions in the system as it exists today. This point is critical because it means that we have yet to discover the type of contradiction that Thompson found so central — that is, *historical* contradiction. Confined to a specific set of relations and laws, neither of these two is sufficient — for neither involves the active participation of individuals themselves in the *making* the is our topic. This is where Pentecostalism becomes important.

3

There are perhaps 20 or 25 Pentecostal churches, Pentecostal churches, and affiliated prayer groups in the villages and larger towns of Southeast Alaska that have significant followings. Beyond this there are likely just as many mission churches without a significant following. Often there is more than one new church in each of the predominantly Native villages. Some are affiliated with national or international organizations — the Southern Baptists, Assembly of God, Church of God, United Pentecostal, or Four Square are all represented. Some others are unaffiliated, or marginally affiliated. Those with national affiliations tend to be run by pastors that come from

property, in the open ocean commercial fishery of the cannery days; to being private property, in the form of limited entry permits, few of which are owned by village residents. "Being Native," once definable in terms of local experience and long term commitments to fishing resources was all but abandoned in the 1980's when "being Native" came to involve clear-cutting whole areas immediately near their own villages.

outside the region. And some of these are missionary churches as well, meaning that they are not self-supporting, and cannot choose their own pastors. Independent churches are not missions, of course, and these are the churches most likely to be led by a Native preacher. It is immediately obvious when one enters one or another of these churches, however, that this is one of the few social institutions in the village where distinctions between Native and non-Native do not apply. This goes for those churches with Native pastors or mission pastors.

Church members seem an odd fit in the politics we've been discussing, for they do not participate in either of these contradictions *as church members*. Yet virtually all of the Native participants in the radical churches are subject to these contradictions in critical ways — for they often are the village's most marginal members and as such they are both the least likely to be in a position to have a say in how these contradictions are approached, and they remain the ones most likely to suffer by whatever solution is reached. They are, in the end, the ones forced to leave the village should the marginality of their village slip too far, and they are the ones most likely to be pushed aside when time runs out on "being Native" in its present form. It is their lives that are to be most affected if some villages are given areas of land around *other villages* for they, perhaps more than most, depend on the subsistence resources that will be destroyed by the development that follows.

It is tempting, and more orthodox marxism has frequently said as

much, to view Pentecostalism as something of a distraction from these issues — one that speaks to the suffering people feel, but not to its solution. This, however, is based on a shallow reading of church life, reducing it to a set of theologically induced beliefs and psychological reactions. In Part 3 of what follows my purpose is to show that a different reading of church practice is possible. Here it was proposed that church practice itself, outside of any theological justification or ideological systematics, provides a means for exposing the objective structures of what we might call “political-economy.” As such, church practice remains central to class processes as ordinary people come to see that their lives both stems from and, when possible, must seek to confront these objective structures. This point is crucial because it moves us toward the sorts of historical contradictions that Thompson found so central to class. To put the matter plainly, the manner in which church members, as church members, must and cannot be part of the class process more conventionally conceived is *the key historical contradiction* we find in Southeast Native villages. Indeed, such issues are introduced by events themselves.

4

The “Flo Ellers Incident,” as it has come to be called, brought to the surface a number of tensions surrounding the Pentecostal movement in Southeast Alaska. To this day the incident itself remains so laden with tension that few who actually took part are as yet willing to talk about it,

though many of those who were nearby or who took part in the events that preceded and followed are more willing to discuss the events themselves. Briefly, in the Fall of 1992 an independent Pentecostal church with a primarily Native congregation and a local Native Pastor sponsored a week long revival, which featured a number of preachers from outside the village. Several of the 100 or so attendees were from other villages as well. One of the preachers at the event, self-described itinerant Pentecostal minister Flo Ellers, raises the issue of Native culture. Though unlikely the only preacher to do so, it was reportedly Ellers' statements that set off the turmoil described below.

People differ on what Ellers said, with some reporting rumors that she advocated the destruction of Native dancing regalia and all things associated with clan totems. Others closer to Ellers say that she merely raised the issue of people's relation to their cultural past, and related her own story that prayer had revealed to her the need to let go of some of her own heirloom cultural pieces while allowing her to retain others.

What followed is more clear. Several out-of-town attendees began a discussion after the service at which Ellers spoke, reporting how they had burned some of their own items at a revival many years before, as a way of cementing their own "rebirth in Christ," and has seen a serpent rising out of the flames. The idea captivated on several young people who had been "born again" at the revival, and they approached the host-church pastor and Ellers and asked permission to burn some items from their "past life." The

ministers agreed, saying, according to one of their number, "Go ahead, whatever you want to get rid of, get rid of." The next day several gathered and started a fire in a metal oil drum outside of the church. Many things were thrown into the fire, including rock-and-roll albums, "heavy-metal" tee-shirts, and liquor bottles.

Whether or not any cultural or dancing regalia was burned remains a point of contention. Remains of some cloth were found in the fire, as were coffee cups and wind breaker jackets bearing the local ANCSA village corporation logo — an intertwined raven and eagle in northwest coast style, representative of the two moieties found among most Southeast Native groups. It is unlikely that any older cultural heirlooms were burned, if only because the items are so rare in most villages these days that few of those attending, especially those who were younger, would have had access to them. Some who saw what remained of the fire reported seeing the burned buttons used on button blankets, and bits of felt, possible from the same type of item. Button blankets are much more common than the older heirloom pieces; however, many are very recently made by members of the village dance group, most of whom are young adults. Some are made as part of Native culture classes taught in the village school. Later Ellers defended her involvement with the statement, "You won't find any Chilkat dancers dancing in heaven" — words that further inflamed the reaction that followed. Yet others in the congregation defended what had been widely

perceived as the anti-culture stance of the host church. And many today still agree with these sentiments. One individual member of this church recently told me that he felt badly that events had happened the way they had, but that if he had to come down on one side or the other in regard to "Native culture," he was "against it."

The reaction in the village among non-Pentecostals and in other Southeast Native communities was outrage. Radio call-in shows reportedly drew calls from as far as Seattle, and the Presbyterian church was prompted into a declaration of apology for its role in past campaigns against Native culture and a pledge of support to all Native cultural endeavors. Concerned members of the offended community called other villages where Ellers had been invited to speak (like many revivals, she and others were traveling on a planned tour), and sponsoring churches were persuaded to cancel her appearances. The church that played host to the revival was shunned by many in the village, though its attendance didn't change much at this time. In fact it remained the largest congregation in a very church going village.

Yet quickly, and quietly, the dispute went back underground. The several Pentecostal churches in this village — the church that hosted the revival, the Baptist church, and the Assembly of God Church — now maintain an uneasy relationship with the cultural movement in the village. The Assembly of God minister will give the invocation for events where the dance group will later appear, but seldom stays for the dancing. The other

Pentecostal ministers do not attend; neither do the members of their congregations. The suspicion of witchcraft remains strong among this group, though most wish to avoid any open confrontation.

The popularity of the church groups continues to grow throughout the region. One reason is their self-professed appeal to the "down-and-outs" of the villages and cities. Problems with alcohol are the topic of most alter testimonies, problems often built on a foundation of widespread sexual abuse and "family dysfunction" — a social work terms that also appear in many testimonies. This raises the issue of class for many in the village, for while the churches do not divide evenly along lines of rich and poor, there is clearly an element of broader political-economic process that is driving the marginality of those individuals who find solace in church group membership and a message of salvation. This much is known and recognized by people in the village, as is the fact that such protest also implicates ANCSA and its current representatives in every village.

The regalia issue, though, dominated the reactions of people on both sides more than any other. While none of the revival preachers would say whether any specifically cultural items were burned — and none, it seems, could have known first hand as none admitted to attending the burning — all defended a firm stance against certain cultural practices. For many involved in the cultural movement the events were reminiscent of a past

incident in the village, for in this same village early church converts had convinced the residents to burn the nineteenth-century totem poles that stood in front of many of the village homes.⁷ The 1992 burnings thus touched a sensitive nerve among some, especially those who resented the past burnings for the cultural capital it had cost the generations that followed. Yet much has changed in the village since then, not the least of which is a near reversal of the roles played by church and culture. At the turn of the century culture was intensely inward looking, meaning that it focused on relations between village/tribal members and hence, between, these people and the invasive circumstances of their surroundings — including, especially, mission churches. Today the opposite is true. Today churches are far more inward looking, while the cultural practice is primarily aimed at a super-village audience, and larger-than-local social, political, and economic relations. This reversal does not mark a change in “culture,” though clearly critical changes have taken place. Rather, the near complete inversion of culture and church marks a change in global politics as they penetrate and redefine “the village.”

Local reactions to these changes remain, then, at the center of an anthropology of these changes. And what was most surprising to outside

⁷ In some villages today, large totem parks still stand. These are often critical parts of what limited tourist trade villages are able to draw.

observers in the events described above, was the speed with which the dispute that followed Ellers remarks went back underground. Reporters who pursued questions only a week after the incident were accused of stirring up trouble. Attendance at the host church changed little, and it remained among the best attended, most financially successful churches in the village. The dance group in the village continued to attract new members as well, especially among the young. Indeed the cultural movement in this village remains as strong or stronger than that of any of the other non-city Native communities in the region. Those who participated marginally in both movements were initially forced to choose sides. Yet many of these individuals resented having to choose, adding that they did not see why the two sides were so irreconcilable, and only a few stopped participating in either one.

This last issue, of dual participation, is true of some church members throughout the region. Most regular church members, however, would agree with the statements of Ellers and others, that involvement with cultural events and practices is at best a distraction, and at worst a serious risk of consorting with evil — the spirits of older beliefs are held by many Pentecostals to be demons capable of doing much damage when invited into a village, which chilkat dancing is seen capable of doing. Yet not all of those who participate in the churches are willing to give up all contact with cultural events, or with those who do. And most Pentecostal church-goers participate

in subsistence work, practices that those in the cultural movement would consider the very heart of “Native culture.”

5

The timing of this writing is important, because what follows is written during a particular moment in anthropological history that is reflected (to an extent) in the structure and content of what follows. I had originally come to Southeast Alaska in the summer of 1993 to examine processes of class formation in small Native villages associated with the boom and bust cycles of industrial salmon canning between 1880 and 1950. It was a revisionist project, meant to remedy past and present anthropology in the area that had ignored the early and thorough immersion of the region in global political economy (Dombrowski 1995). Upon beginning my research, almost everyone I met had worked for or in a cannery, and canneries stood at the edge of virtually every village I visited. Yet conversation about them was minimal. They were landmarks, like ‘the airport road’ or ‘the gravel quarry’, and any institutional quality they might once have had was gone. The buildings themselves were virtually invisible — they elicited no public interest if not used for other purposes, though some are now community or corporate offices, or even sport-fishing lodges. In some villages, where the canneries were formerly owned by local tribal councils or where villages were built around privately owned canneries, people spoke with some obvious civic

pride about the way “things used to be.” But this was always in the distant past, and even then past politics involving cannery management and patronage often stopped conversations well short of a discussion of the present. History, of the sort I was interested in — of canneries and cannery labor around which most of these villages were in fact formed; which had dictated past family forms, property relations, and even the physical landscape of houses, roads, harbors and ferry routes — was largely gone in any topical sense, despite its overwhelming material presence in village.

What seemed more important to many of the villages poorest residents, and which turns out to be the logical opposite of the canneries, was the central social role played by things with no material presence — spirits and the Holy Spirit in particular, along with demons, witches and guardian angels.

Understanding this necessitated something of a turn in my own approach to the social dynamics of this village and later, to the region more generally.⁸ Put plainly, to accept that the “reality” behind the contemporary

⁸ This turn was Peircean in essence, and it meant accepting that the reality of any object must be considered on the basis of its effects, and not its presumed constitution. The term “pragmatist” is probably more appropriate, though the distinction was never recognized by many besides Peirce, who coined to differentiate his own work from the related empiricism of James and others, whose “pragmatist” philosophy had grown very popular by the end of his lifetime (see Peirce 1955: 252 [original m.s. 1902-5]). Yet even Peirce never pushed the point, frequently, even late in his career, referring to his own work as pragmatism and minimizing some of the differences between himself and James.

political dynamics I sought to understand was made up, at least partly, of immaterial, spiritual entities — and not, or not entirely, of the historical dynamics that had drawn me to the villages — pushed me to consider whether the objective reality of these entities was not so different. Put more provocatively, I began to wonder whether “the Holy Spirit” or “demons” or “witches” were so different from the invisible spirits that I came to field with: i.e. “mode of production,” “culture,” or even “class struggle.” This is essentially a post-structural turn, though not necessarily “post-structuralism” as this has come to be used in anthropology.⁹

Such a notion is still comparatively new and thus requires a brief discussion. And we must begin by noting that this does not mean banishing “class” or “social formation” forever from our lexicon, nor eschewing analysis or comparison in favor of pure description (which I doubt to be possible). Rather, it is simply to acknowledge that reality — objective, empirical reality — is socially constituted and hence open to a number of forms and composed of any number of constituent elements. This applies equally to the “structures” discussed above — like “families,” ANCSA, or “the State” — as it does the “beliefs” of church members.

Such a notion does not make these structures any less “real.” They are

⁹Anna Tsing (1993) provides an interesting discussion of “post-structuralism” as it has come to designate a particular genre within anthropology. Others work not included in her list would include that by Taussig (1997) and work he cites there.

real in so far as they have effects, and indeed dynamics predicated on an internal logic that has crucial, indeed defining social effects. But so does church practice, which too is quite real, and has important social effects generated by a logical, internal dynamic. To think of these things as differently composed is to continue a very limited enlightenment prejudice. Yet to acknowledge them is not to banish the “fetishism” of political economy from its dominant place in the lives of most of the people anthropologists deal with on an everyday basis. Rather, it is to take seriously (perhaps for the first time) the objective reality that these same people do, in fact, live within.

For anthropology this idea is actually not so new, and the notion that we come to the field burdened with past analyses and world views rather than armed with them is perhaps as true now as it was a century ago. Indeed many (including and since Margaret Mead!) have argued that one of the crucial aspects of field work is its ability to make known the ephemeral nature of the anthropologist’s own objective reality. The only thing that makes the “post-structural” moment of today’s field work any different from the past is that many anthropologists now find their own objective reality to have preceded their own arrival — in the form of actual objects; but also processes like trade and production on the world market; or in the form of ideas about culture, or class, or even ethnography.¹⁰ In this way, the post-structural

¹⁰ I think here of the film *Trobriand Cricket*. In all likelihood, such objects *and their subsequent manipulation* have always preceded anthropology.

process has escaped the confines of the ethnography (the anthropological object) only to be unavoidably encountered again in the anthropological subject and fieldwork situation.

And it is here that we must take our lead from church members, for whom there is no contradiction in the idea that spirits (and demons in particular) have shaped local history every bit as much as the immersion of the village in waves of capital intensive production. In what follows I will argue that church practice is essentially “post-structural,” in the sense used above, even while it seems to be yet another example of the displacement of local particularity by outside hegemony. The ethnography of Pentecostal practice presented in Part 3 is aimed at demonstrating why this is so.

6

Two further points are necessary to bring together the discussion of Thompson with the issues raised by Pentecostal practice. To argue that Pentecostal practice is post-structural practice is perhaps novel, but were it to stop there the importance of that observation is restricted to its novelty. What seems as important, though, is that Pentecostal practice as such is not so different from other sorts of practices and experiences around it. Other anti-structural experiences and practices — those that stem from the experience of the state or local inequality — are perhaps equally revealing of the “structures” that underlay the current order *and its misapprehension*. Indeed

what makes church practice and the groups that emerge from it so important to the class processes of the region is specifically that they share with others — others they presume to oppose — many common apprehensions and dissociations of the objective structures in which they find themselves.

The three chapters of Part 2 are included to situate Pentecostal practice with these dissociative experiences of state power, local inequality, and cultural resistance. This include discussions of the experience of work in the timber industry (Chapter 6), of encounters with state officials and law in the form of Fish and Game Wardens (Chapter 7), and finally of the ongoing dependence of the cultural movement on the structures discussed above — i.e. patronage and ANCSA corporate sponsorship (Chapter 8). Together these chapters make clear the ways that the political economic structures do not “cause” the popularity of church membership, but rather how they surround it and make it make sense to those involved.

This last issue brings to the front what is perhaps the most critical lesson to be learned from the post-structural nature of church practice, and one that begins to point us toward an answer to the question of why these common experiences take the form they do — that is, why *church* membership and not some other form. The answer lies in the nature of the experiences gained, for it becomes apparent in each chapter of Part 2 that structure, in the sense used in Part 1, is not an ordering force in lives of

village residents; in fact, it is the opposite. Put plainly, what becomes apparent in any discussion of the local form in which structure makes itself present in lives of village members is that this structure *makes chaos*, in ways that are neither remediable or even entirely comprehensible for those involved.

Church membership speaks directly to these issues, often in identical terms. If church practice makes sense, and more so, makes collective, associative sense to church members in these circumstances, then their role the predicament raised for us by Thompson becomes central.

Part 1 — Structure

"...what we call matter is not completely dead, but is merely mind hidebound with habits" C. S. Peirce (1940: 350).

The chapters that follow examine the two primary structures whose individual dynamics make up much of the current social processes and the experience of these processes within the villages of Southeast Alaska.

The first chapter, Chapter 2, is historical and focuses on the way that past and present penetration by capital have left most villages without internal organization beyond "families." Tribal and village governments have been repeatedly built-up and then undermined such that no village-wide form of organization or government has been very effective for more than a short period of time. What emerges as the most constant feature of local organization, then, is the "family," an extended network of bilateral and affinal kin that exists more as a set of consistent tensions than any stable roster of local groups. Briefly stated, families must exercise power to be "real families" — those that do not cease to exist socially, their members soon exercising other co-lateral or affinal links and becoming associated with another "family." But to exercise power, families must put into play antagonistic forces. They must incorporate extended kin to become large enough to exercise local power, and as a consequence they must avoid exercising power in such a way that it excludes or hurts those most marginal members. Yet, in a place where the ebb and flow of industrial capital has left a

social landscape of such diversity and division, every decision and exercise of power means alienating some members of the family.

Chapter 3 gives examples of “family” structure from the perspective of two leading families and two marginal households. The former show that “families” are not dependent on factors like demography or household cycles (in the Chayanovian sense). Rather, the continued reproduction of family existence depends on the ability of leading members to manipulate local lines of patronage and the shifting political economy. While this is frequently tied to voting numbers, family recruitment follows such loose lines of kin and fictive kin that it is unshackled by actual links of descent or marriage. Moreover, the specific examples of the two families here demonstrate that different avenues of local success are open to different sorts of exploitation. The flexibility of the “family” form allows the form to perpetuate itself in seemingly disparate situations or local contexts.

For marginal households, participation in family politics is a necessary but seldom a rewarding process. Confined by the high stakes of local patronage — for many poorer residents successful attempts to find patronage may mean the difference between staying in the village and leaving it — all households must attempt to be part of one family or another. But the limited opportunities for rewarding political ties often means that marginal families receive little or nothing of the success they help achieve. Often, when this shows itself to be the case, marginal households will then leave the orbit of

the successful family, joining another with whom some collateral or affinal (or imagined) link is then emphasized. Ironically, this means that marginal households most often leave a “family” as it comes into power in some way — further marginalizing themselves as they are forced to side with a group now nearly as marginal as themselves.

Chapter 4 discusses ANCSA as implemented in the Southeast region. The local political dynamics that result from the act have placed village against village, and insiders against outsiders. Like many previous examples of capitalist penetration, ANCSA has overshadowed other forms of political and economic organization, like tribes or village governments. Yet it has brought to the front a new objective reality of shareholder interest groups, and links with environmental, industry and government organizations. This objective reality, with its consequent social realities of vote tallies, proxies, shareholder groups, has reformed the objective reality of everyday living, including especially the dynamics of being rich and poor, but also the relationship of individuals to their environment and families. The chapter centers on two recent issues in ANCSA that bring this to the forefront: the NOL issue and the landless Natives.

NOL’s (“Net Operating Losses”) were an accounting instrument that allowed village ANCSA corporations to sell huge, albeit fictional, business losses for cash to successful companies like Disney Corp. The money gained from these sales were often distributed as “dividends” to corporation

shareholders, doubling and tripling family incomes in some villages. In most cases, however, one necessary consequence of this process was the automatic clear-cutting of all village corporation lands, meaning that the windfalls that resulted were destined to be short lived. The implications of this are discussed in the chapter.

The “landless Natives” are groups of Natives from five villages and towns that were not allotted ANCSA village corporations, and as a result missed out on the NOL’s. These groups have lobbied for a second ANCSA settlement. But their efforts have been coopted by regional timber interests and the political establishment. As a consequence, their efforts have been resisted by other Native villages, putting some local leaders in the ironic position of opposing land settlements for neighbors and relatives.

These dynamics have contributed to the immediacy of the reality that ANCSA creates. Individuals are “landless,” or “rich,” or “poor” in ways that invoke a host of village relations and larger than local processes. These objects — rich, poor, shareholder, landless Native, ANCSA, and others — are the stuff of everyday life, the context or material reality of village Southeast Alaska. Taken together they form a structure, in the classical anthropological sense — though, one might note, as such it makes little sense to ask whether the structure exists in the head of the informants or is actually real, as anthropologists have supposed in the past. The structure is real because it exists in the heads of informants, especially when the category “informant” is

expanded to include the timber bosses, development bankers, corporate lawyers, and regional politicians. With power so decidedly in favor of the realities of these structures, village residents have little option but to acknowledge them as such.

Chapter 5 takes up the topic of ANILCA, a law passed after ANCSA that overturned several ANCSA provisions, most especially the injunction against subsistence hunting and fishing on Federal Lands. Since the passage of ANILCA the federal and state government have made several attempts to work out joint management of public lands, but this has always failed. Likewise, Native claims for subsistence rights have consistently confronted State and Federal policies. Little discussed in this process, however, is how local inequalities play a role in how subsistence is used and conceived. For those poorest in the villages subsistence foods make up much of the households basic sustenance. Around this a number of local relations have grown that exist outside of "family" and ANCSA structures.

Together the people in these relations and the relations themselves remain subject to a host of structural manipulations. Disputes over the "tradition" and "sovereignty" often place at risk those most marginal in the community, such that, ironically, those most involved in subsistence are least likely to be able to fight for it. This irony is taken a step further when we realize that the politicization of subsistence, far from allowing those most marginal to remain in the village, actually contributes to a heightened

marginality for those members of the village already alienated by family and corporate structures.

Chapter 2 — History and Local Differentiation

Southeast Alaska has become a favored spot for cruise ship tours. The area is almost entirely an archipelago; and the islands are actually a submerged mountain chain with deep waterways, rainforest and glacial scenery on all sides. The mountains meet the water in steep faces and between them are fjords and "canals" large enough that the glaciers or forests can be viewed up close, without leaving the ships, and often without even going outside. The area's artistic and mineral history fuel the accompanying tourist commodifications, with the waterfronts of the main tourist towns — Ketchikan, Juneau, and Sitka — dense with shops that cater specifically the half-million-or-so cruise ship passengers that come each year. Most of the plastic totem-poles they sell are actually mass produced in Seattle or across the Pacific; the dried smoked salmon processed in smoker factories in Washington or Oregon. Nor is much, if any, of the jewelry either locally produced or even produced from local materials. There are even a few shops that specialize in jade jewelry, capitalizing on the notions of precious materials and distant indigenusness, despite the South American origins of their products and motifs in their designs.

The cruise ships tend to travel the larger north/south canals, and few visit the smaller, primarily Native villages located further to the west and along the outside of many of the islands. Rather, the stock-in-trade of these

tours are the stretches of scenic wilderness that line the fiord walls of the canals. Yet, when flying above the region to and from any of the outside villages, or on the smaller ferries that service them, one sees clearly the paths of the cruise ships. Their routes are marked by long stretches of old growth forest and standing timber on the mountain sides facing the canals through which the cruise ships pass. These same mountains, however, like much of the Southeast as a whole, are often clearcut right up to their peaks on the sides opposite the scenic passages, leaving vast fields of stumps and the rotting remains of low-grade felled timber. What remains on the canal-side is a camera-ready forest facade, on the other side a virtual lunar landscape.

The forest facade is not extended to the ferry routes that service the 12 villages beyond the three large cities mentioned above. These ferries carry fewer tourists (especially on the slower outside routes) although some still feature "guides" from the US Forest Service that give brief presentations on the villages they pass by. The guides stick to the sensational and superlative whenever possible: "the oldest Russian settlement outside Sitka"; "the tallest totem pole in the world"; "the hiding place of Kaatlean." The stories seem radically out of touch with what appears outside the windows, though, and this quickly becomes clear to most of those listening to the presentation. The performances have always struck me as parodies of the cruise ship tours, left to make do with the backside of the mountains and the lack of consumable items. Some listeners are sufficiently romantic to retain the nearly impossible

illusion of tourism; others are not, though for them the parody does not dissolve, but rather seems to move to a higher level.

"Aren't any of the old houses left?" one asks. "No. There are in Juneau and Ketchikan" where the old houses are actually quiet new, constructed for the cruise ship tourists. This the guide does not say, though most likely the listener, having just come from one of these cities, knows it already.

For many tourists, especially those that have never visited before, the villages no longer seem very accurate representations of themselves — sensibilities heightened by those same newly built long houses and totem poles along the waterfronts of the cruise ship towns. But the tourist traffic in the outside villages is too light and the villages too poor for this kind investment; the ferries are seldom in village for more time than it takes to unload and load the cars and trucks coming and going from the boat. It is this disappointment, I think, that moves the performance from parody to anthropology. It is, in a sense, the Triste-Temporate of "off the beaten path" tourism in Alaska.¹ Indeed many of the ferry passengers leave feeling as

¹ "Where was the old, the real Lahore? In order to get to it, on the far side of these badly laid out and already decrepit suburbs, I still had to go through two miles of bazaar, where, with the help of mechanical saws, cheap jewelry was being manufactured out of gold the thickness of tin-plate, and where there were stalls displaying cosmetics, medicines and imported plastic objects. I wondered if I was a last discovering the real Lahore in dark little streets, where I had to flatten myself against the wall to make way for flocks of sheep with blue-and-pink dyed fleece, and for buffaloes — each as big as three cows — which barged into one in friendly fashion, and still, more often, for lorries. Was it when I was gazing at crumbling woodwork, eaten away with age? I might have got some idea of its delicate fretting and carving had the

though they have seen the “real” Alaska, for one indirect result of the facade — and it applies to more than just the remaining trees, but also to the houses and the entire physical landscape — is that it marks what lies behind it with the potential for exposure. The feeling of backyard clairvoyance.

1

“Seward’s Folly,” or “Seward’s Icebox,” as Alaska was originally known, was not purchased with the intention of colonization, though it was, in fact, America’s first overseas colony. Rather, the pattern of formal neglect, discouraged settlement, and subsequent expansion elsewhere in the Pacific make clear that Seward and others intended the Russian purchase to be little more than a way-station on route the richer treasures of China and Japan (Paolino 1973). In Southeast Alaska this meant maintaining a commercial depot at Sitka (the former Russian capital of New Archangel), and the search for an accessible coal source somewhere nearby — later found near Killisnoo, not far from the present village of Angoon. Apart from these two areas, little

approach to it not been made impossible by the ramshackle electrical supply system, which spread its festoons of wire from wall to wall, like a spider’s web all through the old town.....

“Then, insidiously, the illusion began to lay its snares. I wished I had lived in the days of *real* journeys, when it was still possible to see the full splendor of a spectacle that had not yet been blighted, polluted and spoilt; I wished I had not trodden that ground as myself, but as Bernier, Tavernier or Manucci did...” (Levi-Strauss 1978: 42-3).

concern was shown for the rest of the region, even less for the territory outside the region. The American Commercial Company, operating out of San Francisco, was given exclusive rights to harvest seal pelts from the “seal islands”, the Pribilofs, located in the center of the Bering Sea — hundreds of miles from the mainland, and more than a thousand miles from Sitka. Though profitable, the trade was limited, diminishing in scope, and had little impact on anyone other than the islands’ residents and the company employees and directors.

Two separate industries were responsible for the changes in Southeast Alaska that marked the turn of the century, and in the long run, for forcing the hand of the Federal Government in providing some colonial structure. Several gold strikes led to significant migration by a number of Americans, Canadians, and Europeans — including strikes at the head of the Stikine River (located in the Southeast Region), the Klondike (which could be reached over the Chilkoot Pass, the northern boundary of the coastal Tlingit), and finally the large strike at Juneau, located within the region itself. Together these strikes reintroduced Alaska to the American public, and made a problem that Congress felt obligated (though still reluctant) to address.

Yet more lucrative, if more mundane, was the gradual expansion of industrial canned salmon production to the Southeast region, and later all of the Alaska coast. This was begun in the late 1870’s, when several salmon salteries were refitted to pack sockeye salmon in cans, a practice that had been

begun several decades before in northern California. By 1900, sixteen canneries would be operating in the Southeast (DeLoach 1939:17), and by the second decade of the 20th century Alaska would out-produce all of Canada, and all of the mainland US as well. The level of production quickly outstripped local labor potential, and canneries began to import from the West Coast large numbers of white and Asian workers to man the boats and packing lines of the many canneries in the area. At its peak it was estimated that 20,000 laborers spent the packing season in the territory, working in 116 canneries, and packing 7 million cases (over 300 million pounds) of canned salmon, mainly for export to the industrialized East Coast and Britain (DeLoach 1939; Gregory and Barnes 1939; Stacey 1982).

Throughout the cannery period the majority of Southeast's Native population worked for the canneries, although like the seasonal workers from San Francisco and Seattle, few worked year-round. Canning was limited to the summer months of July, August, and early September. During this time, however, the canning lines would run continuously from 6 am to midnight. Women worked inside the cannery on the "slime line" — particularly after much of the rest of the processing had been mechanized — where fish were cleaned and arranged for processing. Others might have worked filling the "lid machine" or on the "patching table," where cans imperfectly filled by the machines were finished off by hand, to make the required 1 pound weight.

The remaining inside work — loading fish into and out of the various bins, most of the machine work, the “heading” and “gutting” of the fish — all was done by the “china gang.” After the Chinese Exclusion Acts of 1902 most of the Chinese laborers were replaced by Japanese, Mexicans, and Filipinos (Masson and Guimary 1981: 1-30). But the division of labor within the cannery remained the same. Most of the Native men fished for the canneries on boats owned by the canneries. Some few held jobs maintaining the physical plant as well, but most of the management and engineering jobs were held by whites. All of the shore-side crew worked the same hours, and twenty-hour days were not set up in shifts but were worked by a single crew. Management justified this by saying that the fish would not keep if left in bins, and so the plant had to operate as long as it had fish. Yet the demands made on fishermen for a continuous supply were just as great.

The rule of thumb for cannery superintendents was that the total “pack” of a cannery had to exceed 30,000 cases of salmon to create the acceptable profit margins for cannery owners. This was not always met, and canneries did frequently open and close, often reflecting insufficient packs in off years. Yet just as often, plant closing represented the efforts of one canner to eliminate local competition for fish by purchasing a competitor and closing it down. What’s more, once the 30,000 case limit was exceeded, virtually all of what was produced would be profit. This was because the greatest proportion of the costs involved in producing canned salmon was not the

fish, cans, fuel, or labor, but instead the mainly “fixed costs” of fish traps, canning machines, plant maintenance, and especially the transportation of all of these things to and from Alaska. These costs were “fixed” because they varied little with the size of the eventual pack. Once these costs were met the profits on every case produced was nearly the sale price of that case. It was not uncommon for successful plants in good years in areas with a good supply of fish to return two to three times their initial investment in a single season.

During the summer months while working at the cannery, many Native families would move out to the cannery location, even when canneries were built close to the villages in which they spent the winter. In addition to large houses for white managers and bunkhouses for the asian workers, most canneries constructed a row of small houses — generally 8 feet by 12 feet, single story with a mud floor — for use by Native families working for the cannery (usually those families where a husband fished on a company boat and his wife worked on the line). Whole families would move into these houses for the canning season, bringing along children and often an elderly relative who would watch over the children and help prepare meals. Most often the men working on the fishing boats would be gone for the entire season, alleviating some of the crowding in the otherwise very small space. Many of today’s elders remember these houses and some from this era still stand along side the now collapsing canneries in the villages. Surprisingly, memories of them are often fond, as these were frequently the first houses in

the region to have electricity (supplied by the cannery generators), and cannery camps were places where western novelties were in good supply (movies, western foods, music, and even alcohol, dancing and gambling). Along these lines, efforts made to try to keep the Native and Asian crews apart were seldom successful, and many families in today's villages have both Native and Filipino or Asian heritage.

At the close of the cannery season Native families would purchase their entire "winter supply" of food and clothing staples from the cannery store. Very few stayed on at the cannery past the packing season, and most often entire families would load their summer possessions and newly purchased sacks of potatoes, sugar, coffee, pilot bread, and rice aboard smaller boats and head back to their permanent homes in the villages throughout the region.

For many families, however, Fall also meant another form of commercial fishing. For them this involved moving out to camps along the outer islands to collect subsistence foods and to troll for fall salmon (usually coho and king salmon) to sell to the remaining salmon salteries located in these areas. In some places, subsistence territories remained relatively consistent with pre-cannery boundaries, though constant commercial violation and the decline of clan corporateness had made old property forms less and less viable. In many areas, however, trolling meant that families moved into new areas to fish on a regular and evolving basis, and subsistence

patterns changed to meet these new circumstances. By the 1910's clan property lines were giving way to the pragmatics of a short subsistence season and the opportunism of migrating families combining subsistence with commercial work. Many of these families did not return to the winter villages until late-October and early-November. Because this caused many children to miss the entire fall school session, missionary teachers and some local leaders called for an end to the "camp" system. This early conflict, between those families still dependent on subsistence resources and seasonal cash income (small boat owners, crewmen, and generally anyone without year-round employment) versus those able to remain in the village year-round (usually the large boat owners with good cannery connections, store owners, or government employees) polarized many villages in ways that prefigure later and even current divisions.

2

Late in the 19th century, many canneries were built near existing villages, especially early on when clan property forms were still understood by whites and Natives to be at least potentially enforceable. This was particularly true in northern areas where several large Native villages represented a desirable labor force and a potentially intractable obstacle to cannery owners and superintendents who would otherwise have invaded the area. In these areas canneries remained particularly dependent on local supplied fish for the

first decade of their existence. By the late-1880's, however, cannery became more assured that their own notions of property would be protected by an increasing US military presence, and they began to set up production near choice sockeye streams, and to encourage nearby Native groups to relocate. At times the summer subsistence territory of a single clan would become the site of a new village when other clans began to forgo their own subsistence territories for labor at the cannery. Several Southeast Alaska Native villages — Kasaan, Kake, and Klawock — remain at or nearby these sites today.

Other permanent villages were formed when Presbyterian missionaries encouraged — and in some cases enforced — migration and consolidation of one or more groups. Villages like Haines, Hydaburg, and Metlakatla were all formed as “model villages,” with missionary and government support. Hydaburg was formed in 1912 from three Haida villages: Klinkwan, Sukkwan, and Howkan (Vaughan 1982). Here local dependence on missionary service for schools, financial support, and mail and steamer service was used to coerce families from these villages to take up residence at a single new location. When this was done, no new communal houses were built. Rather, under missionary instruction, only single-family European style houses were constructed along a single boardwalk at whose end was the church and mission home.

Along with these new villages and house styles came new forms of political organization. Continuing the example from Hydaburg: when the

new village was built it was suggested that there be formed a "city council." Inter-clan cooperation had always been a secondary concern among both Tlingit and Haida clans throughout the region, and Howkan and Klinkwan had both had village governing bodies drawn from the leaders of the resident clans. In Hydaburg, however, the idea of a village-wide election for a village council was a mostly new idea. Missionary demands that the council business be carried on in English further alienated past clan-heads. In the end, the elders from Klinkwan, Howkan and Sukkwan decided to let the younger men lead the council. According to anthropologist Daniel Vaughan:

When the annual election came up, the first group of [clan] leaders, sensitive to criticisms of their traditional meeting style, asked voters to elect younger men to office. The next group of councilmen were people of the age to have attended school in either Klinkwan or Howkan schools. The Haida lay-preacher [Sam Davis] was elected mayor. This council conducted town meetings in the "new way", bearing some semblance to parliamentary procedure....This new council also requested that all business of the town be transacted in English. (Vaughan 1985:135-6).

In other villages, traditional clan elders continued to hold much sway in the selection and function of new councils. Yet in many of the cannery dependent villages, outside influences and internal divisions made these councils relatively ineffective. These were company villages for almost half of each year, and those with close ties to the canneries were able to exercise other sorts of informal power. The cannery owners themselves also held considerable power over the fate of these villages. Decisions not to open a particular packing house in a particular year could cause families to move

away, diminishing the impact of local leaders without any obvious change in formal organization. This was the case in places like Ketchikan where thorough emersion in the cash economy undercut the authority of local leaders without replacing it with any novel body or structure. In other areas where tribal councils remained important, new sorts of entities like school boards held positions of power because of outside ties. Thus in Kake, the local school board was able to virtually eliminate the “camp” system of Fall fishing, subsistence production, and winter trapping by issuing \$25 fines per child for children taken out of school. This in effect confined most families to permanent residence in the village after the 1920’s. After this only men went away to camps, and their time there became less frequent and less lengthy.² Smokehouses were built in Kake for the first time then, much to the dismay of many older villagers who found the practice of processing fish in the village “unsanitary”.

In areas where Native run village councils were able win some power — usually through extremely careful and persistent use of legislation meant for white colonists in larger towns — canneries were often able to circumvent this authority by invoking jurisdictional conflicts between the state and federal governments. This was the case in Klawock in the early decades of the twentieth century. Here the village council had been able to win municipal

² In addition, the rapid development of fur-farms in the region, along with the gradual end of the sea otter pelt trade, made winter trapping unfeasible economically.

incorporation under early territorial laws. This allowed them to tax the businesses within their municipality — the major one being a large salmon cannery owned by a California-based firm. In response, the cannery simply abandoned its current building and moved across the bay to an area outside of the municipal boundaries, but within rowing distance for the village laborers. Efforts to expand the municipal boundaries were blocked by the federal government which had in the decade before claimed almost the entire Southeast archipelago as a National Forest. In the end, the cannery paid no taxes and the village remained dependent on missionary support to keep a school open year round (see Dombrowski 1995).

Permanent village locations and the creation of a regional Native high school did encourage another novel sort of political body that had region-wide influence. The Alaska Native Brotherhood was formed in Sitka early in the cannery period, founded by several missionary-educated Tlingit and Tsimshian Natives. Their original intentions are unclear, though fraternal organizations were popular throughout the United States at the time. Very soon after its founding, however, the ANB became very active politically, mainly under the direction of William Paul, a Native lawyer from Wrangell whose mother had been an early christian convert and educator. With the financial backing of the ANB Paul litigated a number of important cases around Native rights — gaining Southeast Natives the right to vote several

years before Native Americans in the lower-48 were granted that right by Congress; and the right to send their children to territorial schools, putting an end to the “two school system” in Alaska. By the late-1930’s the ANB was active in labor politics as well.

Paul’s own left-leanings had led him in this direction early on, and it is likely that the ANB was pulled along with him, rather than vice versa. By 1940, the ANB had won the right to be the collective bargaining representative for many of the cannery workers and most of the fishermen in Southeast Alaska. At this time they began to offer “associate status” to anyone who wished to join, and soon there were many more non-Native, associate members than there were Alaska Natives. Throughout, however, William Paul and a central core of long-time members remained in control of the organization (Drucker 1958). The ANB also began publishing its own journal, the *Alaska Fisherman*, at this time. The ANB and the *Alaska Fisherman* took as its main issue the outlawing of cannery owned and operated fish traps. These traps were placed near stream mouths and convenient pinch points (where schools of fish must pass through a narrow area between islands, etc), in the same locations year after year. By the 1930’s trap caught fish exceed that caught by boats, while traps required few operators and fished almost constantly once set up. The ANB called for the outlawing of fish traps altogether. The cannery owners resisted, and, despite the fact that the issue was taken up by Congressional committees repeatedly over several decades,

no injunction was ever issued. Eventually the fish trap issue would tip the balance of local opinion in favor of statehood, and a fish trap injunction was the first law passed by the newly formed state senate. But this was not until 1959-60, after almost 30 years of steady advocacy.

The declining importance of fishing to cannery operations was matched by the declining power of the ANB in labor arbitration. The ANB had never made advocacy for shoreside workers a priority in their negotiations, despite the role that Native women played in this work. Other unions based in Seattle had been organized among the Filipino crews, often affiliated with national and prominent west coast unions.³ By the late-1940's

³Counting on the fact that many of the cannery workers were also involved in agricultural labor throughout California and the Northwest, the AF of L chartered the first cannery workers union, the Cannery Workers and Farm Laborers Union (CWFLU) in the early thirties. All of the original members were filipinos from Seattle.

The union operated very independently, taking little direction and seeking little participation from the parent organization — a fact that angered many AF of L directors. This frustration was brought into high relief by a number of events in the late thirties. The CWFLU had always operated out of Seattle and always under the continuous threat of dissolution from within, caused by a combination of ethnic chauvinism between Tagalogs, Visayans and Illocanos, and by notable and increasingly obvious corruption by the union's president and chief officers. This changed when the two top officers were shot to death in a dispute over the continuing labor contracting system and when a rival Seattle union was also chartered by the AF of L as the Alaska Cannery Workers Union, both in 1937. Later that summer the CWFLU gave up its AF of L affiliation and joined the CIO, as Local 7 of the new United Cannery, Agricultural, Packinghouse and Allied Workers of America (UCAPAWA). UCAPAWA quickly won the support of the majority of the Seattle cannery workers, leaving the AF of L largely out of the collective bargaining negotiations for the entire canning industry. It was at this time that the AF of L threw its support behind the ANB's effort to establish itself as a collective bargaining agency.

the ANB was out of the labor organizing business, out-maneuvered by Seattle

In 1940 the AF of L chartered the Alaska Marine Worker's Union in Southeast Alaska, recognizing and granting affiliation to the collective bargaining arm of the ANB. For several years the AMWU was a competitor for UCAPAWA, especially in the Southeast region. During the war, when wage and fish prices were fixed, a relative status quo remained in place, and the ANB largely set fish and wage prices for most of the region. But after the war competition resumed. In 1943 the CIO had thrown its support behind a rival union in the Southeast, the Purse Seiners' and Cannery Workers' Union, and brought several law suits challenging the collective bargaining role of the ANB. In this they were supported locally by Frank Peratrovich, an Alaska Native from Klawock who was a rival of Paul's and later president of the ANB. The Purse Seiners Union's association with the Seattle based CIO unions afforded them a better negotiating stance, and led to the gradual abandonment of the AMWU by most of its non-Native members. Eventually the remaining members of the AMWU voted to affiliate with the CIO as well, merging the two unions. Shortly after this vote, the ANB quit the collective bargaining field, and the political power of the organization declined precipitously

Shortly after World War II Seattle's UCAPAWA Local 7 again faced corruption and ethnic division problems, and the executives of the union faced a rebellion of the rank and file early in 1947 season. The division resulted in the take over of Local 7 by a the "rank and file" committee, and the formation of a "company union", the Alaska Fish and Cannery Workers Union. The run-off between the two representative bodies was set for the spring of 1948, but shortly before the election several of the "rank and file" leadership were arrested on charges of pro-communist organizing. Fearing any suspicion of communism, the CIO revoked Local 7's charter in 1949, upon which Local 7 joined with Harry Bridges left-oriented International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU). Despite all this, Local 7-ILWU retained the vast majority of its members.

Making matters worse, however, was the fact that following the independence of the Philippines in 1946, the status of most filipinos in the United States went from being US nationals (most of who needed only a Philippine birth certificate to enter the US in the 1920's and 1930's) to being foreign born aliens. In 1953 the U. S. Government effectively broke much of the power of the union by declaring Seattle an Immigration Port of Entry, and treating all returning workers — many of whom had lived in Seattle and worked in the canneries for over 20 years — as aliens requesting entry to the US. The criteria for denying entry were particularly loose, and in one step the radical sentiments and most of the more active leaders were removed.

based unions and internal disputes between the Paul brothers on the one side, and the Peratrovich's of Klawock, a former cannery owning family with strong ties to the BIA area office in Juneau, on the other. A land-case that was initially begun by the ANB was also separated off at this time, and by the early 1950's the ANB had returned to its original status as a social and advocacy club.

3

In 1936 Congress extended the Indian Reorganization Act to Alaska, attempting here, as elsewhere, to create more uniform means through which to monitor and transform Native communities. The act offered several routes for political organization, and only a few Southeast communities chose to reform or recreate tribal councils along the lines laid out by the act. Most villages had by the 1940's already adopted village councils and in many places the structural duplication was avoided. Instead, many communities favored the formation of economic or "cooperative" associations as vehicle to secure loans and coordinate BIA interaction. Through these associations several villages were able to purchase local canneries, though the BIA retained considerable control over their operation. Loans for the purchase of boats were made available as well, though this eventually proved the downfall of many of the associations.

By 1950, IRA (Indian Reorganization Act) associations in Hydaburg,

Kake, Klawock, and Angoon all owned canneries in their respective communities, and by 1960 they had accumulated nearly \$5 million in debt. The fishing industry in the Southeast had suffered a considerable downturn throughout this period, with fish landings dropping and demand for canned salmon decreasing world-wide. Throughout, the BIA had encouraged these communities to continue to absorb debt — a policy that remained unchanged until an outside audit was made in 1960. In his report the auditor, LaVerdure, noted, “It is difficult to understand why approximately forty percent of the funds appropriated by Congress for the financing of Indians is confined to four communities with a total estimated resident population of 1,445 persons when there are approximately 500,000 Indians in the United States” (Laverdure 1960:5).

The Juneau Area office had encouraged the purchase of canneries in an effort to complete the still incomplete transformation of most villages to a full-scale wage economy. Its goals might have been lofty — to create a modern economy where the electricity in most villages need not be turned off at the end of the cannery season, or where individuals need not leave village seasonally for wage or subsistence work. Or they might have been more self-serving — as was probably the case for several well placed Natives in the BIA bureaucracy who stood to benefit from boat loans and the re-opening of then closed canneries. In either case, however, the Juneau Area Office went to great lengths to keep the canneries in operation, including the gradual

assumption of total control of all four Native-owned cannery operations.

In 1960, with the single largest economic asset in the villages fully under the control of the BIA, local political power reached a nadir. Cooperative Associations formed in the villages under the IRA Laws were largely defunct. Family economies were sliding as well, for as statehood approached many outside owned canneries closed. Fishing had been declining for two decades, and despite the brief boom that followed the fish trap ban, the market for canned salmon was shrinking — further lowering the price of fish. During this time many families left the villages, some for the larger towns in Southeast Alaska, like Sitka, Ketchikan, or Juneau, and others for far away Anchorage or Seattle. Hoonah showed a decline by one-third in the late 1940's and 1950's. In Klawock it was just as large. The exodus threatened the survival of many villages, jeopardizing such population dependent programs as the school lunch program, trash and public utilities services, and the survival of those few small shops and suppliers found in every village. The housing shortage that characterizes most villages even at present began during this time as well. Few houses were built after World War II until the regional housing authority began construction in the mid-seventies. Housing in the villages in the early 1960's was easily obtainable, but the quality suffered from years of neglect (see Lantis et al for early indicator of this trend 1948).

Unlike those in other areas of Alaska, Southeast Natives had been

thoroughly immersed in a cash economy since the first decades of the century, and by the late-1950's this economy was collapsing. Lantis and Fuller compiled a region wide economic survey for the BIA in 1947-8, and looking back (in 1987) Lantis commented, "Pay attention to the Indian families' expenditures as well as their income. Their needs for cash were remarkably diverse and modern, compared with most of the remainder of Alaska Native communities. Their needs guided their employment decisions" (letter to Robert Price, 1987:2). Indeed, during the study year the region had suffered a particularly poor fishing season, and many families had spent more than they earned, relying on credit extended by local stores. Noting this, Lantis and Fuller point out that expenses seem far less flexible once patterned, and that family spending during off years probably represents other less difficult years more accurately than does family income. This is not because families spend without consideration of their income, they argued, but instead because patterns of employment dictate certain kinds of expenses, while not necessarily guaranteeing steady income. This is certainly the case for families whose members sought employment at the canneries, and hence foreswore opportunities for peak subsistence production or employment in other industries. Average family expenditures of roughly \$2800 for the study year suggest full scale articulation with a cash economy, even while major sources of income — fishing, cannery work, and trapping — remained markedly

uncertain and prone to extreme annual fluctuation.⁴

4

Full immersion in a cash economy did not mean an end to subsistence practices for most Native families, though, and for poor families in particular these practices grew in importance. The relative uncertainty of most family incomes and the high cost of trade goods in what were still very remote villages ensured that many spent what time they could afford in “putting up” salmon, hunting deer and seal, collecting berries, and pursuing those crafts for which a tourist outlet could be found. And it was this continued use of local resources that inspired and maintained the land claims of Southeast Natives through most of the mid-20th century.

Land claims had originally been advanced by the ANB at a regional convention in 1929 (CCTH 1981: 5). The issue was highly contentious, however, with some groups advocating for a cash settlement and some for reservations in exchange for a cessation of claims throughout the region. What’s more, some local leaders, like Paul, felt that the land claims should be advanced by clans and clan leaders — the aboriginal title holders according to

⁴ Lantis and Fuller note (1948:6): “Another important source of income for Hydaburg people is trapping, which in the 1947-48 season yielded more income than salmon seining. As is true elsewhere in the Southeastern territory, this source of income is somewhat uncertain for two principal reasons: first, the trapping season on local fur animals is not open every year; and second, there is a very considerable and uncontrolled encroachment by non-residents upon Native trapping grounds.”

many historic sources — rather than villages. The BIA preferred the latter, village approach, as did the majority of the post-Paul ANB leadership. The result was that no progress was made in advancing a single set of claims for several decades. Hydaburg, partly as a result of its distinct tribal status — most Hydaburg residents are Haidas, while virtually the entire remainder of the region is Tlingit — followed a BIA initiative and opted for reservation status in the late-1930's. The land swap arranged by Secretary of the Interior Ickes included the surrender of over 1 million acres on Southern Prince of Wales Island by the Haida for a 101,000 acre reservation in and around Hydaburg. Much of the logic of the swap rested on ownership rights of the water that bordered Native lands, giving the Haida rights to three successful but at the time privately owned fish traps to supply their own struggling cannery. The reservation was overturned in a court decision less than a year after it was created.

Shortly after the issue was first introduced, land claims had created such dissention within the ANB leadership that it had nearly paralyzed the institution. At the time the ANB was at the height of its union power, and the paralysis threatened this success. The result was that in 1939, discussion of land claims was banned from the floor at ANB meetings and a separate body was formed to pursue the claims.⁵ The new group was known as the Tlingit

⁵This was perhaps legally necessary as well, for the ANB at the time had greatly expanded its associate membership and had many more non-Native members than it did Native members.

and Haida Central Council. When formed it was composed of many of the same individuals as the ANB executive council, although the groups diverged over the next several years. At first progress was very slow, despite the fact that Congress passed a law giving the tribes permission to bring suit in the Court of Claims in 1935. Initial congressional deadlines for the suit expired when lawyers for the Natives were rejected by the BIA, and later when the lead Washington DC lawyer for the Tlingit and Haida died.

The suit was finally brought in 1957, and in 1959 decided in favor of the Natives. The cash award, however, was postponed through a series of negotiations between the Justice Department and the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The eventual award was quite small — \$7.2 million for the entire southeast panhandle — supposedly the value of the assets lost to the Federal Government through the creation of the Tongass National Forest in the first decade of the century. This was drastically undervalued by just about all accounts, and included no interest adjustment for inflation despite the fact that the award was not made until 1968.

As will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4, prior to receiving the award there was little agreement on its disbursement. In addition, the late 1960 brought the discovery of large oil reserves on other disputed land along Alaska's North Slope. In the end the decision was made by the leaders of what was by then called the Tlingit and Haida Central Council to retain the entire award amount and to use the money to start a centralized tribal

administration. This body would then act as a tribal representative to the Federal Government/Bureau of Indian Affairs and apply for a “self-governance” relationship within the Federal bureaucracy.⁶ This was bitterly disputed by the ANB, which had always considered itself the central representative of the Southeast Natives. Eventually the ANB lost in their bid for tribal recognition, however, and the Central Council, or “T&H” as it has come to be called, emerged as the largest Native political power in the region, particularly in relation to the Federal Government and Federal Indian programs.

In the early 1970’s, T&H created two separate branches of its own organization: the Tlingit and Haida Regional Housing Authority; and the Tlingit and Haida Regional Power Authority. The former was meant to act as a sub-contractor building low cost, HUD-sponsored housing in Native villages throughout the region. T&H houses now make up perhaps half —

⁶The Indian Self-Determination Act of 1975 (P.L. 93-638) instructed the BIA to turn over the administration of some indian programs to tribes themselves. The act was not applied to all indian groups, nor to all programs administered for these groups by the BIA. In southeast Alaska, four groups were selected by the BIA to take over the administration of several programs. These groups were given “638 contracts” (named after the registration number of the law. The contracts worked like block grants to groups for the implementation of specific programs. A tribe could thus receive a 638 contract for local “GA” or general assistance. They could then decide how to spend the portion of those monies allocated for administration (i.e. by hiring a full-time GA caseworker, or by opening an office within the tribal administration for this purpose, etc. The four “compacted” tribes are Tlingit and Haida Central Council, and the IRA councils in Kake, Sitka, and Ketchikan.

and in smaller villages even more — of the available housing. The majority of the houses built remain owned by the authority, and residents pay rent based on their annual income. After twenty years of consistent rent payments, title to the houses is supposed to be turned over to the residents. This, however, seldom actually happens. Extensions on the payments due are added each time the authority comes in to “renovate” the houses. And the construction of most houses is so shoddy that this is a near constant process. One example: the first of the T&H houses were built without insulation, in Alaska! A recent renovation program has insulated these houses by adding a one inch layer of solid foam around the outside of each house, and then adding a new layer of plywood siding outside of this insulation layer.

For families living in these houses, the added insulation means additional years of payments before they receive title. Insulation is only one example, and it seems certain that the need for constant repair will prolong Housing Authority ownership of the majority of village housing for many years. What’s more, an unbroken residency of 20 years is rare for families anywhere, and especially in areas with highly volatile economies like Southeast Alaska. And each time a family leaves, any record of past payment lapses, so that if they move back to the village they must again begin the twenty-year effort. More financially costly, perhaps, is the fact that for those who leave, past payments which might have gained equity in any other sort of ownership system, revert back to rent and are, in effect, unrecoverable in

any form.

The Power Authority produces the electrical power in most villages through diesel generator plants built in the late 1970's. Not incidentally, most of the T&H houses are heated with "electric heat."

While officially an entirely separate arm from the Central Council, the reality of the combined political, housing, and electrical control of T&H has recently become an issue for villages that seek some independence from the regional body. In the early 1970's, when village economies had reached what must be considered the low point of the last 150 years, most village IRA councils had delegated what little tribal political authority they retained to the Central Council. Acting on behalf of most of the region, T&H's representation was much stronger, and it was as such that the creation of the Housing and Power Authorities was possible. By the mid- and late-1980's, however, a new generation of village leaders had emerged, and an entirely new economic landscape had been created through the broader Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act or ANCSA, discussed in Chapter 4. These leaders sought some independence from T&H, which by then had grown into a largely settled and increasing institutionalized bureaucracy. For T&H, the loss of locally delegated tribal authority means a significant loss of clout in their relation with the Federal Government, and perhaps the dissolution of the centralized body altogether. Movements in Hoonah, Yakutat, Hydaburg,

Klawock, Craig, as well as the early exclusion of Kake, Ketchikan, and Sitka, make this dissolution a real possibility. The result, many suspect, has been a considerable amount of foot-dragging on the part of T&H to promote village “self-government.” Others have cited stronger (albeit entirely circumstantial) evidence of collusion between branches of T&H to punish those who seek some measure of village independence. More compliant tribal members seem to receive faster repairs or modernization on their houses; “self-governance” advocates, on the other hand, say that they wait far longer to get housing, and to get repairs in the houses they eventually receive. I have no data to support or deny these claims — the point, rather, is that the complaints are widespread and uniform and reflect a widely held opinion.

Taken together, however, it is clear that the Central Council remains the paramount political entity in most tribal/federal relations for Southeast Natives, and that its practical role in providing heat, power, and housing to many villages has underwritten its retention of this role. At present, most village council budgets go primarily to supporting local public schools and minimal public services, like water and trash pickup. T&H, through its support of General Assistance Relief (the strictly Indian arm of the Welfare system), through the Housing and Power Authorities, and through its role in seeking and receiving broader Federal assistance for community development, controls most of the money through which village economic and social transformation can and does take place.

When Alaska achieved statehood in 1959-1960, the dominant industry throughout the state remained fishing, particularly in terms of employment and individual/family (rather than corporate) income. Logging was an important source of jobs, but it did not have the broad political impact that fishing did. The fish trap issue had come to be understood in terms of “outside” cannery/fish trap owners, and local fishermen. In reality the sides were never quite so clear. Many of the boats that fished in Alaska, then as now, came seasonally from Seattle or Bellingham in Washington State. Likewise, by 1960 many canneries were owned by people who lived in Alaska, and sometimes in the same villages in which their canneries were located. But for village residents in the Southeast the terms insider and outside seemed adequate. As mentioned above, the first law passed by the newly elected State Legislature was a total ban on fish traps. Within a year, all of the traps were gone, and in effect so was the chance of the canning industry surviving the then current decline. Forced to meet boat demands for higher fish prices, the cost of canned salmon increased, and its place on the dinner tables of European and East Coast working class families quickly disappeared.

In addition, the trap ban did not stem the decline of salmon stocks. Instead, the brief boom for boats that followed the ban invited a renewed capitalization of the fishing fleet, with larger versions of the Alaskan “limit

seiner" employing new equipment and catching even greater amounts of fish. Between 1960 and 1971, boat landings rose to 3-4 times their pre-ban level, then fell to well below half their peak (Rogers, Listowski, and Brakel 1974: 175 [Table 80]). By the mid-1970's, overcapitalization and decimated stocks were so apparent that the Alaska legislature was pressed to act.

The means adopted was a "limited entry system," made law in 1974-5. Under this system single permits were issued to individuals for participation in a particular fishery — seiners had to have a seine permit; trollers a troll permit, etc. An individual could hold licenses in more than one fishery, but not more than one license in any single fishery. The principle behind the strategy was to fix the fishing effort by limiting the number of individuals and boats pursuing fish stocks. Yet because the permits were limited in number, they had two critical economic impacts on fishing families and villages. The first was to depress the value of seine boats (still the most important element of the fleet in the Southeast), especially those sold without a license, for without a license the boat was unusable. The second was to create a commodity market in licenses. And as a commodity, licenses became alienable, something that fishing had never been before.

By lowering the value of seiners, Native fishermen suffered a set back in the single item of capital that most had accumulated. This, coupled with the alienability of the license, led to a rapid decline in the number of limited entry permits held by village residents. Between 1975, the first year of the act,

and 1979, the year of the first comprehensive study, Southeast residents lost one quarter of all purse-seine licenses, and non-residents gained almost as many (Langdon 1980:20-29 [tables 6, 8, & 9]). Three-quarters of these were transferred through sales/purchase, and half of these were financed by a bank, the original owner, a processor, or the State loan program (Langdon 1980:34). In short, most of those buying permits were doing so with borrowed capital. For purse seiners the level of "processor" financing was the highest, with fish buyers financing one of every five transfers. In his report at the time, anthropologist Steve Langdon noted that the purse seine permits required the most financing because they remained the most expensive, averaging better than \$50,000 in 1978. Yet financing was complicated by the fact that the Limited Entry law was unclear whether permits themselves could be used as collateral for loans. Banks most often required collateral in the form of boats or real estate, while fish processors often did not require collateral of any kind. On the other hand, those boats indebted to processors accept radically limited marketing options, in effect becoming a client of the fish buyer who holds the note on the license. In plain terms this often meant lower prices, and with lower prices, the processor financed permit holders held a more tenuous place in the fishery.

In the villages, few Native fishermen held the necessary non-fishing

collateral to obtain a bank loan.⁷ The cycle of outmigration in the villages further aggravated these trends. Throughout the 1960's property values had declined directly in proportion to the limited opportunities available in the villages, further lowering the ability of the remaining village residents to attain financing for boats or permits. At the same time, the brief fish boom and the state-wide oil boom had the opposite effect in the larger, predominantly non-Native villages. Here for most of the 1970's property values rose and financing for corporate ventures increased. This meant that, of those licenses that were sold or transferred within the region, most moved from villages to the cities, and from Natives to non-Natives. In the first three years of the limited entry permit system, rural residents state-wide lost four out of five of those originally issued in 1975. The Southeast was hit the hardest in this way, with well over half of the purse-seine permits in non-resident hands within three years after the law was made.⁸

At present there are few purse seiners left in most villages. Those few

⁷ Langdon (1980) points out that this was probably true of fishermen everywhere. The implications, he notes are that the limited entry system made it more difficult for fishermen to obtain loans necessary to fish than non-fishermen, preferring those whose accumulated assets were acceptable to creditors.

⁸ Langdon (1980: 59) notes that rural residents were initially allotted 34% of the licenses, but that by 1977 their share had fallen 6.9% overall, and 80% loss. This means that their share fell by 20.3% of the original total. Comparative data points out that the numbers are comparable throughout Alaska, but that where differences exist they show the Southeast region to be hit the hardest.

that do are left to support the salmon and salmon roe export trade to Japan. Indeed by the late 1980's about half of all U.S. salmon production was exported to Japan. And while Alaska continues to produce about 1940 of the world's salmon, those species most available in the Southeast are favored mainly for their roe. It is not uncommon to see Southeast processors disposing of thousands of pounds of salmon carcasses that have been stripped of their roe — the actual meat of the fish no longer sufficiently valuable on the world market to justify processing. The susceptibility of the industry to a single market has been felt recently by several sharp depressions in fish and fish product prices that have little to do with the Alaskan supply and are caused mainly by new competition from Chile and Russia (Knapp, Peyton, and Weise 1993).⁹ The farm salmon that is produced in these regions is still less valuable for its meat, but it is a direct and even competitor for roe.

The decline in fishing in most villages marked a decline in two elements of local political/social organization. Family boats — those boats whose owners are captains and who employ members of their own family as crew — were once the predominant arrangement among Native-owned purse seiners. The loss of a permit in such circumstances meant not just a

⁹Another source of price fluctuation, when dealing with an international market, is the currency exchange rates. The high value of the yen in the late 1980's early 1990's gave Japanese buyers great leverage in U.S. markets. The recent fall of the yen would be expected to have the opposite effect, though it is yet to be seen whether this will hurt or help Alaska producers, who continue to compete with producers in other countries where the yen remains very strong.

loss of jobs, but the likely dissolution of a form of local corporateness that had been around since the early cannery days. Village-wide, the IRA councils, most of which had been set up in the 1940's as a vehicle for obtaining boat loans, found themselves bankrupt by boats whose value diminished significantly without a permit — which remained the possession of an individual and were non-foreclosable. Since this time most councils have quietly arranged the sale of boats for which they hold the note, most often at a loss, always with the tacit agreement of the BIA Area Office in Juneau. Without boat loans, the reason d'être for most cooperative councils has diminished and even disappeared.

6

Where it not for several unrelated political economic changes that coincided with the limited entry program, most Native villages might have been abandoned by the late 1970's, as most of the non-Native villages were. The indirect source of the changes was the discovery of large crude oil reserves under Native lands on Alaska's North Slope. As discussed below, this led to a state-wide settlement of all Native land claims. Yet the discovery effected Southeast villages in another way as well. State revenues from drilling leases on lands eventually taken by the state, and tax revenues from the exploitation of other reserves on Native or Federal land, rose dramatically after 1970. To this day Alaska collects virtually no taxes beyond these

corporate taxes. There is no state income tax, and in fact the state pays out a yearly dividend to all state residents from an “Annual Fund” set up with money from the original oil leases.

Consistent budget surpluses have led to an expansion of public employment at all levels, including the local level where state funding supports many village-based projects. In 1965, 5,920 people in the Southeast worked for state, federal and local governments, 3,160 of them for state and local governments alone (Rogers et al., 1972: 174 [Table 79]). In 1990 the overall total was 11,860, of which 9,263 were state and local workers. The differences are telling. During the two and one half decades of oil revenue, federal employment in the region actually dropped, while state and local governments tripled in size. Yet the working population of the region as a whole did not grow proportionally during this time: going from 17,470 in 1970 to 32,670, or 87% in 20 years. What’s more, the majority of the population growth in the region has been confined to the large cities, with many of the villages retaining a constant population throughout this same period.

The result has been a complete transformation of village employment patterns. Even in the most industrialized villages, like Kake, close to one third of all workers were employed by the state, federal, or local government. If contrasted with the number of those employed full-time and year round — which by far most government employees are, and many other village occupations are not — the number would be much higher. In poorer villages

with little local industry, like Hydaburg, the ratio is a staggering 55%.¹⁰

Yet beyond the statistical shift, other more crucial changes have accompanied this trend. By far the most notable is that many of the new jobs — indeed most, in some areas — are held by women. Women make up the majority of the employees at any of the Federal health care clinics, run by SEARHC. Likewise most of the new Headstart workers are women. Within village governments, men still hold many of the more “public” of the public administration positions, but numerically women often outnumber the men, composing almost the entire secretarial and mid-level administrator jobs. And while the majority of the public school teachers in the villages continue to come from outside the villages (and often outside of the state), the majority of the remaining school positions are filled by women — the support staff, secretaries, monitors, cafeteria workers, and so on.

In small villages, like Kluckwan, women are twice as likely to be employed as men. In larger villages like Klawock, men’s unemployment rates are twice as high as women’s. Perhaps the best example is Angoon, where the numbers of men and women seeking jobs are more close than in some other villages. Here, among Natives especially, the differences are apparent. Of the 113 Native men in the labor force, 49 are employed; for Native women, 67 of the 87 are employed. Women hold 67 of the 116 jobs (58%), while composing 44% of the labor force (all statistics taken from the

¹⁰All figures for 1990, taken from the 1990 US Census.

1990 US Census). The implications of these changes are discussed in the next chapter, for one crucial aspect of this change has been the creation of high levels of job patronage that accompany any public office. These have become critical “spoils” as other sorts of jobs within villages have declined. Issues about the changing role of women, and its impact on households, is discussed in Chapter 5.

7

Many of the political entities discussed thus far still operate with limited authority or scope in most villages. ANB halls are found in most villages, though these have fallen into disrepair in many places because of a lack of dues paying members. Young people do not join the ANB or ANS (the women’s equivalent) as a means to public recognition any more. Some local chapters have turned to bingo to help finance local activities and to maintain the Hall itself. In some villages the ANB hall still serves as the site of most village-wide functions — wedding receptions, retirement parties, payoff parties, or dance group celebrations. At these events, however, ANB members seldom play a prominent role based on their status as such. In other villages, larger functions are held in the school gymnasium, marking a shift in the orientation of the village from the ANB to the State financed school.

The IRA Councils and related Cooperative Associations have, in all but four villages, turned over most of their relation with the federal government

to the Tlingit and Haida Central Council. Some still meet, but their authority within the villages is slim. What relevance they retained after the failure of the canneries was lost through the Limited Entry System. Very recently, some have tried to gain back some of the responsibilities (and subsequent authority) given over to T&H, but this has been resisted and, at present, no village councils or associations have managed to achieve any new recognition. The Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida continues to be the main regional Native power. This has come through the associated Housing and Power Authorities, and through their role as intermediaries to the Federal Government. Grants and programs for economic development, General Assistance, emergency relief, and a host of miscellaneous Federal programs like Small Business Administration (SBA) loans have allowed T&H to maintain a hold over dependent villages — which is, ironically, increased by the escalating dependency of most villages on Federal programs. It is by taking a percentage of the monies gained through all of the programs they administer that the Central Council pays for its administrative staff. These jobs too are used to establish alliances with important families in the village, for they area an additional means for patronage throughout the region.

Village councils and administrations remain important as a source of employment in all villages. Here the wheels of patronage turn most predictably.

Village budgets, though, are relatively stable, and most income is

earmarked for specific fixed costs (like schools, past village debt, ongoing programs like building roads or dumps, and, of course, village administration), the allocation of which is often overseen by the State. Little of the budget is left for discretionary spending, and what little there is mostly reserved for capital outlays — garbage trucks, dock or oil bin repair, harbor work. Mayors and village administrators have few options and derive very little power in this way. Rather, most of their influence is gained through the ability to influence hirings in the administration — police or village public safety officers, garbage collection, local construction and maintenance — and in State and Federally sponsored programs like public schools or Headstart. With full-time, benefit guaranteed employment scarce in the villages, these jobs are a priority for everyone. For this reason, mayoral races in some villages will be quite heated, despite the fact that the village administration has little real power to set policy or influence village life in any structurally significant way.

At different times each of these political entities — IRA Councils and Cooperative Associations, Village Councils, the ANB and ANS, School Boards, and even the Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida — has seen moments of considerable local influence, and the gradual erosion of this influence as the political economy once again shifted in a new direction. The ebb and flow of capital in what remains a resource rich area has fostered and undermined several markedly different forms of political and social

organization. Many of these still exist in a formal sense, though at present most of the power lies with the ANCSA board of directors, as discussed in Chapter 4.

Before moving on to ANCSA, however, we turn to a discussion of what is at present the *de facto* structural element of contemporary villages, “families.” Introduced above, these groups remain *the* central players in every village I have ever visited. They are the means through which patronage jobs and out-of-town money are turned into local influence, and eventually votes. Family heads are courted for their ability to influence local situations, and in return are given the means for assembling or maintaining a “family” — primarily jobs. Within the village other forms of patronage are used in similar ways, especially jobs with either the village ANCSA corporation or in the village governmental/administrative apparatus.

Family form is, as a result, fluid. And despite its allusion to biological notions of relatedness, kinship plays little actual role in composing or maintaining a family. Beyond this, and though mentioned above it bears repeating, families have no logical or often even genealogical link to previous sorts of kin-based social groups. They are entirely present, and it is to this present that we turn.

Chapter 3 — “Family” Organization as the Organization of Inequality

What most village residents refer to as “families” — extended bilateral and affinally-linked groups of three or more generations — have emerged intermittently over the past 100 years, becoming at times the most important village social structuring form.¹ Kinship has always been important in Native villages, and many still speak of “nephews” and “uncles” as special categories, reminiscent of past matrilineal linkages and clan affiliations.² But today’s local social organization is quite different, shaped in large part by those same forces that have consistently destabilized other forms of organization in the region and villages. In this context, “families” have become the

¹ There are several places in the narrative where reference is made to present structures, entities, beliefs that will seem reminiscent of past local forms to those familiar with the literature on the Tlingit or Haida. Unless otherwise indicated, my implied point will be that contemporary and past forms are unrelated, or so distantly related that other features are of more central importance. Social organization and spirit beliefs in particular may, according to some readings, raise issues of past matrilineal clan organization and moieties, or past shamanic practices. But this is generally not the case. Myths of “original” culture are strong, particularly on the Northwest Coast where these have been so frequently celebrated by outsiders. While it is undoubtedly true that some traditions, feelings, stories have continued in modified form down to the present, their claim to importance lies not in the past, but in the present, and thus is the present circumstances of this continuity that make it significant. Genuine culture is a sorry standard that anthropologists and governments have made a criteria for “Nateness,” and that have as a result set up unattainable expectations for today’s Native Americans.

Differences with contemporary and past anthropologists on these issues are dealt with mainly in the source notes that follow the narrative.

² In the 19th century this would have meant “mother’s-brother” and “sister’s son,” though today few use the term this specifically and most think of nephews of both brothers and sisters as significant relationships.

fundamental social units in all Native villages. Large families can dominate village politics and, at present, village ANCSA corporations. In fact this seems to be the crucial defining factor for being considered a family, as well as the origin of the most central tensions. Briefly stated, families must exercise power to be considered "real families." Indeed the very nature of the linkages — specifically the bilateral linkages and married in "relatives" — means that an almost unlimited number of potential "families" could be assembled in any one village. Those families that are "real," in the sense that they are recognized as in some sense corporate and indivisible by themselves and others, are those that act together to assert or dominate some or another aspect of village social life.³ Most of the time, in fact, families function around some specific political goal with sufficient local prominence to mobilize (and hence define) themselves. Family politics as such have the potential to wreck havoc on many local institutions — School Superintendents are perhaps the best example of this, as are police chiefs. I

³This is true even where power and participation are defined by certain kinds of non-participation. For example, in one village where several large families dominate, dissention between these groups means that only someone with no links to any one of the major families has any hope of becoming mayor. The present mayor in a very insular and primarily Native village is an older white man from Texas, who is now in his third term. This example is also testimony to the fact that control of local government now means so little as to be ideal ground on which to demonstrate collective non-participation, just as long as all of the other families do the same. When I asked what would happen if one of the "families" tried to run someone, the answer was always that the other families would find someone to run against them. And together they would always win.

was once told that one could be a police officer in any of the larger Native villages for as long as one wanted, but that no one will ever last more than one or two years as chief.

What turns this broader social tension into tensions within families is that the exercise of power inevitably means the alienation of some members of the family. The reason for this is quite simple. Most families exercise power through voting, either for village councils, mayors, IRA council members, ANCSA board members, ANB representatives and so on, or through the sheer magnitude of their collective participation, as with a church or dance groups, or even in "town meetings" where sheer number add up to influence. To be powerful a family must be large. Past political economic dynamics and contemporary systems of patronage combine, however, to make all villages and hence all families highly stratified. Thus to draw the lines sufficiently broadly to become a family, it is necessary to include individuals and households with very different political-economic needs — meaning very different *but immediate* political-economic expectations. In an example drawn from a following chapter, when families are forced to choose — to throw what few resources even the most successful of them have — between subsistence rights and jobs in logging, either choice will negatively affect some of their members. Either choice will probably cost the family in numbers, as those whose livelihoods are no longer possible will likely leave the village. Yet the family in question, to be a "family," must

always choose. If individual members choose differently and for themselves, then the family ceases to be a “real family,” and becomes just a group of relatives. When this happens, members are likely to leave and align themselves with other relatives or in-laws, in effect forming “new” families.

Movement in and out of the villages has always been a part of village life as well, and family dynamics reflect this. Family members who leave the village are still considered relatives, and may be called on for help, as when college-age children board with relatives in Seattle or Anchorage. But members who leave the village lose much of their family status. Unless they are willing and perhaps even plan to move back to the village, they are unlikely to have any say in the use or sale of family resources, like a family house or lots of land. Likewise those who leave are unlikely to have any say in family decisions regarding village or corporate politics, or the renegotiation of family alliances undertaken in their absence.

Yet families are seldom even remotely economically corporate. As mentioned above, some assets, like old houses, tend to remain within families. But family run businesses have a short life expectancy. In just about every village one can learn of a family store that went broke by extending too much credit to other members of their own family, who later could not/would not repay. In commercial fishing, “family boats” which were once common are now very rare, a result of the decline of the fishery and the inability of family boats to cut back on crew expenses or expectations quite so

arbitrarily as non-family boats. As such, families are seldom free of conflict. Yet it would be a mistake to relate family troubles to purely economic problems. Families remain deeply conflicted — while just as much at odds with other families — because they exist through a set of tensions fundamental to their ability to survive, but equally dangerous to their long-term viability.

In the past important families have been able to guarantee themselves seats on tribal, village, or IRA councils, only to find that the demands made on the council members for jobs and patronage far outweigh the ability of the entire council, let alone a single councilor, to deliver. This has threatened the very existence of particular families, and some have disappeared as a result. Note, however, that this does not indicate a demographic or structural change, but rather reflects the many options open to any individual for which family she or he will belong. Families can disappear without a single member actually passing away or leaving the village. Likewise some families remain strong despite the near constant loss of individual members to outside jobs or other opportunities, usually through more sensitive use of patronage and specific efforts aimed at recruiting marginal members.

Several examples of households within this sort of organization comprise the majority of the remainder of the chapter. Throughout, however (and a point we will return to at the end of the chapter), it is

necessary to remember that all family politics turn on the ability of family leaders to simultaneously bridge the gap between the village and the larger political economy, and simultaneously prevent others from doing so. As we shall see below, such efforts are not composed of actually preventing others from contact with those outside the village, and impossible task even if it made strategic sense. Rather, the task lies in keeping those for whom the leader provides patronage from making their own connections.

It seems useful at this point, then, to include a discussion of several households and families whose relative positions lay out some of the personal and social dynamics discussed here, and some that will be revisited in subsequent chapters. Each situation is unique for they are located in different villages, though as mentioned above, certain features of the contexts discussed below are common to all, and recognized as such by people in the villages.⁴

1

The Jamison's are the current descendants of a former teacher, herself a Native woman who had married a "white" man, one of the early arrivals in the region. He had been a saw mill operator associated with a mission group

⁴Note that each of these sketches is a composite. All are based on actual situations, though the names and locations have all been changed. At times, the events or strategies of more than one family have been joined to point out certain features or dynamics of their particular situations. Here cousins may be described as though they were siblings, and generations skipped where the ages were similar.

at one of the old villages. She was an orphan and was raised, with her uncles' consent, by a family of missionaries. She was one of the first from the village to get a teacher's license, and she taught in a new village (formed from her own old village and several others) for more than forty years. He died long before she did — indeed she only recently passed away, well into her 1990's. She spoke fluent Tlingit and had been instructed by her uncles (on her mother's side) in much tradition and folklore. Before she died she was recognized as "the authority" on village history and Native culture. People came from many villages for her memorial dinner.

Together they had four children, three boys and one girl. Two of the boys remained local, the daughter and one son moved away to one of the larger towns in the state, where they still live. She is no longer married, though, and returns to the village to stay with her own daughter on occasion. One of the sons who remained in the village is a fisherman, one of the few commercial fishermen left in the village. He was and is a "highliner" — owner of a commercially successful boat. To remain so, he now fishes non-stop for 8 months each year, and holds permits in several fisheries outside of the region as well as a seine permit that he has held from the outset of the program. He is married, but has no kids. His wife remains in the village while he is away fishing.

The next oldest son moved to Seattle in the 1960's. He seldom returns and plays little role in "the family." The youngest son now works for the

village, as a maintenance man on the village buildings. He got this job when his oldest brother was mayor of the village. Like his brother, he is well known in the community, though less commercially successful or politically prominent. Both are known for their local knowledge, and for their use of subsistence resources. It is common sentiment around the village that you will see one or the other on any given day heading out of the village at the crack of dawn to collect cockles or mussels, pull a crab pot or two, net some shrimp, gather wood for the stove, or go hunting on one of the nearby, unlogged islands.

The oldest brother was mayor for two terms. He was also involved in the IRA Cooperative Association at the time when it gave over the majority of its responsibilities to T&H. Many people in the village resent this. Even greater resentment comes from the financial dealings of the IRA during the time he was a central member. The village Cooperative Association had owned a cannery and some facilities, left from their original purchase in the 1940's. The cannery had functioned off and on into the 1970's, generally subcontracted to a processor who would then hire people from the village as laborers and buy fish from local boats. It was always more of an employment scheme and means for allowing local boats to stay local than it was a commercially aggressive business on the part of the IRA council, and as a result, they seldom received much compensation from the contractor. After limited entry, when the number of boats fell and the canned salmon market,

already depressed, was dealt its final blow, the cannery was refitted for several successive purposes: to process shrimp, as a cold storage for the fresh fish market, and as an egg packing house that would send salmon roe to Japan. It is unclear to most people in the village where the funds for this refitting came from, and what role individual council members had in choosing the contractors. There has always been some suspicion (though I emphasize that I have no knowledge of actual evidence) that several board members, including Jamison, got paid as a part of the deals that were struck.

The most recent contractor, however, went bankrupt and sued the Cooperative Association for money invested and opportunity lost as a result of breach of contract. The arbitrator found for the contractor and awarded damages. The only asset of the Cooperative Association, the revamped fish processing house and cannery buildings, were ordered to be held in lieu of payment. Many of those in the village blame the then current board for the loss of the cannery, and some hold the two leaders of the board — one of which was Jamison — personally responsible.

Since that time he has gone out of politics, never again running for mayor and leaving the IRA council after the cannery fiasco and the delegation of most other functions to T&H. The younger brother has never been involved in politics, but is among the most popular of the village residents. All of his influence is carried informally.

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Despite past suspicions, limited numbers of direct kin links, and a diminished role in the formal politics of the village, the Jamison's remain one of the most powerful "families" in the village. Their influence comes from two places. First, the most recent generation — the daughter and son of the daughter of the original school teacher — both have been educated outside the village and now have returned. The daughter has a college degree, her brother a technical degree. Both have also lived outside the village for extended periods of time and have made important contacts outside of the village, with the BIA, non-Native politicians, and at T&H. She was once the village representative to the Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida, knows and is well known to the administration of that body. He worked for several of the logging contractors hired to log the village's ANCSA corporation land. This experience, and his name, have allowed him to play a central in several of the village corporation's board of director elections (via "proxy votes") even when he was not a candidate. At present he holds a seat on that board.

The daughter has recently been part of an effort to revive the IRA council within the village. Actually an earlier movement to do so had specifically targeted her uncle (the former mayor and council member) as part of their campaign for the need for a more active and open council administration. Through contacts with the T&H Central Council, however, she was able to have the legitimacy of the initial movement questioned.

T&H sponsored elections were subsequently held in village which brought forth a new council of which she is a part. Of late, her brother was elected as well, and she was made president of the council — a semi-salaried position.

Neither of the current generation has a large family, and neither is married to a member of another prominent family. Both have married individuals from what might be called more marginal households within the village. Both actually have in the past been married to outsiders, but neither of these marriages lasted, and the both former spouses now live out of the village. Yet the size of the Jamison “family” is not limited by these links, and in a sense might in fact be enhanced by them. The lack of immediate family members has prompted a number of marginal families to emphasize links that go back to the original generation of Jamisons. I was told, “my dad’s grandmother was a cousin of C— Jamison’s, and she told me before she died that we were the same family before that.” These sorts of links, in a village where many people marry and have children with more than one partner during the course of their lifetime, allow just about anyone to claim “family” ties with just about anyone else. What makes the Jamisons likely candidates for such connection is both their powerful positions in the past and present, and the fact that a lack of immediate family members makes the central core of relatives more dependent on what might be seen as voluntary — and thus potentially reciprocal — kinship.

The results of this situation means that the patronage expectations on the current generation of Jamisons (neither of which, actually have this last name) are very high. The pressures here are felt by both, though neither has been in a position of power long enough to have felt the loss of disgruntled members. What remains clear, though is that the actual decision-making and organizing responsibilities of the family now lie with the current generation. The two uncles who remain in the village can and do lend support and advice on some issues, particularly when it comes to dealing with the leaders of other families — most of which are a generation senior to the current Jamison's. But by and large they remain above most of the current machinations.

2

A second important "family" makes clear how demographics can often mask the actual nature of family dynamics. The Smiths are at present the most powerful family in one of the larger Southern, Haida Native villages. The original parents are little discussed, both having died in the 1920's, but the "family" is composed of two brothers, their children, and the children of a now deceased third brother, A— Smith. The latter died only recently and his wife remains alive, in her 80's. She still lives in the "family" house, which grew over the years to an immense collection of additions on an otherwise ordinary house. At any given time as many as 15 people might be staying in

it. The nucleus of the current “family” lies with the children of this couple — A. Smith and his wife. They had 10 children, seven of whom were boys. At present the youngest is over 40, the oldest in his late 1960. When alive, A— Smith was president of the tribal council and a leader in the Presbyterian Church. When ANCSA mandated the creation of village corporations to handle the original cash disbursements and to begin a program of land selection, he was chosen by the village to head the new corporation — largely on the basis of overwhelming family support. Since that time, however, the family has actually shrunk and no longer can the Smith’s dominate an election like they could in the early 1970’s.

Of the seven boys born to A— Smith, six remain in the village. All have married, most have children. Indeed, many of the grand-children are now in their late 1920 and thirties. One of the three daughters moved away and is now living in California, though several of her children have moved back to the village. They live with their grandmother in the original family home. Several of the boys play a role in village politics: primarily the tribal council and the ANCSA corporation board of directors, and one son has recently been made a local magistrate. Altogether, the children of this one man and their children compose about 1/5th the voting population of the village.

The two brothers of A— have pursued political careers as well. One is a village corporation president, the other a former president. And while they

do not necessarily agree on most things, and indeed many of A—'s children do not necessarily agree or even like either or both of their uncles, they continue to "support" them, and thus the family stays together and maintains much influence. Neither of the two uncles, however, has a large family of his own. All the children of one brother have left the village and the other has only one child, a daughter, whose own family is small. In this way A—'s six sons and two daughters who remain in village hold considerable sway over family decisions.

The Smith's economic status has gone through several ups and downs. A— had owned a store through which the family had originally gained considerable wealth by village standards. The store had also allowed other family members to get supplies at a more reasonable price, meaning that their respective incomes went further. This was how the Smith's originally became a "family" in the larger sense. This stood in marked contrast to the other "families" in the village, most of whom are fishing families. A—'s children did sometimes go fishing, and two are now small boat owners. But no one in the family has ever entered fishing as a seiner, as most other prominent Southeast Native families have. Instead, beyond the store, A— served as mayor when he was young, and played a role in ANCSA corporation until his death. While never the most wealthy family or household in the village — having ten children made that impossible — the "family" remained above many of the up's and down's of commercial fishing.

The store did eventually fail, mainly through bad debts owed by extended family members. This was also the beginning of the down-turn in the families overall influence. Along with the store, which failed in the late 1970's, the inability of A— to deliver enough corporate or government jobs to those on the margins of the family caused many to leave the orbit of this group and go elsewhere (figuratively speaking, for few actually left the village). Most of the patronage A— was able to supply went to his own immediate family. Some still work in jobs he helped secure, many for the village ANCSA corporation. Likewise, family members own several parcels of land throughout the village, although these are individually held.

Many in the village see the family success as a direct result of their size. With so many members in so many places, it often seems to others in the village that there is a Washington in every office, every department, and on every board. As mentioned, though, the size of the family has shrunk over the last two decades. This is particularly telling in the grand-child generation. Two daughters of one of A—'s daughters provide an interesting example. Both were born in the village, and though their mother now lives elsewhere, both returned after college. Both have college degrees. Their father, a former village employee and later employee of the village corporation still lives in village. He is, however, separated from his wife, and is no longer a solid member of the family. He remains friends with several members, especially his former mother-in-law for whom he continues to do

many favors. But his allegiance to the family is minimal, diminished further by the fact that he is now employed part-time out of the village.

The two daughters have chosen very different paths. The older went away to school and returned to take a job with the village corporation. At the time her mother's uncle was the president, and her own uncle a member of the board of directors. Another uncle was employed on a contract basis with the logging end of the corporation. Her own job was as a low level manager, a position which still afforded influence in several corporate sponsored programs, like the new day care center and a couple of internships with the corporation that she herself created.

Her affections for her family, however, were tempered by two factors. The first was the fact that her boyfriend was from outside the village, and was non-Native. The second was her allegiance to her father, whose distancing from the family coincided with her return to the village. She and her friend live in a company owned trailer at the edge of the village. For a time they stayed with other family members and took meals at her grand mother's house, but the friction became so strong that they were glad for the chance to move out. At present she is planning on leaving the village after her contract with the corporation expires. In a recent hiring she passed up two distant family members for the internship positions she created.

Her sister returned to the village without a guarantee of work. For a time she worked in the Day Care center started by her older sister, but when

this project failed to be successful (many of those in the village who work for the corporation but are not part of the Smith family refused to send their kids to the day care center when it became apparent that it would be run primarily by Smith family members) she was let go. After this she got a job at the Cold Storage plant owned by the village ANCSA corporation during the summer, where her uncle is the crew manager. This was not patronage hiring, however, because they are always looking for workers, and she, like everyone, was paid a standard wage. Where she might receive some favors is in the flexibility she receives if she is late for work, or in the bonus system where raises are issued on the basis of days worked without interruption. She is less close to her father and has recently supported her mother's attempt to remain an active member of the family despite the fact that she, the mother, is no longer living in the village.

Her allegiance was most apparent in her support of a family member who had been passed over for promotion at the Cold Storage. Her more marginal status at the plant allowed her to champion his status in a way that he could not and that his own uncle could not — each being dependent on the corporation for continuing employment. Part of her ability to do this rested on the fact that she continued to live in the family home, and to take all of her meals at her grandmother's table. In this way her financial needs were less pressing. Over the course of a month she made the case for family action with many of the aunts and uncles who visited. And though nothing

ever came of the job situation, she firmly established herself as an important member of the “family”.

The rest of the village remains uniformly aligned against the Smiths. There is a sense among the other families that their long-time domination of village institutions has allowed them to get rich in illegitimate ways. Some point to the large houses built by one of the original three brothers, a former village corporation president. But even beyond this, it is obvious to most people that the accumulation of salaried jobs has created a network of connections that leads to further monopoly. Thus, they say, when the village corporation started a day care center for workers’ children — subsidized but still requiring some contribution by the parents — it was no surprise that three of the four employees were Smiths. The Smiths responded, in their own defense, that the state mandates certain prerequisites of day care workers, and that they hired only those applicants who were qualified. But this did little to assuage the rest of the village. Many of the other families in the village pulled their children out of the center as soon as it was clear that it would be another element in the Smiths’ domain. Some never sent them at all, despite the fact that this had been an important issue for workers at the cold storage the previous year.

These feelings carry over to church issues as well. The Smiths have always been members of the Presbyterian church, comprising almost the

entire congregation. Yet again this is not a result of simple demographics. Rather, A— Smith, as one of the early church leaders, had exercised considerable control over the running of the church, at times exceeding the resident preacher in authority. The large family home neighbors the church and the current church was built on land ceded by A—’s father at the turn of the century (A—’s eldest son now has a house on the original church land, so the deal was probably a swap). This domination eventually caused many of the other “families” to leave the church, much to the dismay of the Presbyterian organization as a whole. Most joined other churches in the village, widening the gap between the various congregations and organizations. I was told by the Presbyterian minister that when A—’s wife leaves the church, he expects church membership to double. At present the Presbyterian church is the smallest of the three major congregations in this village.

3

An example of a more marginal household comes from a northern Tlingit village. The household is composed of a Native man, his wife who is of Aleut descent, and their four children. Neither of the parents has close relatives in the village. His parents live in a nearby city, hers live in the Aleutians. Siblings of both live in these places as well. Their two oldest children have left the village, the daughter to live with her maternal

grandparents; one son to go fishing in a near-by, predominantly white town. The two younger boys still live at home. The older of these is in high school and attends the regional Native high school in Sitka; the youngest is in grade school.

The father, T—, is an occasional heavy equipment operator, having been trained in the 1970's when he worked on the pipeline. The mother was primarily a house-wife for the first decade of their marriage, but has recently gotten a job with the Head Start program, and is now there full-time. T— now stays home with the youngest and is seldom employed on a full-time basis. When there is a log ship in the village he works as a longshorer, and wishes that he could get a job driving a crane. But he has no formal training in this, and only those people with connections get the training, he says. Longshore work comes along about once every two months in this village, though in the past it was more frequent. In a good day on the ship he can make \$100 as a longshorer, and sometimes it takes three or four days to make an entire load.

For the most part they live from her salary and what government assistance they can get. Neither received village corporation shares — because she is not a Southeast Native, because he signed on with one of the landless groups discussed below — which means that they have been left out of the recent cash windfalls that some others in the village have had. They live in a T&H-built house that is in constant need of repair, but they have a

relatively new truck and are up to date on their bills.

On the side she makes cakes for special occasions like birthdays or retirement parties. These bring in a little cash perhaps as often as once every two weeks. He pursues subsistence activities, though perhaps not as regularly as some. He has a skiff and a net, and often he will lend these out to a friend for a share of the catch. He has a "partner" in subsistence, a friend since childhood, that he does subsistence fishing with during the peak salmon runs, and they will hunt deer together on occasion as well. He also receives fish from commercial boat crews and skippers who give him by-catch king salmon (for which they have no permit) for a share of the smoked fish he will make from it. Though he uses fewer of the alternative subsistence species (shellfish, crabs, seals, seaweed), and despite the fact that he takes a sometimes casual approach to fishing and hunting, their household is among the highest users of fish and deer in the village, and is known for its large smokehouse and carefully smoked fish.

T— had grown up fishing. His father and elder brother are both fishermen, his father now retired. His brother inherited the family seine boat and his father sold his seining permit years ago. T— says that he does not feel excluded, though he wishes he had gotten some of the money from the sale of the license (based on the fact that he could have asked for it and they would probably have given it to him, he says). But he did not like fishing and is for the most part glad to be left out.

Jobs for heavy equipment operators were available when the village corporation first began its road-building plans back in the 1980's, but not having acted right away, he was too late for anything but a second tier job or one of the older machines. Rather than do this, T— stays at home. He talks about going back to work at times, but knows that the situation hasn't changed and that he does not have the connections to get the type of job he wants. It's all connections, he states plainly.

Their lack of immediate kin connections with anyone in the village has caused T— and his family to be loosely affiliated with several families. T— claims a distant link (great-grand-parent generation) to the most powerful family in the village, and his middle son refers to a member of that family as his "uncle." Most often in the past they had voted along with this family and been counted as a part of it by core members of the other families. But these connections waned as that family gained considerable power in the village, including leadership of the tribal council seat and a seat on the village council. T— had hoped that this might turn into a salaried job, but nothing came of it. Things came to a head when he was passed over for a village job about 3 years ago. The details are revealing of the expectations marginal households have of the "families" they support.

In this village few families have paid their trash bill at any time in the recent past; some because they can't afford to, some because they don't have to. In response the village decided to let those who wanted to, and who owed

more than a year's bill, to work on the trash truck for a week in compensation. Most of the people in the village signed up to work on the truck rather than pay their bill, meaning more hands than weeks. At the time there remained one permanent worker on the truck, the driver, and there was a rumor circulating that he was going to quit. T— wanted to be put near the top of the list on the work schedule in order to advertise himself for the potential job. When his "relative," who was on the village council, could not/would not place his name near the top of the list, and when the job did eventually open and went to someone else, T— became disillusioned with this family and more or less cut his and his household's ties to it.

A few years later there was a movement in the village to replace the entire IRA council with a new group of "radicals" who would break with T&H to form an independent "tribe." Though the IRA council held almost no actual power, the potential confrontation motivated all of the important families to choose sides and back one or another group. The family with whom T—'s household had formerly been associated, the now former village councilor and his large family, backed the existing council. T— decided to "switch sides" and back the "radicals," partly because he thought that they might have a salaried job for him if they won. To switch sides, T— began spending more time with his "partner"— the subsistence partner with whom he fishes and has been friends for many years. His partner, B—, is a marginal member of one of the two "families" that composed the radical group.

Though B— was not a central figure in the dispute, nor even a prominent member of his own “family,” T—’s long time affiliation with him was sufficient to allow him to become a familiar member of the radical group.

The radicals lost the next election, and there was as a result no jobs to be had by anyone on the radical side. But for T— and his family, the lines of even potential patronage with their old “relatives” were now fully severed. It has yet to become apparent whether his new affiliates will be any more useful to him or his household, for at present they are entirely out of power. But the association gained by T— in this struggle continues, and most people in the village would consider him an ally of this, his new family.

4

One last example of a similar household from a southern Tlingit village will conclude this chapter. J— and his wife have seven children: six girls and one boy. They live in a village near the one in which he grew up. She is of Filipino descent and grew up in the village where they live at present. Their oldest child, the boy, is sixteen. The girls are all younger; the youngest is 3. He is one of the few “full blood” Natives in his generation, a point of pride that he makes when out of hearing of his wife and children. Like T—, he does not work regularly. He had worked for a local timber company, as a choker setter, but left that work many years ago. Since then he has worked only part time, and sometimes even less than this. When there

is a ship in the village he will work longshoring. And he has worked as a guide for hunters/tourists.

His "livelihood," as he puts it, is hunting and fishing. This he does on a near constant basis. In the winter he will still set traps for land otter or mink, and he will occasionally hunt for sea otter — of which a single pelt properly tanned will bring \$1000 or more. Most of his time, however, is spent in pursuit of mundane resources, like fish, seaweed, shellfish, seal, or deer. Without this, his family would not have much beyond rice to eat most weeks. Yet in contrast with T—, he is assiduous about following the fish and game regulations. He gets his "deer tags" every year, and his fishing permit. He is one of the few individuals I know who will obey the six sockeye fishing limit. Some of this may be the result of having been caught before, and there is a large State Fish and Game office in the village where he lives. Still others who have been caught are not so cautious.

Perhaps one reason for this caution is that the penalty for even the suspicion of an infraction is the confiscation of the subsistence equipment. This is held until the hearing, which may be as long as a month. For families tied less immediately to subsistence harvests, such a wait is not particularly difficult, and in most cases the materials are returned regardless of verdict. But for J— a month without a boat, gun, seine, or other items means having to depend on others for these things or go hungry. Unlike even many of the more devoted subsistence users, J— is almost entirely dependent on

subsistence resources for food.

This is not to imply that these resources can be pursued without other forms of income. It takes cash to buy bullets, gasoline, and outdoor clothing — not to mention capital items like a gun or boat. With his limited entry into the labor economy, J— is dependent on the income he can get from longshoring or guiding, or from the sale of hunted items like the otter pelts mentioned above. Unlike T—, above, he cannot depend on his wife's income for the necessary cash. J—'s wife does not work. She stays at home and watches over her children. At times she will baby-sit for others in the village, and this brings in a few dollars. But most of the time this money goes to "the light bill" or to pay down the credit the family receives at the local market. The family receives some government assistance, mostly AFDC, which J— can use to pay down the store bill, and in this way pay for gas or bullets gained on credit. J— and his family have continued to qualify for this aid because of the high unemployment rate in the village, even though he is not really in the labor market. In addition, J—'s wife has gotten officially categorized as disabled because of an accident in the past, and this entitles them to money and aid from additional programs.

J— has no cognatic kin in the village. Most of his family lives in a nearby village. Like most Southeast villages, the two villages are sufficiently distant that he is alone. His wife has family in the village, though. Her

mother is deceased, but her father, uncle, and brother all live there. Despite this, there is little family solidarity outside of the various individual households. Her father was a janitor at the school for much of his life and is now retired; her uncle was a crewman on a fishing boat. Her brother presently works at the airport, when there is work, clearing the area of snow in the winter and doing maintenance on the building at other times. Most of the rest of the time he does janitorial work inside. It is a salaried position but the pay is not good.

Altogether her family is not associated with any of the important "families" in the village. Instead, all are devoted members of the Salvation Army church. The original inspiration had been her mother's, but following her death, J—'s wife became the most vocal advocate of church issues within the household. She makes sure that her uncle and father have a ride to church on Wednesdays and Sundays, and that they make it to the various other socials held throughout the week. All of her children attend church and Bible school every summer. In fact, she makes sure they attend all of the Bible schools at all three of the churches in the village. J— attends church with his wife, and his own family had been Salvation Army members when he was growing up; this was how he met his wife. But his commitment to church causes is not as active as hers, and she takes the mission end of the Salvation Army program very seriously. Among their children, most of the girls are too young to have a serious attitude about the church. Their son,

now sixteen, is not particularly interested in church doctrine or messages of salvation, but he attends church meetings to see friends and girl-friends.

J—'s "family" association in the village tends to be marginal. His near constant sharing of subsistence foods has earned him friendship with many of the local elders, and some of belong to important families. But this has not gained J— any special status with the current leaders in these families. He is viewed by them as marginal regardless of their opinion of him. He is illiterate and unlikely to sway public opinion, or to be in a position to bargain favors. In turn he refers to most of the leaders of today's families as "those people up on snob hill" — a reference to a new area above the village where a number of wealthy individuals have built large houses. Those "families" with whom J— is most friendly are some of the older fishing families whose influence (and corporate existence) has diminished since the 1970's.

It is worth mentioning, though, that J—'s, marginal status has not kept him above family politics. In the late 1980's and early 1990's, when local ANCSA corporations were harvesting timber at peak rates, many local hunters and fishermen opposed the indiscriminate clear cutting often associated with logging in the region. As with many issues, this one divided the village along "family" lines, causing those who are most marginal to declare which side they would support. J— supported several of the older families by sitting with them at village meetings where they listed the sort of uses that logged areas once supported. In the end little came of the protests.

J—'s association with the families diminished as the issue passed from local consciousness.

Ironically, J— felt the consequences of this event only much later, in the context of the village dance group. Here he had always been accepted as a good dancer, though his home-made costume was less elaborate than the newer ones fashioned after the group received some ANCSA corporation support. Some time after the debates about logging had been concluded, J— found himself on the outs with several of the younger dance group leaders. Through organizational changes, he was no longer one of the central dancers. He told himself, and me, that this was because he had gotten old. But later he admitted that he suspected it had something to do with past disputes, and with the fact that he continued to deliver subsistence goods to some of the elders of some of the families that he had opposed. This, he felt, probably made the younger members of these families mad.

5

The patterns of relations that emerge from these discussions are simple and straightforward. Families are made and unmade according to two factors, 1) their ability to hold onto marginal members, like T— and J—, whose situation remains distant from those well connected leaders of the families; and 2) their ability to consistently reassemble connections when members like T— and J— move on. The Jamisons have been able to reinvent themselves,

the Smith's have not. While the former is on the rise, despite its minimal core, the latter is on the wane, despite its large core. These tensions within families are matched by tensions between families, all of whom struggle over what remains a limited amount of potential returns. In fact, both sets of tension seem to spring from the fact the potential returns are not large enough for a single family, let alone several.

It is important to note before moving on, however, that families also contain a critical contradiction that must not be confused with the internal tensions discussed here. The central contradiction of family life lies in its dependence on limited but reliable forms of difference between villages and the larger political-economy which some individuals can use to make families. One brief example will serve to make this point and conclude the chapter. I was told by the central figure in one village's most powerful family that his early success was rooted in getting the shipping contract for the school lunch program. Financed by the state, the contract called for purchasing and shipping on a weekly basis all of the food and supplies necessary for the village school. This contract was not itself exceptionally profitable, but it did allow him to obtain a loan from a bank in Juneau that financed the start of a store and shipping business. With the store and the lunch purchasing / shipping contract he was able to employ much of his family, and his family grew. He was later elected chairman of the local IRA council. Able then to deliver votes in state-wide elections, he was virtually ensured a lifetime hold

on the contract with which he began the family itself.

The differences between the village and the world outside — in the village there are no banks, and nothing of sufficient value to banks to use to obtain loans; or, the fact that the lunch contract is subsidized entirely by the state and hence awarded not by the local school board but by a State agency — are crucial to the way this man was able to make a family. The contract made the loan, and the loan the store, and the store and shipping business allowed him to keep his own children employed and thus in the village and to extend his patronage out to his nephews and nieces, their spouses and so on.

Yet there is room for only one shipping company and general store in this village. Were others families later able to obtain such loans or contracts, the system would not work for either. Plainly put, if the “distance” between the village and that which is outside it were to be too easily breached, then this way of making a family would not work, not for anyone.

As critical, though, is the stability of this inequality. If the differences between the village and the state should change, then the means for this structuration will change as well. Should, for example, the State become as poor as the village and unable to support the lunch program entirely; should the village fail to remain at least marginally economically feasible and thus lose so many households that the state no longer thinks is reasonable to support those who remain; in both cases the school lunch program will be canceled. On the other hand, should the village gain sufficient means to

support its own school lunch program, and hence the local school board take over the awarding of the contract, the entire arrangement is jeopardized as well. Both village and state must remain viable and the relative differences must remain in tact for this family to be possible.

Families are thus tied to a stasis they have little means to control, and in fact, consistently undermine — for the pressure on family leaders to expand their connections with the outside to expand the scope of their family leads to greater and greater integration with the larger political-economy. Should, for example, the recent land swap proposed in this village cause the opening of a road between this village and a nearby town, the family store stands to lose greatly. Yet as a corporate board member, the individual telling the story was under tremendous pressure to vote for the proposed exchange from those in his family who sought money from the corporate profits or jobs in the soon-to-be local logging outfits.

The contradiction of family, then, is how individuals within them can both create links across the gap between the village and that which is outside it, without simultaneously undermining those differences.

Chapter 4 — ANCSA and the Place of Local Differentiation in the Larger Economy

Since its inception the Alaska Native Claim Settlement Act has been the axis around which virtually all Alaska Native politics have turned. Beginning in the early 1970's, the Act and its consequences have been subject to much criticism from non-Native observers and from Alaska Natives themselves. Yet, though few have pointed this out, ANCSA works differently and has markedly different consequences throughout the state, from region to region and even from village to village. This is particularly true for Southeast Alaska where a past court settlement caused the near exclusion of the region from the provisions of the act altogether. Though the region was eventually included, it was under distinct circumstances and as such, has felt the impact of radical political reorganization, occasional influxes of windfall cash payments, and a reorientation of all local social process quite unlike those of other regions.

Before entering into a discussion of the peculiarities of the Southeast, however, some understanding of the common provisions of the Act is necessary. ANCSA is a law — not a treaty — enacted in 1971 by the US Congress to settle and extinguish all of the outstanding land claims of Alaska Natives in 1971. It involved a cash payment to Alaska Natives of over \$980 million and the retention by them of 40 million acres of land, with all of the remaining land becoming the property of the Federal Government and the

State of Alaska. The cash payments and the retained land did not go directly to the organizations, tribes, clans or villages whose claims the act sought to settle and extinguish, however. Rather, ANCSA created a number of public corporations to which the land and payments were transferred. Individual Natives were to be made stockholders in these corporations, and the companies were to remain exclusively Native-owned for twenty years. After this, the shares were to be available for sale on the open market. The expectation was that the corporations would use the money and land to produce income for themselves and their stockholders, speeding development of Alaska's dispersed resources and relieving the Federal and State governments of costly support programs for the many remote Native villages.

The claims of some Native groups had been outstanding for several decades, and strung out in the Court of Claims for just as long. Up until the late 1960's the Federal Government showed little initiative in examining or settling these claims.¹ The impetus for the 1971 Act was the discovery of large crude oil reserves in Prudhoe Bay on Alaska's North Slope several years earlier. This discovery, coupled with rising oil prices on the world market, prompted intense corporate pressure for a clarification of claims — pressure heightened by a decision by Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall that

¹As with the claims of Southeast, government compensation is usually awarded in sums deemed equivalent of the monetary value of the land at the time of loss. Thus every year that courts stalled settlements, inflation diminished the amount to be awarded; see Price 1990.

upheld development until the claims were addressed. The corporate format for the settlement was unapologetically, though ineffectually, assimilationist. Few Alaska Natives, like few other Americans, were shareholders in any large corporation. Even fewer of the ANCSA corporations' first elected directors had experience in any sort of business venture. Yet neither of these two considerations seemed important to Congress.

According to ANCSA a "village corporation" was to be formed in each predominantly Native village — its stockholders drawn from the current Native residents of the village, former Native residents, and descendants of past Native residents (the latter two regardless of current residence). The limit was that any individual could enlist in only one village corporation. Those with ties to more than one village were forced to choose one or the other. Each village corporation in the Southeast was allowed to choose 23,040 acres of land, in most cases contiguous to the village itself, for development.² Those villages whose surroundings were off-limits or unsuitable for development — Angoon and Kluckwan — were allowed to choose parcels from islands with no permanent Native populations, though these parcels were hundreds of miles from their own villages, inevitably in areas traditionally used by Natives from other villages. Most chose those parcels

² Section 16(b) each village could choose "....23,040 acres, which must include the township or townships in which all or part of the Native village is located, plus, to the extent necessary, withdraw lands from the townships that are contiguous to or corner on such township. All selections shall be contiguous and in reasonably compact tracts...."

with the most valuable stands of old growth timber for commercial development. Mineral resources were seldom considered during the initial selection in the Southeast, because the subsurface rights to the village corporation land were not held by the village corporation but rather by the “regional corporation.”

Regional corporations were a second tier of companies set up by ANCSA. The state was divided into twelve regions, and twelve regional corporations were created. Natives who were shareholders in village corporations in the region were issued shares in the respective regional corporations as well. In addition, some who were not village shareholders (most often because they missed enrollment, or were residents of villages denied village corporations — discussed below) were enrolled in regional corporations as “at-large shareholders.” In addition to the 12 regional corporations formed throughout the state, a 13th corporation was set up for those Natives not now resident in Alaska and unlikely to return. This corporation was given a share of the cash awards but no land. The remaining 12 regional corporations were awarded the same amount of land as the combined total of their particular region’s village corporation holdings. In addition, they were awarded the subsurface rights to their own selections and of the land selections of the village corporations within their region. This was meant to facilitate the development of North Slope oil by fixing the negotiating power for drilling rights with a single board of directors — that of

the Arctic Slope Regional Corporation. In this way, the oil companies did not have to negotiate with the various villages for the development of reserves located near or beneath each one. Instead a single contract for development could be worked out with the regional corporation for development beneath all the villages, regardless of the individual villages' opinions about the arrangement.

The potential for disparities in developable resources were apparent from the beginning. As a partial remedy, the Act included a profit-sharing provision between the regions. 70% of the net profits from the regional corporations was to be distributed to the other 12 regional corporations — with the idea that resource rich areas, like the Arctic Slope and the Southeast, would help support those regions less endowed with oil or timber. This, like several of the Act's provisions, marks these corporations as special sorts of corporate entities that, despite their official "for profit status," were expected to take over the welfare responsibilities of the State and Federal Government. Since that time, provisions like this one have been the source of an endless stream of lawsuits between the various corporate entities that have further drained the corporations of operating monies.

In the Southeast, the Southeast Alaska Regional Corporation or Sealaska received about 270,000 acres of old growth forest. Sealaska lands had to be chosen near the various village selections. This, coupled with the allowance for several northern groups to choose plots far from their villages,

meant a heavy concentration of Native logging in the southern end of the archipelago, on and around Prince of Wales Island in particular. This has created a host of *intra*-regional tensions around the various uses of this land, highlighting tribal and ethnic differences within the Native population as a whole.

A third class of Native corporation, urban corporations, was also created by the Act. These are less common than village corporations, because of the dispersed and village based demographics of most of the Alaska's Native population. In the Southeast region there were only two named: Juneau and Sitka. Corporations formed in these two cities were awarded the same 23,040 acres of land, but due to anticipated needs of the cities, they were allowed to choose plots further from them. Urban corporations were identical in most ways to village corporations, and were meant to include areas with large Native populations, although in places where the Native population did not make up a majority of the resident population (the criteria for a village corporation). These urban corporations, like the village and regional corporations, were enumerated in the actual legislation. In the Southeast, five villages with significant — though not majority — Native populations were left off of the list, a topic to which I will return below.

In the Southeast, the distribution of settlement funds preceded the selection and conveyance of land. Half of the total cash award was paid out to the regional corporations immediately, with the rest staggered over the next ten years. The regional corporations were expected to redistribute a portion of this award to the village corporations; to pay out a legislated percentage in "dividends" to their shareholders; and to use some to set up the corporate infrastructure and begin the development process. The latter was made more difficult by the delays in the conveyance of the land to the corporations. Less than one percent of the 540,000 acres selected in the Southeast had been conveyed by 1979, eight years after the Act. Oil drilling and development on state and federal land had begun right away, however, and most Natives could see the "other side" of the agreement reaping the benefits of the settlement. This led to great pressure in the first years of the act for a show of results. In most cases this meant a distribution of corporate cash assets as "dividends." In every village some individuals ran for directorships on this promise and were made corporate board members on this basis alone. When the actual conveyance of land did begin (after 1979), the vast majority of the village corporations were cash strapped, and many had to pledge their land holdings for loans necessary to begin the development process.

On the shareholder side, the desire for some show of results was understandable from a number of standpoints other than the sight of large

timber companies beginning to harvest recently surrendered land near the villages. As mentioned above, during the 1970's, commercial fishing in Southeast Alaska reached a historic nadir. The cannery boom that had created many of the small villages in the early 1900's was completely defunct, with only a handful of the more than 100 former canneries still in operation. The "limited entry permit" system was causing many formerly prosperous families to sell and move out of the villages. Household incomes throughout the region dropped significantly, and many long time fishing families lost their boats. Indeed one of the reasons that some chose to enroll in the regional corporation Sealaska as at-large shareholders, rather than joining a village corporation, was that at-large shareholders were paid more than were shareholders in the village corporations. Individuals who elected this route received double checks in the initial distribution, and still receive dividend checks from Sealaska that are half-again or even twice the amount of village corporation shareholders. Those with shares in village corporations saw part of their cash distributions given to these corporations to be used in starting harvests or business ventures.

No accommodations were made in the original Act for the issuing of new shares to Natives born after 1971. These are the "New Natives," and since that time, few corporations have made provisions for their inclusion. This has left these individuals — many of whom are now adults with families — without claims on the lands around the village and largely

without claims on the central political entities in most villages, the village and regional corporations themselves. In the Southeast where only a few cases have been formally considered or taken to a vote — Juneau's urban corporation, Goldbelt Inc., first voted in 1996 — opinion has been overwhelmingly in favor of the continued exclusion of the New Natives.³

In one potentially positive development since the passage of the original act, much of the fear that was attached to the expiration of the 20 year moratorium on sales of shares to non-Natives was quelled in 1988 when the law was amended to halt this provision indefinitely, leaving it up to the individual corporation whether or not to allow the sale of voting shares to non-Natives.

This change, however, has not reduced the possibility of alienation of the land to non-Natives for many village corporations.⁴ Throughout the state, "land swaps" are being proposed by the State and Federal Governments as a way of boosting village corporation profitability. These involve the

³Some village corporations have issued shares — Angoon, for example — though most have yet to deal with the problem in any serious way. Yet by not voting one way or another, this is also, in effect, a vote of exclusion.

⁴ Likewise the original pledging of land for collateral — one of the few options for corporations whose cash holdings are constantly demanded by shareholders — means a real possibility of land being taken by banks, should any of the post-logging business projects fail. Such projects have grown in number in the last few years as the village corporations in the Southeast have finished clearcutting nearly all of their timber reserves. Some corporations have turned to fish processing, but the state of this industry is little better. Others have sought to capitalize on the tourist boom of the last decade, but few villages are geographically positioned to take advantage of this either.

exchange of less productive land for more productive land, or land already logged for tracts of uncut timber. Critically, though, these land swaps virtually always involve a reduction in overall acreage, such that smaller tracts of uncut timber will be given in exchange for larger parcels of a corporations already cut land. This, as we shall see below, sets up a critical dynamic not just in the relation between village residents and the state and federal governments, but between village residents as well.

Three additional issues have arisen since the passage of the original legislation that are particular to Southeast itself; two of these will be discussed here. The first is that five villages in the Southeast Region were inexplicably denied either village or urban corporations. The Native residents of these villages, most of whom are “at-larges” within the Southeast Region as a whole, have come to be called the “landless Natives.” This issue has become the center of much recent political wrangling. The second is the issue of Non-Operating-Losses or NOL’s, a tax loophole that provided a massive influx of cash for some villages, and created the illusion of local corporate success for some village corporations. This illusion has been important for the directors of these corporations, awarding considerable political power to some. It has also prompted the formation of a number of active shareholder groups, and significantly altered the relationship between “resident shareholders” and “non-resident shareholders.”

The third issue, left for the next chapter, is subsistence. One provision of the original ANCSA legislation extinguished Native subsistence or “traditional use” rights on federal and state land. For some Natives, traditional use foods and resources are important financially, and for virtually all, subsistence practices are important identity-forming practices as well. Some of this was remedied in the Alaska National Interest Land Conservation Act (ANILCA) that was passed by the US Congress in 1980. This legislation, however, further complicated the relationship between Native subsistence users and Federal and State authorities by disrupting the relative jurisdictions of the latter — a conflict still being waged today. Just as important, however, is the implication of widespread and continuing development that jeopardizes subsistence resources. This is critical not just from a resource conservation standpoint, where Natives have at times found important political alliances; even, perhaps it is least important from this standpoint. Rather, conflicts between resource development and subsistence use deserve particular attention because of their differential impact within and between communities. The latter remained a point of regional political tension even after any direct reference to subsistence was removed from the original Act itself.

3

As mentioned in the Chapter 2, by the mid-1960’s — the period when Native activism for a state-wide land settlement was gaining strength — the

Tlingit and Haida Central Council ("T&H") had successfully sued the Federal government for compensation for the loss of tribal lands in the Southeast. Yet their success was diminished by the actual size of the award — \$7.5 million (the value of the Tongass at the time it was taken, unadjusted for inflation). By this time oil had been discovered on the North Slope, and it was becoming increasingly obvious that Congress was going to do something to settle the claims of Natives throughout the state. T&H representatives were thus faced with a dilemma. Accepting the Court of Claims award might jeopardize Southeast Natives' chances of being a part of a state-wide settlement, for at the time this was not a priority of North Slope representatives (whose claims on the oil bearing territories were the key bargaining chip held by the Natives) nor those in Congress. Yet for those involved in the T&H leadership, the Court of Claims settlement also meant an opportunity to create a centralized tribal organization that might begin to bring together the scattered villages and to present a unified Native block in regional politics.⁵

In the end the decision was made to take the Court of Claims settlement, though accepting the award did jeopardize the participation of Southeast Natives in the ANCSA process. In a compromised reached only in

⁵Others have accused the representatives of the time of pure self-interest, for when the money was eventually accepted it was used to create an endowed administrative structure within which most of these representatives found jobs.

the last few days of negotiations, Southeast communities were included under a special provision that limited the size of their land awards. While communities in other regions were awarded land in proportion to their existing population, Southeast communities were given a "flat-rate" of 23,040 acres per village corporation. Comparable sized communities in other areas received up to 161,000 acres per village. The total area retained by Natives in the Southeast was a little over 544,000 acres, including those holdings of the regional corporation, Sealaska. The list of communities where village corporations were formed included: Hydaburg, Kasaan, Klawock, Craig, Kake, Angoon, Hoonah, Yakutat, Kluckwan, and Cape Fox (south of Ketchikan). Two urban corporations were formed as well, in Juneau and Sitka.

In five villages, however, shareholder lists were drawn up but no village corporations were authorized by the Act. These communities — Haines, Ketchikan, Wrangell, Petersburg, and Tenakee — all have a majority of non-Native residents, but substantial Native populations. All told there are about 2000 at-large shareholders, i.e. shareholders in Sealaska who are not shareholders in any village corporation, who enrolled in these villages. Since the mid-1970's, those enrolled in these five villages have continued to receive dividends from Sealaska as at-large shareholders. In the late 1980's, however, the established village corporations — in villages where some of these "at-larges" are now residents, or that are near enough to others for local happenings to be well known — began to produce large dividends through

the sale of net-operating-losses or NOL's (to be discussed below). In the best cases, and these are always the ones that become the most well known, the dividends were quite large, sometimes as high as \$500 to \$1000 *per 100 shares* (the standard issue under the original act) *per month*. For families with two adult shareholders, NOL's meant an increase in income of \$12,000 to \$24,000 annually. For much of the 1980's, these sums significantly exceeded the annual incomes of most village families. Sealaska, for a number of reasons, did not keep up this financial pace, and many at-large shareholders felt left out of the only obvious windfall the Act had provided.

The environmental and local social costs necessary to take advantage of the tax-laws (on which this income was based) were quickly overlooked by those who wanted in on the windfall, and individuals from the five "landless" communities formed a group to lobby Congress for some reparation. This is the Southeast Alaska Native Land Acquisition Coalition, but the people it represents are usually referred to as "the landless".

Beginning in the early 1990's, the landless began advocating for a second congressional settlement that would allow them to form village/urban corporations and for a land award to these corporations. These claims received little attention at first. But later, and especially in the mid-1990's, these claims came to the center of the ongoing dispute between the State of Alaska and the US Forest Service over harvest levels in the Tongass.

The Tongass National Forest, in which both the original conveyances and the new claims by the landless are located, is a Federal forest reserve managed by the US Forest Service, a division of the Department of Agriculture. For most of the last five decades it has been managed to support two large wood pulp mills and a number of smaller sawmills. Both pulp mills are located in the region, one in Ketchikan and one (now closed) in Sitka. The Forest Service allows the harvest of Federal Land for the supply of these mills mainly through the awarding of contracts for road building within the Forest. Logging companies, usually subsidiaries of the pulp corporations, are awarded logging acreage in return for building access roads throughout the archipelago. Not coincidentally, these roads are largely for the purposes of accessing new harvestable areas. In this way, the pulp companies have traditionally paid very little for the timber they use in the mills, whose cost is little more on average than the cost of accessing (road building) and harvesting. Before the pulp mills were built it was argued by the industry that because of the large amounts of capital required to begin a pulping operation, and because these mills must be run almost continuously in order to stay running, the industry required the stability of a long term harvest guarantee. They were awarded 50 year contracts in the early 1950's that set minimum levels of road building. These contracts have dictated the harvest levels in the Tongass until recently.

In 1981, as a means of addressing a number of changing political

circumstances in the Southeast, Congress passed the Alaska National Interest Land Conservation Act or ANILCA. The Act was introduced above as a critical piece of legislation for Alaska Native subsistence rights, but it gained much wider support because of the broad applicability of the act itself — for commercial fishing, recreational tourism, and wildlife conservation. This flexibility is found in ANILCA title 8, a provision that called for a management scheme of “balanced use” of the forest. The act itself both recognized and empowered a coalition of Native subsistence advocates, tourism advocates, and commercial and sport fisheries advocates who, for a brief time, were able to form an alliance against the large timber developers. “Balanced use” was understood by these groups to mean that timber harvest levels must be reconsidered to account for other uses of the forest.

The timber corporations in the early 1980’s found that national sentiment was against them, and conservation legislation across the country was popular. Their strategy was to make their case locally and to stall the revision of the management plan until the political tides changed. They launched a coordinated media campaign and series of production slow downs calculated to make their point with Southeast residents both publicly and financially. Pulp prices were actually falling on the world market at the time, and diminished production schedules were perhaps part of the overall

corporate strategy regardless of Forest Service harvest policies.⁶ They also found an ally in a new Senator, Frank Murkowski, whose own financial interest and an important voting constituency lay with the timber industry. By the late 1980's, sufficient new information and a host of new legislation — including ANILCA, but also including broadening of the Endangered Species Act to West Coast forests in general — prompted the Forest Service to undertake a major overhaul of the management of the Tongass.

Timber harvest allocations from public lands within the Tongass had been declining steadily through the 1980's as the harvest on Native (private) lands had grown. The overall harvest level had remained about the same, but the local timber companies had been receiving less of a share — largely as a result of their unwillingness to pay market prices for the timber harvested on Native land which, as a consequence, was marketed mainly in Japan and Korea.

Beginning in 1991 several attempts were made to introduce "landless

⁶Wood pulp, as is commonly known, is used to make paper. It also the main ingredient in a number of synthetic fibers and materials, including rayon and cellophane wrap. In the case of the former, rayon, it competes on the world market with a number of other fibers, both "natural" and synthetic, and the value of pulp, and therefore of lumber, often reflects this competition. This was the case throughout the late seventies and early eighties as wood prices fell dramatically on the world market, partly due to the opening of a number of new harvest areas (especially in New Guinea) but also because of increases in the availability and acceptance of other fibers, including cotton. The years 1994-5 saw a dramatic increase in world pulp (and hence wood prices) due largely to a poor cotton harvest in Asia, increasing the value of alternative fibers, including rayon, on the world commodity market.

legislation" to Congress. The most successful of these (in terms of nearness of passage) was a bill by Senator Murkowski that reached the floor in 1994-5, though it was never voted on. The bill itself was indicative of the interests that lay behind it. It called for the establishment of village corporations in the five landless villages, and for the allocation of harvestable land to these corporations. Realizing that Congress would be reluctant to vote any more cash compensation (and most at-large shareholders had received a portion of the original award) but arguing that some special compensation was required, Murkowski proposed allocating land according to the population-based formula used in other regions. In this way, four of the five landless communities would qualify for 161,000 acres per community. Overall the bill proposed awarding an additional 640,000 acres of harvestable timberland, more than had been allocated in the entire region under ANCSA. This was warmly received by the Southeast Alaska Native Land Acquisition Coalition, the organizing body for the landless. But two additional provisions made clear that the apparent generosity of the bill had other motives, for the bill was from beginning to end a scarcely disguised timber grab on the part of the large processors.

The first was a rider attached by Senator Murkowski stating that all of the timber allocated had to be processed "in state," and thus (though unstated) by one or the other of the two large pulp corporations mentioned above. The second was a provision that the lands allocated should be those not already

designated for harvest by the long-term contracts of the two large mills. In Tongass management terms, this meant that the land awarded the landless would have to come from "LUD 2's", or Land Use Designation 2 — lands specifically designated for the "balanced use" provision of ANILCA under the Revised Tongass Plan worked out only the few years before. In effect, all 640,000 acres would come out of those sections of the forest earmarked for tourism, sport fishing, and Native subsistence. Moreover, because several of the landless communities were located in predominantly non-Native towns, whose "needs" might conflict with radical development of nearby land, it was proposed that the allocations come from areas throughout the region.

This last provision turned many of the non-landless villages against the proposal, and, as long as the landless continued to align themselves with the large timber corporations, against the landless as well. Several of the LUD 2's jeopardized by the act had been designated off limits to logging only 3 years previously through the struggles of Native subsistence advocates and conservationists. Many also pointed out that the provisions of the act precluded the kind of windfall that the landless anticipated. Because of the requirement of in-state sale, few thought that the landless would receive anything near the market value of their timber. Optimistic expectations by the Southeast Alaska Native Land Acquisition Coalition were 70 cents on the dollar, or about the cost of logging the timber under the road contract system. The NOL laws that had turned losses into cash for the other villages were off

the books by 1995, precluding the sort of dividends that had prompted the action itself. Though seldom mentioned, even with the awarding of the large tracts of land, the very best most of the new corporations would have been able to do would be to break even. All of the profits from such a deal would have gone to the large processors.

By the summer of 1995 a number of villages had sent letters opposing the proposed bill, couched in language of support for the landless. Kake said they supported the claims of the Natives of the 5 villages, provided none of the allocations were to be on either the west coast of Kupreanof Island, or on Kuiu Island nearby — both traditional use areas for Kake Natives. Hydaburg was less circumspect, having witnessed the effects of distant village corporation logging within territory they considered their own — Long Island, and the south end of Prince of Wales Island. Much of the anger arose of the direct threat to local subsistence resources. Some spoke of the political machinations of the Juneau “indipinos” — Indian-Filipinos — who had botched the original land suit, then the ANCSA settlement, and now the prospect of a third land settlement. Others in Hydaburg went so far as to erect signs on the logging road leading into the village that read, “Now Entering Haida Country.”

By the end of 1995 regional cohesion within the Southeast Native communities was virtually nil. This was true not just between Haidas and

Tlingits (and in fact, many Haida enrolled in Ketchikan and are among the landless, including some who now live in Hydaburg). The prospect of a landless settlement that would award land for development near other communities prompted tensions and isolation between predominantly Tlingit villages as well, between Kake and Wrangell for instance, and heightened existing tensions between Hoonah and Juneau.

4

Much of this conflict is the result of the single cash windfall that ANCSA brought to those villages awarded land in the original settlement.

Between the years 1971 when ANCSA was passed, and 1979 when the land awarded in the act actually began to be conveyed, timber prices on the world market rose steadily. Yet between 1979 and 1982, when most of the land was actually deeded over, prices dropped to their 1972 levels, unadjusted for inflation (Schiller 1984:3). They continued to fall until the mid-1980's, when they rebounded somewhat, regaining 1980 levels. At the time of peak Native harvest, the price for timber was roughly half what it had been at conveyance (Knapp 1992:23-4). Much of the fluctuation had to do with opening of new sources of supply, particularly from East and Southeast Asia. The high prices from the early 1970's were created by increased demand from Japanese buyers, and this demand continued throughout the period. But by the mid-1970's, with demand and prices high, Japanese firms had begun

exploring harvesting agreements with governments in Asia, Eastern Siberia, and New Guinea.

The 23,040 acres awarded each village in 1971 seemed, at the time, a certain source of corporate income and dividends, and, just as importantly, jobs. But as the value of timber fell and the cost of timbering equipment continued to rise through several years of steep inflation, village corporations found themselves unable to begin logging. Loans were unavailable, even when held against the timber land itself, and few corporations had the cash necessary to begin without outside investment or support. Two approaches were possible. The first was to subcontract the actual logging to an established logging firm. This produced a stream of income but few jobs and frequent tensions between shareholders and their own timber representatives (who negotiated with the subcontracting firm) over the issue of "shareholder hire." The second strategy was to find a way to obtain alternative loans, usually meaning higher rates over shorter terms, potentially from timber marketing firms. This money could then be used to start a logging operation — to purchase the heavy equipment, hire the outside experts, set up a sort yard, and eventually begin harvesting logs. This also led to problems. For while it did create a number of jobs for people in the villages, the majority of the corporate profits, if there were any, were siphoned off to service the debt or diminished by special terms given a marketing company in exchange for the initial loans. Likewise, local hiring meant considerable training. Few had the

necessary experience when the logging was first begun in the early 1980's.

This also hurt production efficiency, lowering profits further and reducing most of the companies who went this route to break-even prospects.

Dividends in these situations were non-existent, raising considerable tension between those whose families depended on jobs and shareholders whose main concern centered on dividends. The most vocal of the latter were the non-resident shareholders, or "out of town shareholders," as they are called in the villages.

Falling prices had one unforeseen benefit, however. Two tax loopholes, usually meant for much larger corporations, allowed the village corporations and Sealaska in the late 1980's and early 1990's to turn large losses into cash income. The first was a tax practice written for larger timber corporations that allowed them to count as corporate operating losses (the kind of losses that include depreciation of machinery) the difference in the value of standing timber between the time it was purchased and the time it was harvested or sold. The law was meant to encourage timber companies to purchase timberlands outside of Federal reserves by protecting them from any downturns in the market value of timber between the time of purchase and the actual harvest, and to encourage them to hold on to large holdings rather than buying and selling according to the timber market fluctuations.

ANCSA corporations with considerable timber holdings were

potentially able to show large losses in timber value because of the fall in market prices that occurred between their selection in 1971 and their eventual conveyance and harvest in the 1980's. It did not matter that they had not paid for the land. The loss was simply the difference between the value at the time of selection and the value at harvest. With timber prices falling by more than half, even the small village corporations were potentially able to show losses in the hundreds of millions of dollars.

What made these losses valuable was a second tax loophole again designed for large corporations that allowed parent companies to deduct the net operating losses of their subsidiaries from their own, i.e. the parent company's, profits.⁷ In effect this meant that very temporary limited partnerships could be set up between profitable companies and those with

⁷ The operating loss laws were no longer in effect in 1987, when their potential for village corporations were realized. At the time, a number of amendments to ANCSA were under consideration by Congress, including a provision to eliminate the sale of shares to non-Natives in 1991 (the so called "1991 Amendments"). A coalition of tribal governments throughout the state, the Alaska Native Coalition, was lobbying for the "tribal option", or the right to dissolve the ANCSA corporations and turn over their resources to tribal governments. Originally, Alaska Senators Murkowski and Stevens attached a rider such that the tribal option would actually reduce the existing sovereignty of these groups. The dispute threatened to uphold the passage of the other amendments.

To split Native resistance, one of the senators pushed through a bill extending the creation and sale of net operating losses for ANCSA corporations. This gained the support of the Alaska Federation of Natives, which, by 1987, was largely a voice for ANCSA corporations' top management. At that point it appeared likely that the Murkowski/Stevens rider would pass, and so the ANC was forced to withdraw the request for the "tribal option." This issue remains unresolved today.

large net operating losses such that these losses were counted against the acquirer's profits. Once the accounting transfer had taken place, then the merger/acquisition could be dissolved. The benefit for the acquiring/profitable company is that each dollar of profit covered by a dollar of NOL is tax free, saving large companies almost 40 cents in taxes on every dollar of profit. Profitable companies were thus able to offer companies with large losses upwards to 30 cents for every dollar of loss, and still retain a 10 percent earnings increase. Small ANCSA village corporations with potential paper losses in excess of \$100 million stood to make between \$30-40 million in the sale of these losses, depending on the terms they were able to work out with the acquiring company. In addition, the \$30-40 million dollars earned in this way were tax free, for technically the losses were not transferred, but merged. For the regional corporation, SEALASKA this also meant that the money from the sale of losses did not have to be shared with the other 12 regional corporations, for ANCSA had stated only that profits had to be shared, not proceeds from the sale/merger of a loss.

For both the regional corporation and the various village corporations, the sales of losses seemed a very fortunate turn of events. Having paid nothing for the original conveyance (except their claims on the remaining nine million acres of the Tongass!), the losses they presented were purely paper losses. The only catch for those wishing to capitalize on this sort of

arrangement was that the losses had to be operating losses — that is, losses created by the harvest of the timber. To achieve the large loss numbers, all of the timber had to be cut or sold on the stump. Timber harvests on Native lands jumped from 19 million board feet (MMBF) in 1979 to over 600 MMBF annually by 1990. Through 1989, the cumulative total was over 3000 MMBF, of a total allocation of approximately 6000. The vast majority of this harvest has been on village corporation land — Sealaska having cut only 600 MMBF by this time, meaning that by 1989 village corporations had harvested approximately 2500 of their total 3700 MMBF allocated in the original act (Knapp 1992: 20, 30, &31 [from tables]). High harvest levels have continued since that time, and at present few villages continue logging for anything but log salvage.

In addition, much of the timber that remains standing on village corporation land is actually no longer under village corporation control. Many corporations actualized their losses by selling timber on the stump, quite frequently to a subsidiary set up by Sealaska. In this way village corporations could create large NOL's without the time necessary to actually harvest the timber. Tellingly, most of Sealaska's logging efforts have been on village corporation lands, while most of their own areas remain to be harvested. What little logging remained to be don on village corporation lands was accelerated in 1995 when a brief upward spike in the price of pulp encouraged the harvesting of stands that had been economically unfeasible in

the past.⁸

The result of the intense logging is visible in every village. Because ANCSA village corporation holdings were usually contiguous with the villages themselves, most of the surrounding environments are completely deforested. Yet despite all this, the worst may be yet to come when Sealaska begins to harvest its remaining timberlands that are, for the most part, adjacent to the already vacant village strips.

Most of the NOL money was paid out in dividends. Of the nearly \$30 million received by one village, \$20 million had been paid out by 1995. Original allocations of 100 village corporation shares were given \$1000 per month in this case. Similar payments have left other village corporations nearly bankrupt, without resources to fill the gap now that the timber has been harvested. This problem has been exacerbated by the desire of non-resident shareholders for the virtual liquidation of village corporate assets and even the corporations themselves. With little to gain from village employment schemes, non-resident shareholders see investments in the village as bad business risks. In a purely profit-oriented sense they are right, and few corporations have been able to devise in-village alternatives to timber that are even sustainable, let alone capable of producing dividends.

⁸ I was told at the time by a conservation advocate that the upward spike in pulp prices was temporary, the result of a poor cotton crop in China that had decreased the world supply of raw fiber.

In most village corporations, non-resident shareholders hold at least half of the shares. Quite frequently a majority of any corporation's board of directors will be non-residents, and often these individuals serve the longest terms. Resident board members are forced to confront the needs and complaints of resident shareholders almost immediately, and must contend with issues not just of "shareholder hire," but of particular job requests. As might be expected, local board members are confronted by the demands of particular "family" constituencies, discussed above. In this way in-village board members face not only the resistance of out-of-town voters, but the opposition of other "families" as well. The result is that the turn-over among resident directors is very high, and few sit for more than one term. At the same time, non-resident shareholders frequently serve more than one term, and are able to use their board status to promote their own re-election, by requesting "shareholder-relation" meetings strategically close to the voting or "proxy" elections, paid for by the corporations. The result is that the majority of village corporations have been run with an emphasis on "returns" rather than job promotion or sustained corporate solvency. I once asked a former in-village board member what would happen once the NOL money set aside for disbursement ran out. "They will go after the rest of the NOL money," he said. After that? "Then they keep going until there is nothing left."

Non-resident shareholders do not always live far away. In fact, many live within the state, in one of the larger Alaskan cities — Ketchikan, Juneau,

Anchorage, or Fairbanks. Many return to the villages during the summer, where they have kin. They will come and “put up fish”, and to pursue other subsistence activities. Sometimes, during their visits, they even hold “concerned shareholder meetings,” usually volatile events with numerous calls to action and frequent campaigning by would-be directors. The rhetoric of these meetings often plays on known divisions within communities. “It’s not the project I worry about. I just don’t trust “so-and-so” with that money. I’d rather have it in my pocket than have *him/her* with it!” And past directors have earned this distrust. While many are not paid, suspicions around the business dealings between directors and the village corporation are rampant. Some directors have sold property or houses to the corporations at vastly inflated prices. Others have used corporate patronage to subsidize local businesses or to seek positions with clients of the village corporation. Though not necessarily a regular occurrence, mistrust abounds.

Non-resident shareholders are especially suspicious of this sort of patronage, and the most vocal in their opposition. NOL money did much to heighten these tensions. By leaving the corporations holding substantial cash reserves, NOL’s created the proxy battles that characterize many village corporations today. And the lack of standing timber, and the dearth of business prospects within the villages, has compounded these problems, bringing them to a more immediate head as those whose priorities include jobs within the village find themselves opposed, often quite vehemently, by

former neighbors, relatives, and friends who now live elsewhere.

5

Two points can be made that sum up structural dynamics discussed here, and reintroduce a point made in Chapter 1. In ways sadly reminiscent of past land settlements and arrangements with Natives in other areas of the US, ANCSA tied Native participation (that is participation *as Natives*) in local political-economy in ways that ensured 1) that participation was limited in extent (by limiting the number of shareholders and making it in the present shareholders interest to do the same) and duration (by awarding resources that are, for the most part, unrenewable) and 2) that participation almost inevitable undercut the ability of those with similar claims to the same (by awarding land, now and in the future, near the villages of other groups, and hence diminishing the ability of those in that village to remain there). These two dynamics are the rock and hard place of the current land law, and they define, in structural terms, what it is to be Native in the region at present.⁹

⁹ Summing up a point about the early incorporation of Natives along the eastern seaboard of North America, Sider writes:

Indians were allow to become commercial producers from diminishing resources — resources that declined, usually rapidly, from the onset of commercial production in any specific area. The could sell deerskins and beaver pelts, they could sell their bodies as soldiers, and they could sell their land.”

The full historical case, continuing as it does into the twentieth century, is discussed in Sider’s *Lumbee Indian Histories* (1993). In such cases it makes no difference whether the commodity in question is deerskins or oil drilling, coal or uranium mining, or the storage of spent nuclear and chemical toxins.

Seldom discussed, however, is the fact that such arrangements necessarily undermining of any possibility of a future rooted in continuity. As participation diminishes so does the possibility of being Native in anything resembling its current form. Put plainly and perhaps overly simply, but dramatically, just to make the point: the hour-glass was turned in 1971, and it contained 23,040 grains of sand.

All this would be sufficient injustice to condemn ANCSA outright, as most Natives and outside observers have (see especially Berger 1985). But there is more. Set against this time table is the fact that in the past, and likely in the future, Native participation *as Natives* has required that which becomes increasing impossible in such situations — continuity — as a criteria for even possible consideration for future participation. All past and likely all future law around Native recognition (whether it be land claims or museum repatriation) has as a fundamental criteria that those who make the claim be able to demonstrate continuous participation as Natives. People know this, and know equally that they are powerless to avoid it.

In the last chapter we saw a set of structural contradictions around families that might be called geographic, for they were dependent on differences between one place and another (if not precisely literally); i.e. between the village and that outside of it. With ANCSA the contradiction is

All fit precisely a long term structural pattern.

temporal, locked in to a processual unfolding that has an ending. On an individual basis that end is often closer than it is collectively. People grasp, often quite clearly, the pending dissolution of the system. This is particularly true for those poorest households in the villages, for the prospect of having to leave the village (for lack of money, lack of patronage, or lack of corporate shares for those born after 1971 — now old enough to have households of their own) is constant and pressing. Framed by ANCSA, subsistence practice and production paints a picture of the very tenuousness of ongoing participation for these households, and it is to this we turn next.

Chapter 5 — ANILCA: Local Differentiation and Subsistence

For Natives throughout the Alaska, one provision in ANCSA beyond all others provoked instantaneous protest. The law, as originally written, had eliminated any future rights for Native subsistence hunting, fishing, or gathering, on lands held by either the Federal or State Governments — roughly 4/5ths of the they had originally claimed. At the time there was little mystery behind the provision. The assimilationist intentions of the Act were well known even in Alaska, and it was thought by Congress that continued dependence on a “subsistence lifestyle” would hinder Native involvement in the soon-to-be transformed economy. The provision was intended as a none-too-gentle shove in the direction of wage labor, ideally for the new corporations formed by the Act. Congress’s optimism was high, but few jobs materialized. Instead, most Natives simply felt further alienated from the claims process and the losses it entailed. In a demonstration now made famous, Alaska Natives from the Northeast part of the state shot Eider ducks, intentionally breaking the rules laid down by Federal Game regulations, and turned themselves in, evidence in hand.

Calls for change came from all over the state, and with the hope of a transformed rural economy dashed, in the late-1970’s the federal government set out to rescind this section of the law. In 1980 Congress passed ANILCA, the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act. In one provision,

ANILCA Title 8, the act required that the Federal Government pursue a policy of balanced use on its land, including allowances for Native subsistence use. In practice most Federal Lands had been managed by the Alaska State Fish and Game officials since statehood and much of ANILCA was written as instructions to State resource managers on the requirements of the new criteria.

Fearing Constitutional challenges to the legislation, based on racial preference for Alaska Natives, ANILCA required instead that the state establish a "rural preference" for resource use on the Federal Lands it managed. Should the state fail to do so, the law required that the Federal Government take control of the administration of its own lands, a step that meant a considerable reduction in the funding of Alaska State Fish and Wildlife management and, more importantly, a significant reduction in the level of local participation for Alaska residents — commercial fishermen, logging interests, tourism, etc. In response the state adopted new subsistence laws aimed at meeting the rural preference provision, and began implementing them across state and federal land in the mid-1980's. Yet problems occurred almost instantly when several urban residents took the new laws to court within the state, citing a section of the Alaska State Constitution that guaranteed hunting and fishing rights to all state residents and thus making unconstitutional any state legislation of a "rural

preference.”¹ State courts found for the plaintiffs and the state subsistence laws were struck down (*McDowell v. State of Alaska*. 1989). The State Legislature was unable to amend the constitution or reach a lasting compromise with Congress or the courts, and the federal government began taking control of the management of federal lands in the early 1990’s.

Most of Southeastern Alaska is Federal land, and the conflicts above have heightened existing tensions around Native subsistence or “traditional use” (a phrase with a slightly different meaning that is preferred by some).² Most of the region’s residents -- hunting and fishing guides, most tour

¹ In 1986 the Alaska Legislature enacted a law calling for “rural preference” for subsistence, but in 1989 the Alaska Supreme Court, in *McDowell v. State of Alaska*, found this provision to be in conflict with the Alaska State Constitutional. Laws passed in 1992 made no reference to “rural preference,” but were written awaiting further action, and had a time limit such that if no further legislation were enacted, the “sunset” provision of the 1992 law took effect and all subsistence laws reverted to the 1986 law absent the “rural preference” sections. This took place in October of 1995. The 1986 law, absent a “rural preference” was already determined to be in conflict with ANILCA, as was the 1992 law (though there was hope of a temporary compromise with the 1992 law). In 1990 the Department of the Interior informed the State that it was out of conformity with ANILCA and that it intended to begin the process of resuming management of federal lands. When no further action to remedy the conflict was taken, the Federal Government assumed full management responsibilities in October 1995.

See “Report on Implementation of the 1992 Subsistence Law,” Alaska Department of Fish and Game, January 1995, for a full review of the origin and implementation of the various laws, legal decisions, and jurisdictional decisions.

²The term “traditional use” seeks to root the right to use particular resources in the ongoing, past and present use of those resources, in some sense de-racializing this use and locating the rights in communities, not “blood quantum.”

operators, Native and non-Native subsistence users, and most importantly, commercial fishers -- have been directly affected by the change in management regimes. Statehood had originally given the state government management of inland waterways (a common statehood provision) including any waters within three miles of the state's shoreline and all navigable waters (including large rivers). In the Southeast this included virtually all of the canals that run between the various islands of the archipelago, and thus, most of the waters in which commercial salmon fishing takes place. Following ANILCA, questions arose over whether federal control would include these waters. The State of Alaska sued the Secretary of the Interior over the issue (*Alaska v. Babbitt*) in 1992. Opposite this is the "Katy John" case, a suit by an Alaska Native arguing that ANILCA required federal management over navigable waters, including the section of the river on which this plaintiff's village is located. The two cases were consolidated and in 1994 Judge Holland found that navigable waters were "public land," and hence subject to federal management. The case is now under appeal.

For commercial fishermen, accustomed to considerable input with the Alaska Fisheries Board, a change in management regimes meant the real possibility of a loss of control. According to most fishermen, the federal government had a record of favoring environmental and Native causes above commercial use. Some also feared that other, non-Alaska issues would cloud federal handling of the case and with an eye toward non-fishing related

issues, that the “Feds” would be willing to trade off fishing rights with Canada, a source of ongoing struggle in The Pacific Fisheries.³ Great fears thus attached to the issue of subsistence, fears based not only on the livelihoods of subsistence users, but on the livelihoods of many others in the region as well.

Obvious tensions with State and Federal regulatory policies were eclipsed in the early 1980’s by the implementation of the original ANCSA village corporation land selections. As we have seen, these created a number of intra-regional conflicts between Native communities, centering around the logging of subsistence areas used by another village. The best example is the Haida. Hydaburg is one of the outside communities, meaning it is located on the ocean side of the archipelago, in the southern end of Southeast Alaska.

³Many commercial fishermen speak of the “Boldt” decision as an important consideration in their political strategies. Boldt was the deciding judge in a Washing State fisheries case where half of the annual salmon harvest in the Puget Sound area for Native tribes, based on treaties signed with these groups in the late 19th century.

The Federal Subsistence Management Board, which controls all the fish and game decisions on Federal lands in Alaska, is composed of the regional directors of five federal agencies (National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Alaska Director of BIA).

Precedent for the sort of deal making feared comes from the division of George’s Bank off the New England coast. Here conflicting 200 mile limit claims were settled by a division that awarded the northern banks to the US, and the southern or eastern end for Canada. The eastern end is the best fishing ground, given up on the prospect that the northern end was said to potentially hold oil reserves.

In the original selection process, two northern Tlingit communities whose surroundings were off-limits for development were allowed ANCSA selections in the vicinity of Hydaburg, in traditional Haida subsistence areas. Sealaska holdings of equivalent size border on these areas as well, and all have been clear-cut.⁴

During the cutting the Haida were divided over the course of protest. Many village residents worked loading and unloading logs during the peak harvests. But the planned clear-cuts included areas around old Haida camps and some areas still used for subsistence hunting, trapping, and fishing. In the end, little formal protest was made, but the resentment lingers. This is especially true for both the youngest and the oldest in Hydaburg — those who remember most clearly the regular use of the area, and those who can still see the destruction but did not witness the very limited boom. Some of these young people have gone to school with students from the northern villages. Their stories of their classmates' wealth from dividends are exaggerated, but the sentiment is common: '....they made a lot of money off of our island....'.

⁴ Ironically, the impact of this cutting has been heighten by the fact that ANCSA required selections to be made near the villages when there were no mitigating factors (like the national parks that surround the two northern villages). Thus the Haida were forced to select timber lands near Hydaburg, and not from the choice areas within traditional Haida territories. Kluckwan and Angoon were allowed such freedom, and did choose the more profitable areas on Long Island, Dall Island, and Prince of Wales Island.

2

Conflicts between subsistence users and their logging and commercial fishing neighbors — between those in the same village or with nearby villages and towns; sometimes within the same family or even household — make people aware of the types of structures that govern their mutual relations, like ANCSA or contemporary timber and fishing politics, and the local forms through which these structures are mobilized. In addition, the changing regulation and actual enforcement of subsistence laws by Alaska State fish and game wardens makes clear to many people the role of “the state” (in a general, structural sense) in reproducing these structures (a point we will return to in Chapter 7). For this reason, subsistence politics play a critical role in the sorts of class-groups that emerge in and from the current political-economy.

The situation is complicated, however, by what would seem the most obvious expression of this class-forming process: that is, the fact that subsistence also creates a host of relations outside these structures, especially for those most dependent on the foods obtained. These relations of “partnering,” “sharing,” and multiple and overlapping forms of cooperation are discussed below as they pertain mainly to those poorest of the village residents. In very straightforward ways these relations help create and mark-out a group known to itself, and further, known to those others not necessarily included within this group. This might seem a critical facet of

class formation, and in some senses it is. But the potential of this class is limited by factors intrinsic to this same composition.

This is because subsistence production happens almost entirely outside the sorts of relations that push people toward the use of subsistence materials. So while it is critical to note that those relations that are tied to the production of subsistence foods are of direct consequence to many people's/ household's material survival — for some subsistence is a "livelihood"⁵ — yet this livelihood does not involve entering the larger economy. Instead, subsistence production is aimed almost entirely at avoiding involvement in this larger economy. It is, in a different terminology, aimed at the production of "use-values," things people will use themselves or trade for something they will use themselves. And while this kind of production may allow the class that practices it to avoid for a time the conflicts and machinations of other classes, it does not of itself provide the means to gain power over these classes or have a say in their making. Put plainly, subsistence production provides only an "out," never a reform of the present structures for it lacks the material and relational ability to do so.

This is largely because these relations are confined to a class already determined by the dominant structures of political-economy that surround it.

⁵ The debt of this argument to Gavin Smith's *Livelihood and Resistance* is discussed in the source notes for this chapter. The term "livelihood" used in quotes here is actually taken from several people I spoke with about subsistence who described these practices as their "livelihood."

Again, subsistence practices are most important to those made most marginal by the recent changes of ANCSA, the collapsed fishing economy, and the timber boom and bust of the 1980's and early 1990's. And while this group may come to survive and even define itself in terms of its dependence on subsistence and the relations that make subsistence possible, such a situation does not provide those involved with a claim on or role in the process that, in a sense, defines this very same situation.

This structural deficit, as we might call it, is similar to the sorts of contradictions that were introduced in Chapter 1 in the discussion of Thompson class/classed distinction. Subsistence provides one example of the sort of impossibility that classes must overcome, and in-so-doing, transform themselves and those around them. For this reason subsistence remains at the center of village and regional politics. In this way, subsistence prefigures the sorts of characteristics that I find so central to the more radical churches — churches which grow and survive by drawing on individuals from this same class. Yet unlike churches, subsistence practice is limited by its strict materiality — that is, subsistence is all too often the only means of survival and only way poor families are able to remain in the village. This materiality has left subsistence users and the relations they create and maintain open to a host of manipulations by those not so directly involved in the (literal) “subsistence” aspect of subsistence hunting, fishing or collecting. It is worth noting, in anticipation of points to come later in the monograph, that church

members and church-based relations are not vulnerable in this same way.

3

Most subsistence work takes place in the summer, with the exception of deer hunting, which goes on year round, and seal hunting, which is winter work and much less widely pursued. The only other “traditional use” tasks that take place in the winter are fur-trapping and hunting sea otters, both of which are very infrequent at present. During the spring and summer, however, most people will seine salmon, set a halibut skate, collect seaweed, trap crabs and shrimp, collect gumboots, cockles and muscles, and pick many varieties of berries. Much of what they take they store, either by smoking, pickling, freezing or canning. By far the most widely pursued, widely used of these resources is salmon.

People generally prefer sockeye (red salmon) for canning. It has the highest oil content of the several species of salmon and keeps much of its flavor through the canning process. Fish that is to be hard-smoked or dried can spoil if it is too oily, and some prefer dog salmon for drying (though many use sockeye for this as well, and just hope that it doesn’t spoil). Some fish is partly smoked (kippered) before being canned. It is not uncommon for some households (of perhaps 4-8 people) to “put up” between 15 and 25 cases of sockeye — one “case” is 48 one-pound cans, or 96 half-pound cans. Whole sockeye weigh between three and six lbs when caught, but the meat gets

lighter as it is smoked, and much of the fish (the head, most of the bones and all of the viscera) is thrown away. Thus one fish might be expected to yield 1-3 one-pound cans, meaning that this same nuclear family might consume between 300-700 sockeye in a year. Larger households may consume more, of course, and conversely some consume very little. State Fish and Wildlife research projects reflect similar approximations, though tending more toward the lower end of this range. In addition, all official figures are given as aggregates and averages, and thus contain little indication of the range or variability in harvest levels.

Deer hunting exemplifies the considerable variation in the amount of subsistence resources used by individual households. Federal limits on deer hunting prescribe an annual six deer bag limit per hunter. When a license is obtained, it comes with six tags. As soon as a deer is killed it must be tagged with the name of the hunter and the date and time of the kill. Enforcement officials check to see that deer are tagged and that the name of the hunter is the same as that to whom the deer permit was given. Deer with inappropriate or incorrectly recorded tags, or without tags altogether, are an automatic violation. In these circumstances the hunter is likely to be fined by the courts, or even sentenced to serve jail time. As explained below, by far the most telling penalty is the immediate confiscation of the deer and the hunting equipment, potentially including the vehicles used. In effect, these regulations are designed to limit most families to 6 or perhaps 12 deer (six per

adult capable of hunting).

Some households take a great deal more, however. By having children in the household get their deer licenses — and hence an additional 6 tags — these families will take as many as 25 or even 30 deer per year. The drawback is that the child must be brought along on the hunting trip, though this is less of a difficulty with older/teenage children.

Yet the most common way around the limit is simply to ignore the license provision altogether, and risk the legal consequences. In one village I could find few who had obtained a deer permit or tags at anytime in the recent past. This is a reflection of this village's remoteness from Fish and Game enforcement officers. But it is also a point of pride, and an element in the ongoing struggle over the place of subsistence — and subsistence regulation — in this village where a number of families regularly take 20 or more deer per year. Some, by their own accounts, take twice this many.

4

Most subsistence activities are done in groups. Salmon seining requires three people, and is most efficient with two power-boats and a skiff, although one power boat and a skiff works fairly well also. Most of the labor during seining happens after the net has been set and the school of fish (hopefully) surrounded. Here two people pull the net while one "plunges" near the boat — using a stick or long handled plunger to splash, and

frightening the fish from swimming through the opening which is left when the net is pulled aboard. The work is back-breaking and long — longer and more back-breaking if the participants are inexperienced, short-handed, unaccustomed to working together, or simply poor at fishing. Individuals who have worked together in the past tend to be much faster, and thus far more efficient. For this reason most people fish with the same people every year, referring to them as “partners.” Though not necessarily warm or even enjoyable relationships, partnerships tend to be long-lasting and reciprocating.⁶ Partners will often drop off fish at the house of one of their number even when that individual was unable to participate at that time. Quite frequently partnerships also revolve around a division of equipment — one will own the boat, one the seine and skiff. People seldom form partnerships on this basis, however, and it is more common that partners divvy-up the responsibility for providing equipment among themselves.

Most subsistence fishing is done near the creek mouths where the salmon ascend to breed. Different species of salmon (in the North Pacific

⁶In past presentations of this material, questions have been raised over whether “partners” are ever/often kin. They can be, though this is not nearly as regular an occurrence as one might assume. One reason is that because subsistence is pursued most actively by the village’s poorest residents, these also tend to be individuals whose kin-networks are the most disrupted by work out of the village and extended periods of residence away from their natal household. As pointed out in Chapter 3, larger and more steady groups of kin tend to be those most well off in any village. Subsistence users are those whose village relations tend to be subject to the most change. In this way, partnership contains a flexibility that kin often can not.

there are five, and they are quite distinct) use different types of streams for spawning, such that any particular stream is likely to have only one kind of salmon milling about its mouth. Sockeye breed in streams that feed freshwater lakes, and can be found in schools between July and August at the mouths of streams that empty from these lakes into the open ocean.

Fishermen will approach the creek mouth and wait, looking for "jumps" and trying to guess the location of a school. All salmon are fast swimmers, and contrary to many assertions, when near a creek mouth they will swim in any direction, with or against the tide. When a sufficiently large school is spotted and approached, an attempt is made to get ahead of it to lay the seine in front of the fish (in the direction they are traveling at the time) and to circle the school with the boat while laying out the seine from a skiff towed behind. It is the decision of the boat-driver when and how the seine will be set, and at least one person must stay in the seine-skiff to cast over the end of the seine and to make sure that the entire net feeds out smoothly.

The seines used are not as long as commercial seines, about 100 - 120 fathoms long (600 - 720 feet) and 4 fathoms deep, but most still use a woven mesh that is heavy when wet. In addition there is a row of "floats" across the top line, and "leads" along the bottom so that the seine will hang vertically in the water like a curtain. Because the net is pulled by hand, efforts are made to keep it light and fewer leads are used than are used commercially. Several hundred pounds of lead is not uncommon, however. In addition, there is

seldom a purse string on subsistence nets as there is on the nets of commercial "purse seiners."

When done well the net encircles the fish, dropping to form a deep, circular curtain. Once the loop is complete, all three fishers will jump into the skiff. Two will begin pulling in the net while the other "plunges". If the plunger can keep the fish from swimming under the boat, and if the leads can be brought aboard before the fish dive and swim under, then any of the fish caught in the circle will be trapped by the net. When the fish are surrounded the "lead line," which runs along the bottom of the webbing, is pulled back aboard the skiff first, in effect closing the bottom of the net like a purse line. This is the job of one of the fishers. The third, if there is a third, assists in pulling the web. If there are only two, pulling in the leads must be done alone.

Once the leads are aboard the fishers may then pull the remaining web and "corks" (the floating line at the top of the net), freeing any gilled fish (those who have forced themselves partly through the net and gotten caught by the gills). The fish not caught by the gills continue to swim until there is no room left in the submerged portion of the web. These fish will then be pulled aboard with the bag formed by the remaining web, or will be picked individually from water. Usually after the leads have been brought aboard the plunger will stop plunging and return to the power boat to begin looking for the next place to set. The two men pulling the seine haul it from back to

front, that is, beginning with the end attached to the skiff that is the last section laid out. This allows the seine to be pulled freely from the skiff when it is being set. If not done properly the seine will cross over or “hang-up,” usually resulting in a “water haul” or a set with no fish.

This entire process is referred to as a set, and may net anywhere from 0 to 100 fish, depending on skill, season, and even time of day (the fish tend to disperse into smaller schools as the day goes on). Much of the responsibility for the number of fish caught rests with the skipper of the power boat, though obviously an inexperienced net man can ruin the very best set. Initially, success depends on the ability of the skipper to guess correctly the size of a school of fish and its direction. Once the net is set, though, the chance of success shifts to the ability of the group to coordinate its work. Sockeye are exceptionally fast swimmers, and if the plunger misses his cue, the entire school will swim out under the boat. Subsistence fishers may make as many as 15 sets in a day, taking between 8 and 10 total hours. Two power boats (in place of one) can usually catch more fish — by towing the net in opposite directions they can close around a school more quickly — though inevitably it takes the same time to haul the net and clear the fish and if anything more coordination between partners. If they save time it is because their efficiency allows for fewer sets, not quicker ones, and this is not always or even normally the case.

Most people like to bring back 200 or more fish for a full day, far above

the current 6 fish per person limit. This is because of the greater expense in traveling to sockeye streams, which are less common than those used by "humpy" or "dog" salmon. Likewise, there is greater efficiency in large numbers, for much of the time is spent in preparing the boat, the seine, cleaning the fish, cleaning up after cleaning the fish, running the smokehouse, and eventually canning. All of these activities must be done, and most are as difficult for a dozen fish as they are for ten times that many. Likewise, the fish are usually split according to shares, with partners each taking some for the contribution of their labor, their boat, or their seine (or usually some combination of these things). The share system is not a set formula as it is in commercial fishing, however, but rather works on a series of rough equivalencies. For three men, one boat, and one seine, add up to roughly a four way split ($1/2$ share going to each of the boat and the seine). If one person with a boat and a seine is joined by two others, he still may take half of the total catch, with the others taking each a quarter.

Altogether the process requires that subsistence is seldom a solitary task, or even possible when acting alone. Likewise the work is rigorous, requiring a physical fitness that means mostly men participate, and very few men over 50 contribute in the same way. In fact, to be a woman or an older man, or even a young man acting alone, means that your subsistence use is necessarily limited and dependent on either others in the household or your ability to attach yourself to other aspects of the process.

Thus men do most of the fishing, and all of a man's "partners" will be other men. Women do much, though not all, of the cleaning and preparing of the fish. Women do not have partners in the same way that men do. When women are involved in subsistence, and when their work affords or requires help then they tend to call on female relatives. The wives of partners seldom work together, and in fact partners generally split up the fish prior to cleaning and smoking, and do these task separately.

Once brought back to the dock, families who do not live directly on the beach will quite often clean their fish at the public dock. Others whose smokehouses are on the beach itself will take the fish to the smokehouse for cleaning and cutting. In both cases the heads, fins and viscera are thrown into the bay. Some of the elders complain about this, noting that in the old days all of the fish processing was done at summer camps and the permanent village was "more sanitary." While both the women and men will cut and process fish, the men often seem to do less — removing the heads and passing them on, arranging the fish in the smokehouse, or cleaning the boat. The physical limits on cutting fish are fewer than they are for hauling the seine, and many of the older village residents will work on these tasks in return for a small share of the results.

Many elders get their subsistence by helping out in this way, counting on sons, sons-in-law, or other villagers to give them fish in return for a little labor. Many of the older folks live in the houses along the beach and have

smokehouses, while many younger families live in the newer houses away from the beach, and do not. Often these older individuals and households will allow the use of the smokehouse for a small share of fish, even tending the fire and the fish, and doing some of the re-cutting.

Smoking the fish is actually an ongoing process that involves rehandling and recutting the fish several times. First, when they are caught and after they are cleaned, sockeye are split lengthwise. The backbone is removed and the fish cut in strips lengthwise about an inch or more wide. After splitting they are dunked in a brine solution. The tails, left on, join the two halves of the fish which can then be suspended along a stick perhaps ten fish on 6 foot pole. These poles are hung up in a smokehouse and smoked for about a day. After this the strips must be split again, and again the day after that, until the mostly dried fish is hanging in strips about 1/2" wide and thick. Fish that is to be half-smoked or "kippered" will be pulled from the smokehouse and canned after the first or second day. Fish not adequately split will spoil on the inside, while fish cut too thin in the early rounds will deteriorate and fall away. In addition, the smoke must be kept on the split fish constantly to cure the fish and keep away the flies. This means that wood must be added and checked during the night. This is usually considered a man's job, though quite frequently men contribute little more than this after the initial cutting.

Once the fish have smoked for one to three days they are often canned

for long term storage. Cans are bought from the supermarket although families which "put up" a lot of fish get them by mail order at a lower price. For canning, the fish is taken down from the smokehouse and the strips cut into can lengths. The cans are filled, a teaspoon of water added, and the cans sealed, usually with a hand-cranked can sealer. The filled cans are then cooked in a pressure cooker for about two hours, sometimes on a kitchen stove, sometimes on a gas burner set up outside and run from a 50 gallon propane tank. The largest pressure cookers will hold half a case, and so the process of "boiling" 15 cases can mean close to 40 hours of cooking time alone.

Canning is frequently done by individual households. If help is available it is usually not from the same partners with whom one fishes. The networks of help for canning are usually a woman's friends, family, or in-laws. The two networks are quite distinct. These same women's networks are employed for berry picking, and while both sexes go berry picking, men usually accompany their wives, not their partners.

5

In general families which take and consume more subsistence resources than others are those with the lowest, or least-regular cash income. Under-employment contributes in two ways to increase subsistence use. Families with lower cash income can save considerable money by using subsistence resources. A single deer frequently provides over 50 pounds of

meat, enough to feed even a very large family for two weeks. Seal meat is similar in quantity (and usually greater), though because it is hunted by fewer individuals it is shared more widely. Fish provides constant summertime food, cooked with potatoes or rice, either fresh or half-smoked. Berries, seaweed, and grease or oil, all provide vitamins and flavor. For poor families the importance of these resources is magnified by the high cost of groceries in most villages — due to the remoteness of most Native villages, which increases transportation costs and, more commonly, allows a single supplier to set high prices. For many poorer households, as I was told, “subsistence is a livelihood.”

One important result of this type of livelihood is that it comes with a particular kind of prestige. Good hunters and fishers provide meat and fish to many people outside their immediate family. Seal and deer meat are frequently passed around, with village elders receiving much of what is given. Gifts of this sort carry a particular connotation, for what is traded is frequently called “indian food” once it is prepared.⁷ Likewise, indian foods are often eaten at large social gatherings, and are a critical element in creating a kind of alternative set of social relations which, whether or not a reflection of a past type of village economy/organization, are none-the-less crucial in

⁷One hears occasionally of someone trying to sell subsistence foods, but this is widely disapproved of within the village. Trade in village specialties, foods not available everywhere in the region (like herring eggs) but generally eaten everywhere, is common, and most often paid for in cash.

understanding the type of spontaneous protests discussed below. Even those who do little subsistence hunting, fishing, or collecting still attach significance to these acts, and participate in some way. This prestige moves the circle of social relations created by subsistence activities beyond the limits of partnership, to a wider group that includes many, if not all, village residents.

A second way that unemployment and under-employment intersects with subsistence use is the time that most subsistence tasks require for any measure of efficiency. It makes little sense to drive all the way to the far end of the island (across, say, 40 or 50 miles of gravel logging roads) to hunt one deer. Normally two or three men, again "partners," will make the trip together. If each takes a single deer this cuts the expense of the trip (per person) by tripling the return. But this means waiting for all three men to take a deer, which frequently requires an entire, and often very long day. Seining salmon, from the example above, works similarly. Individuals who cannot commit to an entire day (and sometimes more than one, due to unforeseeable factors like weather, mechanical factors like boats or trucks breaking down, or trouble with enforcement officials) cannot participate on the level of someone whose time is largely "their own." Thus the families who make the greatest use of subsistence materials are frequently *not* those employed in logging, the municipality, schools or health clinic, or in one of

the few full-time occupations in each village⁸ — checkout-clerk at the grocery store, waitress or cook at the coffee shop, or administrative employee for the village ANCSA corporation.

Commercial fishing might once have occupied this list as well, though the nature of the enterprise has always provided some resources for household consumption. More recently, however, commercial fishing has been subject to rigid, frequently spread-out, official “openings” and “closings” such that commercial fishermen now spend far more time tied up at the dock than they have at any time in the past. The nature of the State and Federal commercial management schemes are such that little advance notice is given for the various “openings,” so most crews and boats have to be ready to go at any time, making complimentary full-time work difficult to plan or achieve. Altogether, it is not uncommon for seining crews to spend three, four, or even five days at home between the end of one fishing period and the beginning of another. Reduced commercial fishing time has cut overall income for fishing families as well, further contributing to the dependence of many on stored subsistence resources. Commercial fisherman today participate much more in day-to-day subsistence production than they did in

⁸Note that those who work for the schools have the summer for subsistence work, while still holding a job that carries benefits. For this reason these are often seen as “good jobs”.

the past.⁹

The distinctions between the jobs that afford participation in subsistence activities and those that do not, are seasonality, flexibility, and the time away from the job afforded employees. These differences follow gender lines as clearly as do the subsistence activities discussed above. By far the majority of those employed in full-time, year-round work are women. Women tend to hold virtually all of the administrative jobs with the municipalities and the village ANCSA corporations. Most head-start and health clinic jobs go to women. Most of the teachers at the village schools are from out of town, and few stay for the summer. Most of the remaining school jobs are split between men and women — with men doing primarily the maintenance and janitor work. Women are the clerks at virtually all of the stores, at the local airports (where there is one), and they frequently drive “the cabs” (of which there is usually one per village). Virtually all of these jobs are year round. Most involve a 40 hour week, with successive weekend days off. Pay is usually hourly, but with little flexibility in the hours, making them resemble *de facto* salaried positions.

⁹ In the past, and up to the early 1970’s, fishing families frequently saved much of their subsistence work until after “fall fishing” was concluded. They would take advantage of particularly late runs, salmon schools that do not arrive until late September, for much of their supplies. This greatly limited their options, however, and put an even greater reliance on land resources, like deer, that could be gotten year-round.

Men employed "full-time" usually work in seasonal occupations that do not afford much time away from work as well. Loggers work 60 and 1970 hour weeks during the summer, a minimum of six and often seven days per week, from March through November. Those few commercial fishermen working on a boat whose skipper has enough individual permits to work "full-time" are usually gone for the entire summer season, and home for most of the winter. Young people of both sexes can find work at the "cold storage," where one is in operation, but most of the full-time managers and bosses here are men. Cold storage and fish processing facilities work as long as they have fish, and to work efficiently this means ideally seven days per week, 10 or more hours per day. This sort of work follows the fishing season as well, and lasts from the end of June to late-September.

For men *not* employed in one of these occupations — there are roughly half the number of jobs of this type for men as there are full-time employment opportunities for women — there are occasional opportunities for work. Loading log ships, part-time municipal work (on roads, or weekly garbage pickup), part-time work for the forest service, serving as hunting or guides, all provide small amounts of cash income on an irregular basis. Many individuals these days have purchased or were awarded small halibut quotas (IFQ's), which allow them to fish commercially for a certain amount of halibut during the course of the summer season. This system has few limits on when fishing may occur — regulating it instead by limiting the total catch

for a season, a percentage of which is held by each individual who possesses some "IFQ's" — and so produces small amounts of cash income with ample flexibility.

Men who work in part-time or occasional jobs thus become those with both the most time and the greatest need for subsistence work. At the same time they are likely to depend on the steady income of a spouse. Women in these situations are often expected to do "double duty": to work their full-time job and then, either after work or on weekends, to do the subsistence work described above. During times of peak subsistence work this amounts to long hours, and people can be found boiling cans of fish well into the night for much of the summer. In some cases the demands of full-time work on women's labor has led their husbands to take up some of the subsistence tasks normally performed by women, but this is far from common. In many cases the relative amounts of various subsistence foods consumed by these families has changed. They eat fewer berries, and can less fish. They eat more deer meat and fresh fish, less seaweed.

The best example of this change is the disappearance of potato gardens from most villages. As early as the first decades of the 19th century, and certainly by the mid-19th century, Alaska Natives in the Southeast had grown large amounts of potatoes — both for consumption and for sale to Russian, British, and American fur traders. As recently as the 1940's, at the height of the cannery period, village families were still producing as many as 34 (50 lbs)

sacks of potatoes, by this time exclusively for personal consumption (Lantis and Fuller 1948: 74a). Many of today's residents can still point to old fields used for this purpose, and many adults remember working in these fields when they were young.

People stopped growing potatoes (and vegetable gardens altogether) in the mid-1970's — meaning that potato production were most common during the cannery boom and bust (ending in the mid-1960's) even though commercial potatoes were available throughout the region in cannery stores and dry-good stores. The recent halt to potato gardening was thus not caused by any increase in availability. Instead, potato production ended with the creation of the current village economy — the expansion of State/municipal and Federal spending in Alaska villages that followed the initial oil boom of the early 1970's. This expansion doubled and tripled the number of full-time jobs in most villages, aided by the addition of state subsidies for the expansion of village school systems. Then, as now, most of the new positions were filled by women, and potato production everywhere simply stopped.

6

Close interpersonal relations and a host of local inequalities thus provide the actual context for most subsistence work, yet disputes with the state over enforcement and "subsistence rights" seldom reflect this fact in obvious ways. This is especially true of the regional movement for

subsistence and traditional use rights, which is often caught up with the same institutions that constitute the cultural revival, the topic of a subsequent chapter. But specific conflicts often reveal the tension between the sorts of relations involved in subsistence, and the uses to which they are put, frequently unwillingly. One seemingly apparent example of a dispute over subsistence rights with State of Alaska enforcement officials makes this clear.

In Hydaburg, several confrontations have marked the tension around subsistence harvests, regulation, and enforcement. The most notable recent example happened in the summer of 1992, when several Haida had used a large commercial seine boat to tow a number of skiffs to a subsistence fishing area. They fished for the day, loading their large catch aboard the big boat. Sockeye limits vary over time and throughout the region, and have been as low as 6 fish per person per day. On this day the fishers caught hundreds, far more than any limit, even though a larger than usual number of individuals were involved. In addition the use of a commercial boat in any capacity is a violation of subsistence regulations. And few of the participants had permits, meaning that altogether there were perhaps three separate and collective affronts to Federal fish and game laws.

The group was reportedly spotted from a passing Fish and Game enforcement aircraft, and a small boat was sent down to take the catch and potentially arrest those involved. Because the distance between Craig (home of the nearest Fish and Game Enforcement office) and Hydaburg is great, the

boat with the officers arrived only as the fishers were returning to the village. The confrontation that followed, then took place in the village, and involved many who were not involved in the actual fishing or violations. Much of the village turned out at the dock, in fact, for the crew of the boat had received a warning and had radioed ahead. Yet many who were part of the reported "mob" initially went down to the village dock simply to watch the confrontation.

Regardless of intentions, when the State Fish and Game enforcement officials did finally arrive in Hydaburg there were over 100 people gathered, better than half of the adult population of the village. Also by this time the fish had been divided up, with many of those now gathered taking some. And many in the crowd, with their fish, remained at the dock, and in addition to defying the calls for the surrender of the fish, they actually prevented the enforcement officials from landing their boat. More enforcement officials were called in by those now stuck in their boat, including the head of the local branch of the Alaska State Police. But the road to Hydaburg is a logging road, and over fifty miles from Craig — meaning that the police did not arrive for over an hour. The crowd dispersed somewhat and reformed a second time when the police finally arrived by automobile. Here the confrontation heated up again, with much shouting between a local police officer from a nearby white town that had accompanied the State officer, and several of the village's leading families. In the end, however, there were no arrests, and no

confiscations.

Since this time Fish and Game has kept its distance from Hydaburg, spending more time “protecting” the more heavily touristed areas in the north, near Hoonah and Sitka. It has been widely acclaimed by those in Hydaburg as a victory for their “subsistence rights.” It is also one of the few victories of any kind for Natives against a state that is at times openly hostile to their claims. Yet the apparent uniformity of this reaction is actually underlaid by serious tensions that, though buried at the time, persisted long after the events themselves had passed.

It was, in fact, the difficulty I had in finding out about the events, that made this clear. The confrontation happened the summer before my first summer in Hydaburg. During my first visit, no one mentioned the incident to me despite the fact that we were working on fish and talking about subsistence frequently. The following year I learned of the incident from a librarian in Juneau. When I got back to Hydaburg, few would speak of it. At the time I supposed this to be a lack of trust on the part of my hosts — understandable, I thought....after all I was clearly an outsider and thus a possible informant for the authorities. But this actually made little sense — folks were by then taking me deer hunting out of season and fishing without permits. And, more to the point, the Fish and Game enforcement and State Police were already aware of who was involved. They had been face-to-face

several times in the course of events and the last half of the confrontation was video-taped.

At this time I was able to speak with people from other villages who were familiar with the situation and not reluctant to discuss the events, or their regional and political significance. One such conversation was with an individual who, though raised in the village, now lived in another Alaskan city — and had lived there for some time. He returned periodically to Hydaburg to can fish which he took home, and he had some relatives still living in the village. For him the issue was entirely one of local resistance to State encroachment, of “Native rights and sovereignty,” as it is often termed. He also spoke of the village’s inability to resist big timber or even the other Native villages because of the occasional windfalls they brought. Throughout his discussion, though, he was certain that once the timber was gone and the NOL money dried up, then people would “wake-up” to the way they had been “used,” and that the demonstration on the dock was early evidence of those feelings, now once again submerged.

When, a year later, I was able to talk with others who were present at the demonstration and its immediate aftermath, their characterizations of the events were much less dramatic, much more immediate. The contrast with the more public representation is informative, for unlike the speaker above, most of this conversation involved issues of more local, more intimate sorts of inequalities. In general, people said quietly that during the confrontation

and in its aftermath they were scared — though not so much of the police or of being caught with illegal fish, or even going to jail. Most of those I eventually spoke with — mostly from households that would be considered heavy subsistence users — live with threats of fines or jail terms for illegal harvests everyday. Instead, people seemed scared of not knowing how such a mobilization happened so quickly, or if they would be expected to do it again, and for whom. Many people in this village do not get permits for their subsistence activities, and with a few exceptions would refuse to do so even when faced directly with fines or jail time. But few would be willing and more importantly few can afford to go to jail over someone else's subsistence violations.

No large scale event like this has happened again even though there have been a number of run-ins with Fish and Game enforcement officials since 1992. This is perhaps more telling than the demonstration itself. From this it is clear that subsistence creates and requires a number of extra-household, extra-"family" relations of cooperation and dependence — for some even relations of mutual dependence for livelihood and survival — that are often extremely intimate and complex, that may at times be brought to bear on situations which have little or nothing to do with the conditions and processes of their making. In addition, they seem to exhibit little of the actual relations they themselves depend on — like marriage and the income

of a working spouse — and what ties they have with the larger political economy.

This disjunction — between the relations created in subsistence, and those in which they are both embedded and remarkably divorced from — make people at once intimately known to one another (as partners always are), and capable of almost complete indifference. Note that this is not a characteristic of small villages in general, where similar characterizations may come of the constant renegotiation of privacy and intimacy. Here I wish to pursue something a little different and more interwoven with larger-than-local processes and structures. One example may make this more clear.

During a summer visit in one of the central Tlingit villages, my host, his wife and I were working on fish that his partner had dropped off — a share of fish in exchange for the use of the seine. The temperature was, for Southeast Alaska, “hot” — in the high 1970’s, and it had been sunny for a week. It was early August and the sockeye were in, so everyone in the village was working on fish; the younger people were off seining again, and the rest were re-cutting the fish that had hung in the smokehouse from the previous days. Someone came by and said old M— had blacked out cutting fish in the sun down by their smokehouse. She was now conscious and up but was wandering around not really knowing what was going on or where she was. We finished what we were doing and then went down. M— seemed OK by then, and her daughters were all more upset than she was. Much of the

village was there, including M—'s entire "family" (which is one of the largest). My host asked them how many fish they had. Most of the fish, because of the commotion, was sitting out for the flies, rotting in the hot sun. When no one answered, we left. When I asked about the family and the reason for our quick departure, his answer was "Their smoke house is on my land."

My host that day was the head of one of the most marginal households in the village. Formerly of an important fishing family, their boat was lost after their limited entry permit was sold. M—'s family, of which she is matriarch, has been tightly connected to the village administration, and this position has allowed them to survive and grow in power with the growing public employment opportunities of the last two decades. The family were never rivals, nor even antagonistic. But on this day, when their fortunes were crossed in the rotting fish and commotion, the differences were obvious.

Inequality is seldom encountered as inequality, especially in small villages where privacy is more guarded. Nor is it experienced necessarily in the processes that produce it — production work (like logging) or patronage work (like bureaucracies) — where most often inequality is disguised as power. Rather, the experience of inequality often inflects relations and objects not directly in its making. People seldom speak of, or even for that matter contemplate the impact of the sorts of inequalities that order village life as

they come to shape relations of partnership, marriage and household, and even the objects of a “subsistence lifestyle.” But, when confronted with the potentially combustible issues of subsistence administration and enforcement, questions of inequality between village residents become clear and unavoidable.

Placed against this is the fact that there is nothing about subsistence work that does anything but place these inequalities in high relief. Subsistence relations, even partnerships, are ephemeral on the shifting ground of the larger political situation. Yet subsistence work, and the tensions between subsistence work and the regional politics of subsistence are a continuous reminder of the structural contexts of everyday village life, *especially for those most directly involved in this work*. Two points connect this fact with the discussion that follows. The first is that such a notion asks us to examine in more detail the way that structures — like ANCSA, or “family”, or state — are encountered; through what relations (or lack of relations) are they met and potentially countered; and how are they understood or misunderstood, socially and individually. Second, noting that those same individual involved in subsistence work are at the same time those most likely to become involved in a Pentecostal church, how are the relations made and expressed in these churches similar to or different from those of subsistence. These two concerns occupy Parts 2 and 3 respectively, and it is to the former that we turn now.

Part 2 — Dissociations

"Knowledge about a thing is not the thing itself."

— William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*
(1982:488).

Two closely related intentions tie together the material presented in the next three chapters. The first is the need to make clear the disjunction between structure(s) and the way they are encountered and understood. This is not, however, an issue of "experience" in either the sense of "lessons learned" (see Williams 1977) nor of "perception" or direct experience (see Bakhtin 1993). The term experience must include not only both of these ideas (how people encounter the world, including through what sorts of relations they do so, and how they come to think of this encounter — including these same relations — individually and collectively¹); it must also include some understanding of the fact that experience names a realm that stands not just outside of structure but necessarily against it. This idea comes most directly

¹ Gerald Sider makes this point in his essay "Against Experience": "....a person who stands on an assembly line stamping out a hundred or so small brass fittings an hour does not have a hundred or so experiences of stamping out fittings each hour, hour after hour, day after day. What is experienced, rather, is a profusion of changing and repetitive conceptual and social *relationships*, between hurting knees and back and the smallness of the pay cheque and the pressures from the foreman to keep on working and the hope and dread of overtime and the satisfaction of knowing how to do one's job exceedingly well and the need to use the toilet and the need to wait for permission to leave the line — all this and simultaneously, an inevitable and changing, and thus necessarily continually tested, socially rooted sense of what can and cannot be claimed or done with and through these relationships, by oneself and by and with others" (1997:62-3 [emphasis in original]).

from Bakhtin and it is tied to a very different timeliness of structure and experience. Experience is, most simply but most directly, that which cannot be undone; structure is both otologically and historically reversible.

In the several chapters that follow I want to explore the ways that the experience of structure does not map neatly only the tensions and contradictions of these same structures. Yet from the beginning I want to make clear that this is not a problem of experience (“false consciousness” to be overcome with a more correct ideology) nor an aspect of structure itself (in the way “hegemony” is too often meant to indicate that aspect of structure that masks itself, see Comaroff and Comaroff 1991). Instead, the split between experience and structure is rooted in what we might call the ongoing nature of everyday life — where structure is “experienced” not just in terms of its objective quality, but also within the context of its happening. The point is elusive but not complicated. ANCSA happens, as a structure, everywhere and no place. It is a law meant to inhabit the entire state, and though put in place at a particular time it is not meant to be seen in its timeliness. Yet it is experienced in specific terms, at specific times and in specific circumstances. For ordinary people structures like ANCSA become inextricably caught up with their circumstances to the extent that the two — a structure and its happening — become inseparable. This point is made most clearly in Chapter 6.

In past this has been widely perceived as a problem both for mobilizing

social change and for the analysis of structural dynamics. Individual experience was dissociating, and only stripped of its individuality could the actual unifying aspects of any particular structure be revealed. The purpose of analysis, then, was to free structure from its contingency, to remove it from its too specific happenings in order to arrive at its "true" nature and historical dynamic, and hence the true, general, relations proposed. This is the essence of structuralism since Kant, whether it be psychological, political-economic, or symbolic; and it is underwritten in each case by a belief that structure can and does exist outside of its happening. Structure (whether it be as material as a mode of production or as symbolic as a "weltanschauung") was assumed to be the ordering force behind the myriad of daily happenings that we call the economy or a culture. That such a view might be empirically or even logically impossible is seldom considered.

From this follows the second focus of this section. Structures — and specifically those structures discussed in Part 1 — are not often (and perhaps not ever) an ordering element in peoples daily lives. Most often the "happening" of structure comes at the expense otherwise ordinary happenings of everyday life. Just as often, in fact, structures themselves seem to target and intentionally undermine the types of order they find, and more importantly, the types of order they themselves seem to create. In Southeast Alaska this is perhaps most true of that structure most associated with order: law. In Chapter 7 we discuss how subsistence work (discussed above, Chapter

5) is actually encountered by the people who depend on subsistence for their livelihood.

The last chapter in this section — Chapter 8, “Local” Differentiation and “Local” Culture — is meant to counter a potential misreading of the arguments presented here and to preface the last section of Pentecostalism, for it is in their struggles against the current cultural politics that Pentecostals have taken on a new and controversial public role. Regarding the former, it is possible to imagine local culture — the specific, idiosyncratic ways of small, relatively isolated groups — to stand apart from the types of structures discussed thus far, for often these sorts of structures originate in and reflect larger than local dynamics. Most often, however, this is not so. “Culture” today takes places within the specific cultural politics of village/region/state. I was once told by a long-time resident of Alaska that the state and industry would always need Alaska Natives to provide some flexibility in their mutual relationship. Because of this, he noted, Alaska is never in danger of running out of Natives, for the powers that be will always be willing to make/acknowledge more when the need arises. This is likely an overstatement of the situation that misses somewhat the efforts some village and city residents to hold on to some identity even when the powers that be seek to eliminate it. Never the less, once such a situation comes into being, any discourse of culture — regardless of origin or intention — necessarily invokes the current cultural politics as its immediate context.

There is more to “local” culture than this, however. As discussed in Chapter 3, the specific form of “the local” is often tied to the way that inequalities between the larger and the local are made to support inequalities within the local. Because culture often marks such boundaries in ways that are open to manipulation; and at the same time doing so in ways that individuals find intensely personally significant; for these reasons “local” culture is often tied up with the same structures that appear wholly external to it. Much of this is true for the current cultural revival which, like Pentecostalism and ANCSA, began in earnest in the early 1970’s.

One additional caution and clarification. This is not meant to indicate that participation in the current cultural revival is in some ways complicitous with the types of exploitation that people suffer. People dance in dance groups and learn to speak one or another Native language for a host of personal and identity-based reasons. Rather, my point in raising culture in this way is to begin to point to divisions within this movement, and to point out those aspects of the cultural revival that the Pentecostals find troubling. This point is made more clearly in the chapter itself.

Chapter 6 — Choker-setting: experience and the current political economy

Billy stopped by while A— and I were working on fish in the yard. He had heard we had some king salmon, and was also hoping for a ride to Craig, if we were going. He was a little drunk though it was only about 10 in the morning. It was the first time I had met Billy. A— asked him if he had been working. He said he had not, not for a few weeks, but that he was going back now, and that was the reason he was going to town, to see if there was any work around. A— seemed to think he'd have no trouble finding work and said so, more as a known fact than as a compliment. Billy didn't respond. A— said that we would come get him if we were going to town and gave him some fish.

After he left I asked about the work. Billy is a choker-setter with one or another Alaska logging outfits, which means that after a tree has been taken down, he climbs up the side of the mountain, over the other felled trees, with a 25-30 foot 3/4 inch steel cable that he puts around the tree and cinches up tight by passing the cable through a metal noose-like fitting on one end — called a "choker". The cable is then attached to a hook from a tower crane, the tree hoisted up and maneuvered to the road. Here it's put on a truck and taken down the mountain to a sort yard and eventually sent to Korea or Japan.

Choker-setting is the lowest rung on the logging production hierarchy.

It is physically grueling and few stay at it past their late 20's. The cable weighs about 40 lbs. The ground they move over is recently logged and usually a contessionation of felled trees up to 6 feet in diameter and over 100 feet long, interspersed with the limbs of previously felled trees not to mention bushes and small trees not worth cutting. The real ground is often 10 or more feet below the surface on which people work, and the cracks and holes between the logs are just as deep, made more treacherous by the constant rain which makes the logs slick.

Choker-setting is a job worked almost entirely by Indians, like Billy, and it is often the only job that Indians hold in Alaskan logging outfits.

"You have to be part animal to do that job," A— said.

1

To be part animal to the job may mean....

1) (the easiest) that you had to be considered by the society in which you live, a little less than human to be made to do a job that difficult, for as little pay and with no rewards beyond pay. That is, you had to be an animal already, in the eyes of those around you, and fit for animal work — a denial of humanity common to many forms of appropriation and one carried out in many social arenas outside of work, but one that is quite possible too simple to ever be entirely true.

2) (more optimistically, but in the end equally as innocent)....that you had to

be, in your heart, somehow divorced from your own humanity — your own susceptibility to suffering, your desire for a future that you can live in and still live to see — to be able to do the job at all. That you had to be “part animal” in your own eyes, immune from, if temporarily, any humanity you might feel toward yourself. This is not always negative, and in cultures where animals often have been accorded supernatural abilities it might be supposed to involve a belief in special “animal” skills, like the ability to move over logs better than others, being at home in the woods, etc. At best it can involve blurring the lines between non-human and super-human in an optimism that, though brief, can be liberating and even uplifting. Such feelings are short-lived, though, and in the end the explanation is no more possible than that above.

Or 3) (the explanation I am least confident of, but most intrigued by) ...something more (or less, actually) than either of the first two. Consider the possibility that if to do animal work is to be denied your humanity, and to deny it to yourself, it is not (and arguably cannot be) the dispensing of individual humanity altogether — if only because to do this sort of work is to be confronted by the materiality of the world, and of being in it; of fatigue, anger, cold, hot, want, boredom, and even danger; of experience, though not in the sense of lessons learned.¹ This point is central to what follows.

¹This is “*perezhivanie*”, as I understand Bakhtin to have used the term: of “lived experience” in its most tactile, unmediated sense; of “presence” in the work of Raymond Williams. My use of Bakhtin is perhaps

Understanding the way meaning is made, unmade, and appropriated in processes of production is *not* a matter of transcending the contradictions so apparent in the original statement — whether someone can, in some zen-sense, be both animal and human at the same time — or of discovering some previously unfathomed cultural-discursive significance of the terms, some alterity they might secretly represent.² All of these points are nonsensical at the level of lived experience: a contradiction (“contra” “diction”) is, by definition, bound by and to language, academic and otherwise.

Rather, at stake is the place of the lived and intimate experience of work of all kinds and the alienation that comes from almost any characterization or representation of this experience. Briefly put,

unconventional in light of his present use within Anthropology, where he is known mainly for his notions of multi-vocality and his reading of Dostoyevsky. My focus here, is on his earlier writings and specifically his engagement with Kantian ethics. See M. M. Bakhtin 1993).

Williams draws on Bakhtin as well, though he refers to him as V. N. Volosinov, a pen name under which Bakhtin wrote *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* in 1929-30. See Raymond Williams 1977:35). For Williams’ use of Volosinov, Vygotsky, and his derivation of a notion of “presence”, see especially Ch. 2 “Language”.

² The allusion here is to Robert Murphy’s brief but interesting discussion of Levi-Strauss as a “zen-marxist”, see R. Murphy (1963). Here Murphy notes the “zen” sense with which Levi-Strauss understands his own work. From *Tristes Tropiques* (cited in Murphy):

When we make an effort to understand, we destroy the object of our attachment, substituting another whose nature is quite different. That other object requires of us another effort, which in turn destroys the second object and substitutes a third — and so on until we reach the only enduring Presence, which is that in which all distinction between meaning and the absence of meaning disappears: and it is from that Presence that we started in the first place.

representations of work can be and most often are treated as things in themselves, becoming what some have called objectifications — material and even “matter-like” in that they are “habits of mind.”³ Two points about objectification. The first is that objectification remains a constant feature of social life. Minimally predicated on ordinary language, the process is pervasive and inescapable, and not a special feature of specific kinds of work or production. Second, and as important here, this constant objectification can be and often is confronted by some notion of being in the world.⁴ This opposition involves a strong attachment to daily sorts of intimacy, in work and out. And thus, while it is probably true that Billy sets chokers because he

³Bakhtin uses the term objectification in his *Philosophy of the Act* as a general term for: “discursive theoretical thinking....historical description exposition, and aesthetic intuition” (p.1) or, science, history, and art. The addition of ordinary language is my own, based on a reading of Saussure that sees structure as deeply inflected in ordinary language use. Obeyesekere notes that there are several conventional uses of the term:

In Marx objectification (*Vergegenständlichung*) refers to the process where the worker’s labor is [“]congealed” or “reified” in his work or object. My usage, however, is closer to Durkheim’s [*Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, translated by J. W. Swain, London, 1954, p. 229].

“Religious force is only the sentiment inspired by the group in its members, but projected outside of the consciousnesses that experience them, and objectified. To be objectified, they are fixed upon some object which thus becomes sacred; but any object may fulfill this function.” (Obeyesekere 1981:196, [footnote # 2]).

⁴“And as a result, two worlds confront each other, two worlds that have absolutely no communication with each other and are mutually impervious: the world of culture and the world of life, the only world in which we create, cognize, contemplate, live our lives and die or — the world in which the acts of our activity are objectified and the world in which these acts actually proceed and are actually accomplished once and only once.” (Bakhtin 1993: 2).

has no choice — with little other regular work in the area, this is perhaps more true each year — it is also the primary way through which Billy confronts the human representatives of this lack of options: the job managers and corporate executives (some of whom are his neighbors) of the timber companies and the government representatives who are their inevitable allies. What is most critical here is the way in which “being in the world” and the intimate knowledge of particular work processes come to confront actual people, as well as the easy objectifications that surround and obscure these experiences through their inevitable “partiality” — a term which retains the dual meaning of “not whole” or “a portion” and conversely “interested” or “taking sides.”

2

Prior to late 1970's, and continuing in diminished form up to the present, timber harvests in the Tongass National Forest in Southeast Alaska have been dominated by the long-term contracts of the region's two large timber processors: Alaska Pulp Corporation (APC) and Ketchikan Pulp Corporation (KPC). These two operations, in one form or another, have been working in the area since the beginning of the post-war boom in Alaska that began in the late-1950's. Both harvest timber through road building contracts under a system in which the U.S. Forest Service allows the harvest of a certain number of acres of timber in exchange for roads built by the harvesting

companies through the forest as described above. The roads serve no practical purpose other than to access future timber harvest areas, and are thus essentially a timber industry subsidy. The end result is that the two large companies are able to obtain timber from land they do not own for their own costs of harvesting it.

Harvest levels were set early on with the awarding of long-term, 50 year contracts for road building with each of the pulp companies: 192 MMBF (million board feet) for KPC, and 104 MMBF for APC, or 2/3 of the total allowable harvest in the Tongass. Since 1980, the annual harvest levels have been determined year-by-year, though the current law governing harvests, ANILCA,⁵ specifies that at least 4.5 BBF (billion board feet) are to be harvested forest-wide per decade. The US Forest Service, APC, and KPC justify continuing high harvest levels by alleging that a pulp mill must work continuously to avoid near complete breakdown (due to the use of highly

⁵ANILCA mandated "balanced use" of Federal resources, a term used by conservation and Native groups to argue for the creation of zones within the Tongass that would not be used for timber harvest, but reserved instead for wildlife, tourism, and native subsistence. These are the so-called "LUD 2's", short for "land use designation 2."

The slowdown in road building allotments was begun in 1980 and again in 1992. In part this resulted from the efforts of a growing environmental movement within the voting public nation-wide, and the consequent appointment of environmentally concerned administrators to Federal positions, such as Bruce Babbitt as Secretary of the Interior in 1992. The actual overall harvest levels in the forest have remained at near constant levels, however, with the shift in policy decreasing the road building allotments granted to APC and KPC and increasing dramatically the commercial harvests on Native Corporation lands (see Chapter 4).

corrosive materials), and thus must be guaranteed a constant supply of wood. The two pulp mills in the area, one in Ketchikan and one in Sitka, did operate virtually around the clock until the Sitka mill was closed in the early 1990's. Since this time, logging has continued apace, with a greater percentage of the logs being sold, unprocessed, in Korea or Japan.

Harvest practices by the large and small timber producers have remained the same throughout the last few decades. Much of the road building and harvesting in the region is subcontracted to smaller commercial timber outfits. The workers who do the actual work of these outfits are drawn from logging operations all along the West Coast of the United States. Most of the employees are ethnic whites, including virtually all management and higher status positions. Those who actually fall the trees and prepare them for transport may be drawn from any number of groups, including, more recently, growing numbers of workers from Mexico. The choker-setters are a mixture of whites and Indians.

The hierarchy within the job structure is mostly the same throughout the logging industry. Heavy equipment operators, those who drive the cranes, pickers, excavators and other road building equipment, and the crane and tower operators are at the top of any job, just below management. Their work, and primarily their potential to do damage to the machines that constitute almost the entire capital outlay of many small firms, require that they have special training. They also tend to do some of the maintenance and

most of the worrying over the machines they operate. Often someone beginning a new machine operator position will be given the oldest loader or picker and told that he has a job as long as he can keep the machine going. Likewise much of the cleaning and routine maintenance performed by the operator is considered after-hours work with some firms. This, of course, is a way of saving money for the logging outfit, playing upon feelings of pride that drivers will have for "their" machine, and turning it into uncompensated labor.

All small outfits are driven to such tactics by the position they are put in by the buyers. Like many primary production industries, contracted firms are generally little more than shell companies, easily replaced by another. Large buyers or contract originators will take the lowest bid, offering the new firm the chance to lease the same equipment used by the previous firm (who also were likely leasing from the contract holder) and, often, they will hire at least some of the same workers. Simply put, contractors distinguish themselves only on the basis of how much production they can generate with the same equipment and same crew.

This carries over onto the handling of other positions as well. Below the heavy equipment operators are the logging truck drivers. Much like the heavy equipment operators, truck drivers control important pieces of equipment, often as expensive as an excavator or loader. Their status is below that of the other operators, though, because truck driving is considered a

more common skill. Though difficult, and often more life-threatening given the precariousness of the logging roads, truck driving is considered a job that virtually anyone can be trained to do. In the end they are paid better than choker-setters or longshorers, but they have neither the wages nor the prestige of the other machine drivers. In many firms this is the highest position that a non-white (especially those without special training gained outside the outfit) can hope to achieve.

Below the drivers are the cutters, choker-setters, and longshorers. The first two are full-time employees, the latter, after the breaking of Southeast Alaska's two stevedoring unions, are most often part-time. As with many West Coast logging firms, the cutters are the highest paid laborers of all those mentioned here. The work is extremely dangerous and rigorous, and like choker-setting, few remain at it beyond their late-twenties or early-thirties. As mentioned above, the cutters are themselves internally ranked among several different specializations like buckers (those who cut the tops and large limbs off of still standing trees) and fallers (who do the work of actually taking down the trees). Despite their high pay, cutters do not carry the influence that the machine operators do.

As mentioned before, when an area is logged, almost all of the trees will be taken down before any are cleared away. This follows the road building phase of the harvest, and precedes the set up of a tower: a large, stationary crane perhaps 90 or 100 feet tall with long horizontal cables run out

from the top of the tower itself — like the spines in an umbrella — and anchored on strong stumps across an area of felled logs. These long cables from the top of the tower serve the dual purpose of stabilizing the tower and providing the runners along which a second cable and pulley can be extended to pick up the felled trees from anywhere in the area and return them to the base of the tower. Here they are loaded on trucks and taken down the mountain.

By the time the choker-setters are brought into an area, the access roads have been built, all of the trees have been felled, the tower has been set up, and all that remains is the collecting and loading of the logs. The choker-setters work under the coordination of a rigging slinger, who sits near the crane with a pair of binoculars and often moves around the hill, coordinating the pick-up of the trees. His job amounts to simply spotting and announcing a target tree. The two or three choker-setters move around and over the felled logs and set the harness and choker around the specified tree. Mutual relations among choker-setters are tense and sometimes violent. Pushing, shoving and fist-fights as a result are seen on some jobs, especially where the contractor has turned up the pressure and pushed for a faster harvest schedule, and where ethnic/racial tensions play a role in expected promotion or job retention.

D—, who is now past 40 and has not been a choker-setter for many years, explained that no white man ever outworked the “good” Native choker-setters. There were some Natives, he noted, who never were any good, and didn’t like the work or couldn’t do it, but these didn’t last. And those that did last could not be beaten. And that was why they never got the chance to advance, he thought. They would outwork all of the whites, and tell them so, and beat them up the mountain, and beat them up along the way, and as a result they would be the best choker-setters and never promoted. This was furthered by the fact that when any of the victims of their accomplishments did get a job somewhere “up the ladder,” they would be sure never to put in a good word for an Indian who had so badly showed them up. D— quit choker-setting after he broke his leg a second time. I asked why when he was still working he never went easy on those guys likely to be able to put in a good word for him later on. He said he just didn’t think about it that much at the time, and it only seemed clear once he quit and began talking to others who had worked in the same job.

D— is older than Billy, though neither is incapable of doing the sort of work required of a heavy equipment operator, or even a truck driver; in fact, both would, it seems to me, have done quite well as a rigging slinger — being able to recognize easily the order of the felled logs, their condition and quality. I later asked Billy if he ever thought he might get a job with a logging outfit

that wasn't of choker-setting. He said that it wasn't likely, and that he didn't think about it much. He figured when he couldn't set chokers anymore he would do something else altogether.

The difference in perspective between Billy and D— might be the result of time, of later resentment felt by the older man for a job that left little to be carried over — of “experience,” as it sometimes used, emphasizing its cumulative (almost hydraulic), if slow acting weight. Yet such an explanation, though on the surface quite reasonable, is actually very similar to the stories told by job bosses and managers to account for the same process — that Indians don't think about the long-term until after they used up everything they have, and until then they just work when they need the money; only when it is over does it “sink in” that, from the beginning, they should have done things differently. Experience, as it were, comes after, and in both explanations the experience of futility and experience as futility are conjoined, in sympathy or not, and always too late.

At present, many Native choker-setters work for their own or another ANCSA village corporation. This has not changed much of the choker-setter's role on the job, particularly where village corporations have sold their timber on the stump to take advantage of NOL's. And even those that still hold timber reserves have most often gone out of the harvesting business, choosing instead to subcontract this work to a local harvester. As a result, while ANCSA has entirely reordered the reality of village politics, it has had

little real impact on the intermediate structures of timber harvesters and work processes. And while the formal experience of unemployment, disability, and continued poverty that go with wage-labor jobs within this industry will inevitably feed into one or another of the “sides” created by ANCSA, they little to undermine or even question the de facto status of ANCSA as the current political reality in every village.

This does not mean that work as such plays no role in understanding the structural dynamics that move jobs, people, and industries to do what they do. Importantly, though, the understanding gained is not always of the structure in its objective form (though people often know it somewhat in this way as well) nor does it come from those aspects of work that lend themselves from the objective political dynamics and groups that emerge.

One example will help make this more clear. In the summer of 1996 I had gone “visiting” in a village where I was staying — a primarily Native village with one of the region’s most aggressive logging operations. My host, J—, is an Alaska Native and ANCSA corporation shareholder who is one of five managers in the village corporation logging operation. He had previously taken an interest in some of my interests and showed me around past and present logging sites. J— actually had little to do with the day-to-day logging operations or with the loggers the company employed, less than half of whom were from the village; his management responsibilities were in

corporation-shareholder relations. But he had been put in charge of a program of supplemental training that some of the loggers had participated in. Through the program, workers were trained and certified in cleaning up hazardous spills — oil spills being the most common, but they also trained for gasoline and chemical spills. The work is dangerous and difficult, requiring air-tight suits as protection against highly combustible and lethal materials. It's work that not many people want, which in some way this appeals to the loggers, especially because the pay is very good — up to several hundred dollars a day in an emergency. After training and certification, the names of those qualified go on a region-wide list and in an emergency they are called up.

The logging company had offered to pay for the training of those who would go, inspired by a spill in their own operation which had been somewhat mishandled and in the end very costly, and by the idea that such a program would supplement the income of their workers whose jobs were essentially seasonal, perhaps keeping some in the village and cutting turnover. Several individuals went through the training and passed, and were certified. On the night I was visiting, one of those who had been certified, T—, came by. He was back from a three day clean-up, his first, and he was the only one from the village to go. His announced purpose in coming-by was to say thank you for the training and time off to go on the job, which had allowed him to earn a substantial supplementary paycheck that week. Beyond

this, though, he had done well and been asked by the clean-up manager to come back whenever he could, and was assured that he would get called. T— wanted to know if he could go when he got called. Working on an accident entailed, obviously, little advance notice and usually required missing some work, and T— realized that he could not afford to lose the logging job. The rule was, said J—, that they could go only two times a year. Oh, T— said.

He had been looking down most of the time when he was addressing J— and was visibly excited when he first walked in. In what followed he never stopped looking and talking directly to the person who was, in this situation, his boss, and who was obviously exercising a sort of arbitrary power that in such circumstances there is little means to resist or even counter. Yet while he continued to speak, his tone changed from excited to a deep monotone, his stance was still, and his hands were in his pockets.

After being told that he was unlikely to be allowed to do the work he had been trained to do, or earn the money he would have liked and no doubt needed, he did not leave. Instead T— began to talk about what he had just done at the clean-up. The work, as mentioned, is dangerous, but this did not enter into the story. Instead, T— began explaining the intricate and infinitely exacting use of the air-suit and ventilation system that were the critical elements needed to do the job. Though never mentioned, the air circulation in the suit is complex. It must provide clean air to breathe and also to vent the suit. Because the workers are usually standing in the spill and the air around

them is likely to be contaminated, this means it must constantly go through an elaborate cleaning. The air flow is crucial to the work and must be adjusted while working, to maximize the life of the filter but also to provide adequate breathing and ventilation. Since the pack is carried on the back to allow the individual free hands and room to work, adjusting it is difficult. Likewise the suit itself must be air tight to protect the individual from the chemicals of the spill, which means that it is very hot and constricting. Making a poor adjustment means that the individual might become overheated and unconscious while working, or even just disoriented, both of which are exceptionally dangerous in the context of a hazardous waste spill.

None of this was explained beyond the actual manipulation of the suit ventilation system itself — which valve you turn for which sort of circumstance. Nor did T— ever mention where he had worked or under what conditions, or even how hard or easy he might have found it; nor how much money he made or if he thought it was fair. None of his description was what might easily be called “class experience” in the sense of lessons learned, though all of it, from the way it was described, would be considered “an experience” — a series of sense experiences as introduced above. All the while looking intently at his boss, he detailed what amounted to the entire technical process necessary to clean up hazardous waste. What seems even more clear to me now — looking back was the subsequent exploration required to understand what he was describing — was how little effort he

actually made to be understood. He moved from point to point in his description of the suit ventilation procedures without any explanation of their connection, and when his description seemed inadequate to his task he would move on, apparently unconcerned by any apparent gaps in presentation.

Throughout J— was somewhat distracted and even dismayed, despite the fact that he has an engineering degree and is technologically very sophisticated. He fidgeted frequently, but T— just kept talking, and talking only to his boss despite the presence of several other people in the room. In all the description lasted more than 15 minutes. When done, T— said thanks and left, now again in high spirits. J— was visibly disturbed and agitated. It was clear, though I think not consciously acknowledged by anyone at the time, that there had been a confrontation. I asked why it was that he would not be allowed to go back when he was called — most of the land owned by the village corporation had been logged out, and workers were being cut back and laid-off altogether. It would look bad if the same person were going every time, J— said.

Both men are resident shareholders, and both have voted in the past for village corporation board members who are in favor of the local development of corporation resources. In fact, their formal, objective political leanings are very similar. Likewise, both grew up in the village and share

similar cultural and local identities, identities that situate them in similar, almost identical formal relations toward state and federal governments, the BIA, and issues of tribal sovereignty. They are, in fact, neighbors in the trailer park owned by the corporation. And though they do two very different jobs, the future of both jobs are tied to similar sorts of social and political processes. In terms of most of the objective political reality of the village, the two men are linked and almost identical.

Nonetheless, the alienation that motivated the confrontation is easy to see. There was a job that was needed, and done, and promised for the future, and now denied (even though the phone call or calls will still come) for what amounted to unreasonable and essentially unfathomable excuses. Countering this alienation was a somewhat inchoate story of the intimacy of being in the world. Several cautions, however, must be made here before discussing the implications that emerge from this fact. In practical terms, this too, will be alienated — for, undeniably and with much the same effect, so will Billy become too battered to set chokers. Management will find ways of appropriating both. In this case, it was a foregone if unacknowledged conclusion both prior to and following the confrontation that the “special training” and “successful participation” of workers in the hazardous waste clean-up program would be celebrated in the next corporation newsletter — the visible object of corporate concern for workers/village shareholders (whose board members currently hold the edge in this village). Still more

direct efforts include morale boosting initiatives like the “logging festival” sponsored by this same company on the Fourth of July, where prizes are given out in a “choker-setting contest. ” For Billy there will be programs of job retraining that frame his choker-setting in terms that make it seem far less dehumanizing than he knew it to be, perhaps turning it into the sort of “experience” that he can “bring to a new job.”

In all likelihood, this appropriation will be resisted, and like other appropriations in the past, with decidedly mixed results. T— will greet the newsletter story with a mixture of pride and resentment, feelings that are a common reaction to objectification as alienation. Billy will enter job retraining with real optimism tempered by the failure of all past programs to do anything but temporarily — necessarily temporarily, for this is the essence of “flexible employment” — allow him to keep working.

4

In all of stories, for Billy or A— or T—, the confrontation with domination and appropriation appears mostly in unexpected forms. For Billy or A—, this form is held “within;” it is not expressed in any general, i.e. Social, appeal like rights or identity or even humanity. For Billy it is his own, personal nature that is at stake. For T—, the form of his resistance exists outside of the class relations that are, in fact, invoked by his boss: recall the phrase, “it wouldn’t look right,” presumably to the other workers, a notion of

class solidarity that T— himself never raises. In both cases the unmaking of the easy reality of ANCSA, or timber production, or a host of other locally known structures is an isolating and apparently individual task.

Raymond Williams, in a discussion of Bakhtin, refers to this process the “isolation of the sign” — the fact that experience, so conceived, leads not to common cause but nihilistic isolation. We are now in a position to consider such a notion more closely. Williams’ concern is that experience when understood as such implies none of the collectiveness necessary to confront the objective structures of the world. This is, in essence, the reason behind his discussion of “structures of feeling” — that inchoate experience that is communicable though yet to achieve any firm objective form (though inevitably it will). Thus while he hopes to avoid the idea that experience is somehow the result of conscious contemplation or discussion, Williams continues to center his analysis on how and when experience is understood through being shared.

From Williams, it seems crucial to understand experience as essentially opposed to or, perhaps more close to his own notion, rising in opposition to structure. Yet to limit our understanding of this opposition to some actual collectivity or collective expression seems too limiting and indeed too episodic to capture what experience is and where it happens in the ordinary lives of ordinary people, despite the appeal of the types of class struggles Marx focuses on). In place of this I would propose an alternative that begins with

the idea that experience is, by definition, that which cannot be undone, regardless of whether it might ever be usefully aligned with other experiences (as with Thompson) or communicated with others (as with Williams). Experience as such continues to be logically opposed to structure, for structure can, as Levi-Strauss points out, work either forward or backward, as it is essentially synchronic or timeless. Experience, like speech, is always bound by time and attached to specific incarnations or specific instances.

Yet leaving aside the metaphor of speech and language, with such a perspective we begin to see how people oppose structure with their own experience by trying to capture its specificity, its timeliness, and to deal with it as such. It does this not by pointing out what lies beneath a myriad of “common” experiences, as Williams proposes, but by noting the dependency of structure on particular, specific occurrences. Thus when T— notes his opposition to his boss, he does so with the simple response, ‘at work, *I* do this.’ The implications, ‘at work *you* do that,’ anchors policy or structure or sense in its only present manifestation, the boss, or the bosses decision. Billy’s response is similar, and his later denial of anything more — implying, as it were, ‘I’m just a choker-setter’ — further personalizes and individualizes not just his own life, but the actions taken upon it. In this way experience not only opposes structure, as Williams point out, but it does so in ways that challenges its claim to orderliness, logic, or totality.

Experience can do this largely because structure only ever actually

appears in ordinary forms — only ever in specific occurrences or instances. In other words, people confront the logical totality of structures (when they do) with the actuality of structure. This does not rob it of its power — Billy will always be paid poorly; T— can and, should he push to hard, might be fired. The power of structure is real. Its totality, its orderliness is not.

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Chapter 7 — Experience of “the Law”

Seal hunting is different from deer hunting or fishing because you do it in winter, but different also in that different people do it, and for different reasons — only those who are really driven to it will go, driven by love of it and hunger both. Jesse drops M— and I off at the point while he takes the outboard up inside the inlet to roust the seals from the ice; it is about 300 yards from the edge of the ice to the point we are on, so if we are lucky when the seals dive for fear of Jesse’s yelling and the sound of the outboard, and then make their escape out of the inlet and into the bay, they might surface right here, near where the point cuts out into the channel. Then we will have a clear shot at them. Except they don’t, they come up much further out, too far out and we just look at them and wait for Jesse to come back. He circles around. M— tells me about the other white guys he has gone seal hunting with — though it is illegal even for a white man to be in the boat, as they tell me more than a few times — and I listen wondering why all the stuff about mobsters and movie stars that always seem to accompany stories like this.

When you hunt seal you don’t want to shoot from the boat, they tell me because its too hard to hit them that way. Both agree, though, that seals don’t sink when shot when I ask about that, but still it is better to shoot them on land or ice or from land, for a steady, better shot; so we walk from place to

place, leaving the boat and hoping for something to pop up in front of us. But nothing does, so we go back to the boat. And then Jesse says wait a minute, cut the engine because there is a young one, probably male, that sees us but doesn't dive. Very quiet now, Jesse just stands and fires but misses; but the seal doesn't move so he fires again and the seal bobs on the water while we break ice to make our way over. Jesse hooks it in the eye and ties it off to the bow of the skiff and we tow it to the beach where they both jump over and now with no gloves or coats they go to work on the seal. They take out the bones and the skull, which they leave on the beach, and clean the intestines and salvage some of the organs, and discard the rest, and tuck the things worth saving back inside and then finally put it all in the bow of the boat. This one is young, and male. We are in the shade now, which is always present because the sun is never high up and only above the trees for a couple hours each day, and it is getting very cold.

We continue like this for a few more hours, the cold now penetrating even all of the layers I'm wearing — its not even cold feeling really just dull pain, like a bad headache only unlocatable. The sun is mostly down but we keep going. Jesse shoots another but it sinks and is lost. Then there is a third, a big female when we finally come up on her, much bigger than the young male from before, I have no idea still but she must be over three hundred pounds. This time it takes only one shot, and then it is back to the beach and coats and gloves off, knives out. Steam rises off of everything left on the

beach and Jesse and M— go around the other side of the island to see if they can see anymore. I wait by the boat, moving it about every five minutes because the tide runs so fast now that it would be high and dry in a half-hour even though the beach is steep. While they are gone I think that we are the only boat out here, and what I am doing here and how different it is from what they are doing here, and how far now, it all seems. They talk a lot about who will get some meat and we go back, using the boat to break the ice by running up on the thicker pieces, and then falling through. It is slow going.

Seal hunting is different from deer hunting in that so few people do it. But it is different also because, for those who do, in fact, do it, they can do it. It's exciting work, and there is no Fish and Game for miles. Both men will be popular tonight, for they can bring seal meat around to people they want to share with, and later, when they have scraped the hide for the fat, they will have "seal grease" to give away as well. "When you can do something like this," Jesse says, "no one can take it away from you."

1

One consequence of the constant shifts in subsistence laws and enforcement has been the radical disordering of the daily lives of the rural poor throughout Southeast Alaska. Given the role that the issue of "subsistence" plays in opposing State and Federal regulation of village life, it might be supposed that this disordering is intentionally disruptive — part of a

battle over “sovereignty” and “Native rights.” Many Native advocates see it this way. Enforcement officials tend to see it as both a matter of “law” (the state’s right/need to regulate the orderliness of its citizens) and of “conservation,” invoking the traditional “ordering” rationale of bureaucratic states, even when they appear to be doing otherwise. Drawing on the issues raised in Chapter 6, I want to argue something different than either of these.

First, it is important to realize that government disordering of everyday life in rural Alaska is not episodic but constant, ordinary, and perhaps even definitional of the role the state plays. Second, the disorder produced is not illusory, temporary, or facile, secretly structured by some deeper plan for further integrating marginal individuals or communities. It is genuine disorder, such that it makes no sense to speak of it as “intentional” or “imposed.” The better term would seem to be “renewed,” outside of any purported or assumed rationale.

This being said, we can then return to a point raised in Chapter 6. There I proposed that individuals confront structures with their (structure’s) actual contingency. Personification of structure — making individuals responsible for “structural” machinations — is only one way of doing this, but it is one that is common and often effective. The issue is quite clearly more complex than this however, for all structure (and all people with a stake in structure) have power. This is especially true in the case of “law,” a structure in its own right that comes attached to the state and the sorts of power that

states possess.

In places where structures come attached to power, pointing out their contingency may help move people's struggle away from the sort of disembodied systematics that structure represents; but doing so also invokes separate consequences of power that seem less dissuaded by these tactics.

Again, this is especially true in the case of law. By way of example, to challenge "the law" in the person of a particular Fish and Game Warden is to face a power entirely unlike 'the power of the courts.' Fish and Game officials are armed and trained in physical intimidation and control. This is a power unlike that possessed by any structure, and one that is capable of attain its most fearful forms in isolated, contingent incidents.

"Law," as such, involves a different kind of power than does capital or other structures not so directly attached to and underwritten by the state. This sort of power is mysterious in the sense that it seems not to derive from any definable point outside of its most immediate incarnation. This will be discussed below, but here it is important to note that is not because power has the ability to hide its own machinations; quite often it does not, nor does this seem to inhibit it in any way. In fact, the opposite is often far more common. Some kinds of power may be defined by, and may in fact be derived from the obviousness with which it presents itself. In such situations people seek or hope for some underlying structural order to the incidental power they face — some possible rationale for its obviousness or present incarnation. In

times like these the order of structure seems turned on its head, so that those who suffer most by it become those that seek it, indeed need it, most clearly. This point is clear in the stories discussed below.

What is true of law is also true of "subsistence law" and the way it is visited on those most dependent on hunting and gathering for their livelihood, for this is often the most frequent form in which law is encountered in any village.¹

2

Jesse is a Tlingit Native, father of four children. Neither he nor his wife have held a full-time, salaried position in over a decade. They receive some AFDC help from the Federal Government. And Jesse will sometimes take a long shoring job on a logging ship when one is in the village. These used to be more common, now they come once every 6 weeks or so. It usually

¹ Two or three of the larger villages (closer to 1000 people) have a village police officer and perhaps even a police chief. These are locally paid, often locally born individuals and appointment is frequently part of the patronage system. Smaller villages, though, usually have a state financed VPSO, "village public safety officer." VPSOs are not police officers (though people will refer to the VPSO in their village as "the cop"), and in most cases their role is in mediation or acting as a reliable witness when situations get beyond their control. It is up to the individual villages to pay a portion of the salary and to provide some of the living arrangements. Likewise, it is up to the village to pay the annual \$10,000 insurance policy if the VPSO is to carry a gun. If this is unpaid, it is illegal for the VPSO to carry a gun while on duty. In Alaska, many men carry guns all the time. Yet few villages can afford this sort of insurance policy, and, ironically, as a result "the cop" is often the only unarmed man in village.

means two or three days of work: \$200-\$300. Other than this, the family depends entirely on the hunting and collecting of Jesse and his wife. His oldest son is now 16, and he too hunts, but like many 16 year olds he spends much of his time planning how he will get out of the village. Jesse fishes or hunts every day that this is possible: fishing in summer, deer hunting in the fall, seal hunting in the winter, berrying when he's not hunting or fishing. He sets some traps for furs and sells the seal pelts that he gets, tanning them himself. He will kill a sea otter for the pelt if he gets the chance, as these will bring as much a \$1000 or more if properly tanned. But sea otters are very rare. Jesse's wife also collects seaweed, cockles and other shell fish, berries of all sorts, and hosts of other foods unused by most part-time subsistence users.

He has been to jail once for violations; actually it was for being caught with illegal game while already having an outstanding fine for a previous violation. He stayed for a week. His family had to go and stay with relatives. He is more conservative now, but also knows that anytime he is stopped they will take his boat, gun, seine, or pack, "because they know him." This does not mean that the local F&G wardens know his name (though some do) or even that they know of his past violations. Enforcement officers are moved around quite a bit, specifically so that they don't get to know people too well. And the judges and others involved change as well. Further, Jesse has not had a violation reach the courts in many years, though his encounters with fish and game wardens have increased. None of these things mean what it

means to be “known.” To be known, rather, is to fall into a class of individuals who can be treated a certain way, and who subsequently are. Jesse is known not so much because they know his name or even his past; he is known to be someone who can be stopped, bothered, and whose things can be taken.

The first day I met Jesse he was fixing an outboard motor for a friend. He knew who I was, for reason's I did not grasp at the time — he knew everyone in the village who was interested in subsistence, especially “whites” from out of town who might be working secretly for “Fish and Game.” By the time we met he knew that I, too, was interested in subsistence and that I was a “college teacher” which made me more or less acceptable. After introductions and with a few others around, he said he would tell me a story about an F&G official who had stopped him a while back:

I was over on back side of “Te ‘at taon” and I had just taken this beautiful three year old buck. Boy he was a beauty. He was thick and had this beautiful coat and I had just taken him down.

I was workin’ on him then, to make the kind of pack that you can carry on your back. And so I was down on the ground and sort of like this [kneels down] and I hear this noise behind me. What was that, you know [with his face imitating the act of turning slowly to look] because I didn’t know it was gonna be a big brown bear. You know. So I turn around and I see this little guy from Fish and Game. He sneaked right

up on me.

So already I know what he is gonna ask me. So I don't say anything, I just turn around and go back to cleaning this deer. And he comes around now, not saying anything either and says, "You got a tag for that deer?"

And I says, no, not that I know of [everyone laughs]. Now he comes over to see what I'm doin' and he says, "stop that there", and now I'm already cutting out bone so I just stop and start cleaning my knife. And he says, I 'm gonna have to take you in then. So I says, "OK, lets go" But already I know that the only way he could have found me is if he saw my boat, and then he must have just waited until he heard shots. So I say, "we goin' this way?" and he says, "yeah", and I start walkin'. But the whole time I'm watchin'" him, and then I says, "Aren't you gonna bring the evidence?"

So he goes back and puts this buck up over his shoulder, on just one shoulder, and now this is a lot of deer meat he's carrying, more 'an a hundred pounds. And we go back the way I come in, up and over and down. It must'a been two hours with him carryin' the deer the whole time. An I just keep him goin', "don't forget the evidence".

So when we get to the boats [he stops telling the story and starts patting the pockets of his vest] I say, "Oh yeah, here's my permits, I do have one left." [everyone laughs].

The story's assumed ending is that he took back his deer after having the F&G warden do the worst of the work — carrying the buck up and down the mountain and back to the skiff. Everyone laughed, including me, and everyone stayed around telling hunting stories while Jesse worked on the outboard.

For all its humor, and with all the respect that I have for Jesse, who later took me hunting and taught me how to find deer and be safe in the woods, and to see a little of what good hunters see when they hunt; despite all of this, in all likelihood the story is fictitious. Most enforcement officials work in pairs in this area, and the need for “evidence” is wishful thinking on the part of Jesse. As above, the most costly penalties — confiscation of equipment — do not require evidence, and F&G enforcement officials know this. But it is at the same time a very revealing fiction, for it shows that despite the near constant interaction of Jesse with these same officials, the actual ways of F&G wardens remain so distant from and misunderstood by most regular subsistence users that the story sounds possible. In the end it says a lot more about users' desires for an enforcement system whose penalties require proof, and where ignorance of the ways of the other are present not just for users, but on the part of F&G officials as well, than it does about the actual workings of subsistence enforcement.

For subsistence users, "subsistence law" is most often, for many exclusively, encountered in the form of enforcement officials. Though an arm of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, F&G Enforcement officials train alongside the Alaska State Police. They carry the same weapons and operate out of the same barracks. Surveillance techniques are identical to those used in other criminal investigations, including using boats and airplanes to spot illegal hunting or fishing "in the act," often meaning before it has happened. Usually planes and boats are employed in tandem — a single spotter plane directing several ranger boats to the locations of boats fishing or individuals hunting. People who encounter think of them as little different from the state police.

Inspections for violations generally take place first hand. Suspicions provoke immediate boardings if fishing, signal and interview if hunting. But such encounters need not even involve reasonable suspicions. Some enforcement officials will stop all those they encounter or even all those they can find in the given area of their patrol. Some will stop as many as eight or ten boats in a single day during the height of salmon seining. In the winter an experienced officer who knows the likely hunting areas and times of a particular villages' more dedicated hunters, can catch up with four or five hunting parties between the time they leave and return to the village. Beyond this, they can and do interview people at their homes if there is suspicion of violation.

Violations and even suspicion of violations involve the immediate confiscation of subsistence equipment and harvests. The former may be returned if no violation is found or if the court over-rules the seizure; the latter is usually gone-by before it can be returned, and so it is may be wasted. Other penalties include fines and jail time. These are usually reserved for repeat offenders, and the latter usually for those who have refused to pay fines and have subsequently been caught for repeated violations. The impact of these penalties vary according to the circumstances of the particular household. For poor households, the first penalty — confiscation of equipment — is probably the most harsh. Without the means to hunt or fish, some households will not eat. Purchasing new equipment means finding cash employment, often outside the village. More often, individuals can borrow short-term from partners, but this is less reliable, and a long-term loan would generally be considered beyond the usual expectations of partnership. For many of those most dependent on subsistence the other penalties, the fines and jail times, are actually less onerous. Most subsistence users know that fines are seldom paid, and judges are reluctant to put food providers in jail; loss of equipment or suspension means an immediate lack of food in some households.

Violations are common, however, despite the penalties involved. This is required, to a certain extent, by the subsistence laws themselves. One common feature of the revisions of the law, beyond their increased

enforcement, is the continuing diminution of allowable harvest in those resources most valued by rural subsistence users. Six sockeye, per person, per day, is a ridiculous figure, and it is the current law. Most poor families dry or store in cans between 300 and 700 fish every year. As a result, people seldom obey the laws for fish. For deer, much the same is true. Because deer meat is difficult to store when the weather is above freezing (and unlike other parts of Alaska, the Southeast is mild in the winter, with frequent days above freezing) a six deer limit means a six week limit. Many people ignore the law and take 20 or so deer. Some tell me they take as many as 50.

The end result of this is that enforcement officials can stop just about any regular user at just about any time and with the expectation of some violation. And even if they do not find an obvious violation, even the suspicion of a violation (a permit held but not carried at the time, for example) is sufficient for the confiscation of goods and equipment. There is little censure of officers for this sort of aggressiveness. The same judges that seem to go easy on subsistence users are also lenient on these sorts of immediate enforcement. The result of this is that the consequences for breaking the law are far less burdensome for most middle-class or better-off folks — those with regular jobs who live in the city but collect or hunt for subsistence during free time — for whom fines are small, and confiscated equipment is eventually returned. But for those who depend on the near constant harvest of subsistence resources for their livelihood, the state

sanctions maximum interference and costly penalties for even the suspicion of breaking the law.

When one adds to this the constant changes in law that have come in the last 10 years and the increases in enforcement power that has accompanied them, the final effect is a situation of intense daily insecurity for poor folks around those items most central to household reproduction. This is felt to be true by most regular subsistence users. Most view changes in the law as simply the manufacturing of an excuse to run-over “users” and disrupt the living of poor families in the villages. Few seek any further rationale for these actions, however. Rather, for many a state of disorder is definitive.

Most of those who hunt or fish, then, encounter “the law” in some form on a regular and continuing basis. In this sense they know it to be what it is: those officials who do the enforcing, and the situations they are capable of creating. Jesse’s story then, seems all the more amazing given this fact. Understanding it for what it says, must say, and why, involves starting with the fact that most active hunters, including Jesse, do not — indeed can not — believe such stories for very long. Not because their experience tells them that it is wrong, though it does. Experience can be ignored even if it can’t be undone, sometimes for a life time if one has to. Instead, wrong ideas about the orderliness of “the law” are not sustainable for long because power does not allow them to be.

3

Power appears in actual form in many different sorts of places: the power to work on the raw material of the world, the power to hire and fire, the power to shape society through congealed labor (i.e. capital); or the power to influence particular people and particular, often face to face, situations. This last is what Wolf calls "personal power" (199? "Facing Power"). The first three depend for their logic on the nature of human labor, which under capitalism it can be stored and channeled. The later does not. It depends on the ability of human beings to "work on" or, perhaps better, "work over" other human beings. In a sense all systems of power have always depended to some extent on this last form, hence Weber's definition of the state as a monopoly of just this sort of power.

Yet "personal power" is not, ironically, the power to do anything but compel others to do something, using no other means than those that lie — potentially — within the particular situation. Indeed, it scarcely involves the use of one's own person at all. And it is likely the unlocatable nature of this sort of power that leads us to attribute it to a person and call it "personal," rather than the fact that it involves some sort of personal action. In its most effective form, in fact, it does not involve one's person at all.

This sort of power is often manifest in representatives of the state, and F&G wardens are no exception. It is mainly through this sort of power that

“the law” is brought to bear in specific instances. And it is because of this that ideas about the systematic and orderly nature of law are unsustainable in actual confrontations with these same officials.

Paulo hunts and fishes more than anyone I met in Alaska. He has a relatively small household, and gives away much of what he catches. He is also the best hunter I met, capable of shooting seals in the water from a moving outboard skiff. He is known for this and is popular, especially among the old people whom he supplies with seal meat and grease, and dried fish. He can't read, having attended school in the village and then only briefly and not seriously. He has several partners who fish and hunt with him, but none on anything approaching this degree of regularity.

For this reason he knows more about the surrounding area than anyone in the village. He works as a guide at times, for tourists who want to hunt a moose, an Alaska Brown bear, a big buck. In this way he picks up some income each fall. But this is small in comparison to the cost of setting up a sincere guiding business, and Paulo is limited by his small skiff, lack of accessibility (for his phone is often out of service), and meager equipment. Several years ago in the Fall, as the story was related to me by Paulo's wife, he was guiding a man whom he had met in the past, and who returned every few years to hunt. Guides usually arrange for all of the necessary permits, having a list of necessary forms and often the forms themselves, so that the customer can simply fill them out on his arrival. Although, Paulo had what

were the necessary forms for the particular season ready for his customer (who had only to show up and pay for them), but in fact, he was not worried very much. "I figured no F&G guy would stop a rich white guy," unless they returned to the village with an obvious violation. They had never been stopped in the past.

This year they were stopped. And when they were stopped, the F&G officials on the spot called in much support. Paulo was amazed. In all a total of four additional rangers arrived before they even left the encounter area. Paulo and his customer tried to show all of their permits, but the first rangers on the spot were not interested in seeing them until the others arrived. When they did, the rangers insisted that they return to their boat before the paperwork could be examined. Here the permits were scrutinized and some papers were produced by the officials. Paulo's customer was not asked to sign, Paulo was, despite the fact that he could not read the form. He signed them having no idea of what they contained. In the end the officials released both men, with no citations, fines or confiscations but Paulo's wife was furious that her husband had signed forms whose contents could not be known to this day. When she confronts him with this, he just shrugs and looks away, as if to say "what else do you do." When I later asked him about it he said that with all the enforcement people around he would have signed anything.

He *had to* sign the forms that much is clear. That is the effect of a power that exists outside of the ability of human labor to work upon the

world, or the power of the capitalist to store and direct that labor. And while one example does not make a rule, power of this sort is essentially ineffable, unexplainable, while at the same time it obliterates all hopes for orderliness or logic in the structure it invokes. Law can not be imagined the structural totality that it, by definition, is; the traffic in power that is law in the world prevents it.

4

Following ANILCA — and driven by several lawsuits — the forest Service began a program in the early 1990's to revise the use of the Forest. The resulting policies of the "Tongass Land Use Management Program", TLUMP, were widely seen by all groups as a chance to renegotiate forest management in terms of the "balanced use" provisions of ANILCA. At stake were the 50-year contracts awarded the two large pulp companies and the fate of several wilderness protection areas not specifically created by Congress (the result of Forest Service attempts to comply with "balanced use" law suits prior to the whole sale revamping). These areas were called LUD 3's, short for Land Use Designation Three, those areas specifically subject to the "balanced use" provision.

Balanced use is, however, a non-sensical term in actual forest management. Timbering, fishing, subsistence hunting and gathering, and mining cannot be maintained on a single piece of land, or even, for that

matter, on closely contiguous pieces of land. They are all incompatible with one another, so that a balanced use provision requires, in effect, the division of the forest into “specific use” portions. Timber production, however, is the only use that uses-up its own portions in ways that are not renewable.

Hunting, fish breeding, and tourism, though dependent on relatively undisturbed areas, do not in themselves undermine these areas. Timber does, and so from the beginning timber interests fought against the division of the forest into specific use areas. In 1988, Big timber and the Alaska congressional delegation began to use the “balanced use” provision of ANILCA to attack those areas set aside for subsistence and tourism.²

During this dispute, many of the village tribal organizations and other current IRA entities along with environmental, commercial and sport fishing interests countered with a demand for an end to the “road-building” contracts and on expansion of the LUD 3’s. Logging Industry representatives argued instead for expanding non-ANCSA forest harvest, which had dropped significantly as harvests on ANCSA lands had increased, under the rubric of increased employment for urban Southeast Alaskans. ANCSA corporations remained above the fray, assuming the role of possible swing votes — for with ANCSA the federal government had defined village corporations in villages without tribal representation as agencies of the tribe, empowered

²The same strategy, of using “balanced use” to gain access to areas set aside for timber harvest is not sensible. Nothing worth hunting lives in a clearcut.

with powers usually reserved for specifically tribal entities.³ With this, ANCSA corporations acquired the potentially valuable symbol of “Native approval” should they decide to side against the other tribal bodies associated with environmental and sport fishing groups. This division within the villages was played upon by logging industry advocates. It was also assiduously avoided by those Native advocates most active in the process. Not surprisingly, few if any of those most dependent on subsistence for their livelihood played any role at all in the revision process.

Native testimonies at the revision hearings reflect these tensions. One example:

My name is K—, my English name is E—, I am a Tlingit from Hoonah. From time immemorial, my dad’s family is from around Hoonah and my mom’s family is from Killisnoo, I am from the dogsalmon clan, of the raven moeity.

I weave Tlingit spruce root baskets and chilkat robes. The baskets are woven from the Sitka spruce roots and dyed grass. This form of weaving is centuries old, after the world flood receded or as long as the trees have been with us.

Tlingit artwork is recognized, as high quality pieces of work, because of

³So in all those villages whose IRA councils had delegated their responsibilities to the Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida, the village corporations were the tribes.

the richness of the land, we were not in search of food. We had the time to figure out how to weave a perfect circle in our chilkat robes, or carve a detailed totem pole, depicting our family crest. We continue to produce beautiful baskets because, according to our "law of the land," we still have our trees. Each basket very, very old, and not so old, in our designs, all show a deep respect and appreciation of this land. A person can feel this through the generations as we come to the land, to harvest materials, for our baskets, chilkat robes or other art work, as we gather our food and medicine.

Hoonah, is surrounded by Tongass National Forest, a village that is predominantly Native. Fishing and Hunting has always been the major way of life. The state of the land was such, we were never hungry or cold.

More than any other place in Southeast Alaska, as a village we feel the affect of logging and road-building. We feel the impacts now and see irreparable damage to the land, should we allow the forest service to continue management as it is. [Senator] Murkowski's bill would not allow other protections that we need to guarantee survival of this land and our cultural [sic], it would only allow more management.

Thank you Senator Wirth, for introducing S346. We need to see end to the 4.5 cuts, we are living in enough destruction. The \$40 million subsidy drives this destruction, mostly to needless roads, another

negative impact, to our way of life. We need to end the 50 year contracts and replace them with short term, competitive bids, to show the American spirit of free enterprise. To strengthen Wirth's bill, we would like to see permanent protection to the 23 areas. 7 of these areas are very crucial to Hoonah. Pleasant Island, Lemisure Island and Point Adolphus, are very crucial habitat for the deer and other wondrous wildlife....⁴

Murkowski, Senator from Alaska, responded:

If I can briefly go to Ms. H— [speaker above].....It is my understanding that the Hoonah Native Corporation owns about 23,000 acres of land near the Hoonah Village. Do you know how much of that has been logged?

Ms. H—. The [unintelligible] is completely cut and Sealaska has seven more cuts to go. If you look on you map that you have there, you are going to see that the percentage of the corporation land versus the Tongass National Forest is a very small percentage.

Senator Murkowski. That is correct, but is the area immediately near the Hoonah area going to get logged up? I was under the impression that you had not quite lost all of the timber but evidently you have now. I was told that there were about 18,000 acres that had been logged

⁴ Statement before the US Senate Subcommittee on Public Lands, National Parks and Forests, April 25, 1989; p. 451.

but not all of it.

Ms. H—. When the total is done.

Senator Murkowski. I think much of your statement refers to concerns applicable to both Forest Service sales as well as private sales, because you are rafting out of Hoonah, towing to Wrangell; and that is a mixture of, obviously, Forest Service logs and your own logs. *I think we should have the record reflect that your concern is primarily with Forest Service sales and not your own sales from your own Private land.*⁵

The irony intended by Murkowski is aimed mainly at the fact that ANCSA Corporations have often been the source of some of the worst wholesale ecological destruction, especially in those areas closest to (and frequently hunted by) village residents. His aims are not charitable to those who have suffered as result, however, and Murkowski's own plans would have eliminated those remaining areas on which these same individuals now depend. His point, rather, is to try to show differences not just in Native use and needs, but fractures within Nateness itself.

To understand this we need to begin with the idea that this is not another example of a "divide and conquer" strategy. Murkowski points out divisions that already exist, though not surprisingly they remain unstated by most of those involved. He does not make these divisions; he does not need

⁵ *ibid.*, p. 477 (*emphasis added*).

to. Instead, such a statement aims at bringing out the more central and cutting irony of subsistence and local development. That is, to argue land claims on the basis of spruce root weaving is simultaneously to root your own claims in a notion of law promoted by the state (recall, “from time immemorial,” as evidenced in baskets both “old and not so old”) and to forego claims based on, literally, “subsistence” — any rightful claim to means to survive. His point is simple if not entirely sympathetic: driven to such strategies by past and (most hope) future development based on ANCSA, appeals to the other, more basic and for many much more pressing needs, are surrendered. What the senator points out, then, even if he does not fully realize it, is that by being there, and by arguing in this way, Natives choose to look to law as structure, and ignore the fact that law owes its “being” to power. More than complicity, what emerges here is the assent to be governed.

5

When people in Alaska and elsewhere use “the law” to mean both actual laws and the people who enforce them they make the observation that these are often, experientially, the same thing. The law is as particular legal officials, including especially enforcement officials, imagine it to be — at least insofar as most people encounter it: hence, they, these officials, are the law. Yet this does not mean that people are unaware of how laws are made and changed, or how they themselves might influence this process. In most

places village residents can give you a rough outline of the way that revisions to subsistence laws have been made and implemented, both under ANCSA and ANILCA. Yet this knowledge does not diminish the fact that F&G enforcement officials are “the law.” This seems important to me in so far as it gives ontological priority to “the law” as an encounterable, and in fact encountered force, not the outcome of a political process or form of governance. This point was made in the previous chapter and it seems particularly relevant for “the law.”

For most, these encounters are intensely dissociating or disordering, for they mean only interference and disruption, often without justification or even rationality. The disorder of power as exercised in situations of law often leads people to see structure in law, perhaps as the only hope they have of some alternative, some comprehensible alternative to law in the form it is known. Such a view also raises critical questions about “States” and “law” as they are generally discussed. Clifford Geertz once proposed that law, in both practice and principle, is “part of a distinctive manner of imagining the real” — a form of representation in which “it is not what happened, but what happens, that law sees” (1983: 173). Geertz argued that the law as such was part of a broader “episteme,” where events are set “within larger frames of signification, and....those larger frames [are kept] in place....by [people] organizing what they do in terms of them” (1983:180). As part of a method that sees social life based around shared values and epistemic agreement, such

a definition might seem plausible. In situations of radical inequality, however, it sounds practically impossible. My interest here, then, is with such a situation, and with Geertz's notion of the law's ability not only to "regulate behaviour," but to "construe it" (1983: 215). In the cases discussed above what seems most critical is the ability of law to regulate (or at least shape it) behavior, without construing it.

For subsistence users "the law" most often leaves people uncertain not only about what should be done, but even about what has been done. This I take to be a hallmark of law in all unequal circumstances, which is, more or less, all circumstances.⁶ None of this means that "the law" does not effectively limit behavior. It does, and no less effectively for the fact that it leaves chaos in its wake. But it does mean that it does so at least at times, and perhaps at most times, without recourse to some firm or coherent structural order. This is the fantasy of power, one not easily indulged in by others.

⁶ I watched much of the "O.J. Simpson Trial" in Hydaburg. For most of those who watched, for whom the nature of law is always across lines of inequality, the case remained a true mystery, and hence high drama. In one way, they saw Simpson as "black," and by definition on the receiving end of general legal treatment. On the other hand he was rich, in ways made obvious by the trials — "he hired about a hundred lawyers" — and so was certain to "get off."

Chapter 8 — Local Differentiation and Local Culture

In the program for the recent “Celebration ‘96” festival held in Juneau — a region-wide gathering of all of the Native dance groups, held every second year and sponsored by the ANCSA regional corporation Sealaska — the Chair of the Sealaska Heritage Foundation was particularly insistent that Celebration was a “new tradition”:

Every other year we gather again, and Celebration ‘96 is the eighth such gathering. Celebration is strong, but we must remember that it is a new tradition. In the Old Way, a clan from one side was usually host to another clan from the opposite side. For example, an Eagle clan would host a Raven clan, or a Raven clan would host an Eagle clan. Those who danced together as hosts or guests were from one clan or one side. Since the old times, people from each clan have scattered far and wide in search of work. Some clanspeople now gather as single-clan dance groups, but most groups at Celebration ‘96 represent many clans. Some are Tlingit, Haida, or Tsimshian, but some are combinations. As times change, our people have adapted.¹

“New” traditions are not specific to Alaska or to Natives, of course; most of what has passed for tradition in the 20th century is little older. Yet more is at stake here than the “invention of tradition” — however useful this notion has been in understanding the way that identity has emerged within, not against modernity. The notion of a “new tradition” is, given the way most people still see and think about tradition, would on the surface seem an oxymoron. Yet this is not entirely the case. The notion of “new” traditions is central to contemporary cultural politics for it reveal quite clearly the ties that

¹Dr. Walter Soboleff, Chairman Board of Trustees, Sealaska Heritage Foundation, from *Celebration 96 Official Program*, p. 1.

bind culture to the current political economy.

To begin with, tradition is not, in this sense, about a chronological division. It could not be so and still be “new,” though it does retain some chronological connotations. Rather, in the sense used here it invokes a second, and perhaps more accurate etymological meaning for tradition as that which stands outside of the current political order — as “betrayal,” Raymond Williams points out (1976: 318-9), with links to the term “traitor.”² Traditions are, in this sense, that which sets their participants apart from the wider social context, and usually against it.

This being said, it is plain from the way that “new” must, in this case, be attached to “tradition” that Celebration somehow stands outside of some notion of standard or actual tradition more generally. It is a special, limited case, not ‘real’ tradition, at least not yet. ‘Real’ tradition — tradition without the “new” — must lie in the distant past. ‘New’ signals changed; ‘real’ traditions are by necessity immutable. In this case, although people still dance for one another, the changes — clans no longer dance for their opposites — make this tradition “new,” meaning different and inevitably less. Tradition, and by extension, the ‘real’ ability to stand outside of the context of this and other new traditions, depends on a more conservative replication.

Note here that my point is not that such conservatism sets up

²Gerald Sider makes this point clear in critical ways for Native Americans in his article, “When Parrots Learn to Talk; and Why They Can’t” (1987).

standards that few past practices could meet. This is true but relatively unimportant. Rather, what seems worth considering is just how and why such standards come to play critical roles in contemporary issues of who can (and who cannot) stand outside the larger social tensions, dictates, and forces to which issues of “tradition” necessarily speak. This is why the term tradition is important and retained, rather than being replaced with some more suitable, less loaded alternative, like ‘ceremony.’ This is because using the term “tradition” still allows the speaker to make a claim on some other form of chronology — less strict but not ahistorical in the sense that a ‘new ceremony’ could be. Despite its newness, then, Celebration is a “tradition” because it is meant to represent some form of continuity, a continuation (even if altered) of what it meant to be Native in the past. This is critical to the ideological functions of Celebration as it exists for ANCSA board members and corporate sponsors, for it necessarily covers over the radical discontinuity of being Native under ANCSA. As importantly, it does this while at the same time maintaining a limit on who can participate in ‘real’ sorts of tradition and who can not — usually determined by the very differences that “tradition” and continuity are meant to obscure. This point is central to the discussion of culture that follows, and we will return to it below.

1

What most Southeast Natives call their culture — the dance groups, art styles, large social ceremonies — springs from tensions discussed in Part 1:

tensions of family and the undermining of local political organization by the ebb and flow of capital; of intra-village differentiation, where lines of patronage and differential connection to the larger political-economy have created clear lines of wealthy and poor Natives (at least by village standards); tensions between communities, felt especially by those most dependent on the foods produced by subsistence practices; and finally, tensions between village residents and State and Federal authorities. In important ways, culture both speaks to and seeks to silence these tensions. For this reason, local culture remains deeply conflicted and conflictual, even while it claims a unifying role — “our culture” is the usual expression, as important for the “our” as it is for “culture.”

Ordinary village residents who participate in culture cling tenaciously to this “our,” and defend, at times vehemently, their own role and stake in culture. And most “new traditions” are, in fact, very popular. Unacknowledged by most participants, however, is that ‘real tradition’ is often so costly as to be unrealistic. In an example made more significant by events discussed below, a single chilkat dancing blanket is worth a minimum of \$15,000 to art collectors and museums at present, and likely more if it is in good condition. Apart from NOL money, this amounts to a little more than a years wages for many village households. Few households could afford such real traditions, which are then limited to corporate sponsorship — and many fine specimens of ‘real’ traditional culture are on display in the Sealaska

Building in Juneau. Popular participation, then, masks the limits of participation, limits that a notion of “new” tradition necessarily enforces.

Yet despite this apparent subtlety, ANCSA corporation sponsorship and manipulation of many cultural projects is sometimes callously revealed. When seen as such, protest is instantaneous. So for example, Celebration ‘96, the event for which the above letter was written, saw the unanimous protest of virtually all of the elders who attended, upset at the ways that the festival was being used by Sealaska corporate directors to run for re-election. There was an “elder reception area,” where board members lobbied elders and, more importantly, their younger escorts, most often the current heads of most of the region’s important families, for proxy votes; wooing clients with scarcely veiled promises of patronage in the form of increased dividends, village jobs, and more support for village cultural projects. In fact, few Southeast politicians were left out, Native or otherwise. The Governor and Lieutenant Governor of Alaska both spoke to the audience during the opening ceremony, as did the Mayor of Juneau. Virtually all of the region’s representatives to the Alaska State Legislature canvassed the crowd handing out pamphlets, and some of them individuals ended up on stage as well.

Perhaps most upsetting for many in the audience was the opening speech by Sealaska’s Chairman of the Board and CEO, who appeared on stage in a three-piece suit without any of the “traditional” speaking regalia or ceremonial attire. The Director of the Cultural Heritage Program of Sealaska

tried to cover this over, and later found him a blanket and hat to wear in subsequent appearances. Yet his speech, like his opening letter cited above, stressed again the idea that the entire event was a “new tradition.” This alienated some of the younger people for whom Celebration is the only “tradition” they have ever known. The general frustration of the audiences was, by the end of the first day, so great that everyone involved in the organization of the event knew that something was likely to happen. Yet neither the CEO nor the Board Member overseeing the Institute could be fired — both are elected — so the Program Director for the event was, though he played no role in the political appearances or the Chairman’s speech.

The program for the next Celebration is unlikely to change either. The elders, after all, are more genuinely concerned with subsistence survival — for in most villages few have got “enough social security” to see them through, and a box of cold cereal and a gallon of milk together can cost \$10. What’s more, the possibilities for forming ‘real’ dance groups (where one clan dances for another) seem slim. Older property forms that once gave clans a corporate existence have given way to the same pressures that have “scattered people far and wide.” Many village children grow up not knowing “their” clan until taught it in culture class at school. In many villages clans remain (or have become) an element of personal identity, especially for those most active in the cultural movement. But any relation beyond name to the corporate ‘house-groups’ of the nineteenth century is untenable in either past

or present political-economy. In this way, to maintain the idea of “Tlingit law” — of proper dance groups and relations, as later noted by this same speaker — not only requires resources most participants no longer possess. It also becomes a means of limiting the importance of what are, at present, one of the few collective forms of identity building activity — outside of the more active churches — in any Southeast village.

2

For ordinary participants in any of the current village dance groups (the most visible element of the cultural movement), issues of patronage and corporate sponsorship seem out of place or unrelated to their own participation. While all will acknowledge that dance groups are led and organized by members of important families, belonging to the group has played an important role in many individual identities as “Native.” As is the case in most tribes, Nateness is a flexible notion that bears little resemblance to genealogical descent. Almost any claim of aboriginal ancestry is sufficient for self-identification as Native in most villages, and these claims are strongly reinforced by participation in the dance and cultural groups. Few of these claims, even the most tenuous, are ever openly challenged — though at times people will remark about “true blood” Natives, or the fact that someone is “mostly white” or “more filipino than indian.” Such expressions, surprisingly, come mainly marginal individuals within the village, and are

aimed as much at each other as they are at village elites. In contrast, I have never heard anything approaching these statements from local elites, even those whose claim to direct indigenous descent is well established. This is likely an indication of some realization of the way that culture and "Native" identity works to underwrite local inequality. This point we will return to below.

Most dancers say they dance because it makes them "feel like they are part of something." Quite often they are unable to express beyond this the reasons for their participation. Many cite the participation of some of the elders: "When you are dancing next to someone like A— M—, you know, you get the feeling like you are dancing in the old way." Belonging and continuity are consistent themes for younger participants. Older participants say that they grew up "chilkat dancing." "At nights, in the summers at the canneries, we would sing and dance with the other kids songs that we learned from the old people." Some of these individuals also disagree with the official representations of those times (representations that invoke 'real traditions'): "Back then, you learned songs only from your family not because it was owned by a family. They were just the only people you could learn it from." Once learned, many say that they would teach these songs and dances to each other to "practice our Tlingit." The dancing was learned from elders: "Everyone's grandma could dance, and so she would sing, ah yah, aie, ah ah...., and dance with her feet like this....and so you learned it like that."

Younger participants in today's dance groups have been taught only in the last 20 or so years, when virtually all of the current village dance groups were formed. This includes even those dancers now in their 40's and 50's. Most of this age did not grow up dancing as many of their parents did. Summers in the village during their youth were spent playing basketball, and many of the older "camp" recreations like dancing and traditional storytelling were waning. When this generation and those after it did eventually join dance groups, the orientation of the performances of these groups was quite new. The dance groups were begun in the larger Southeast cities. Here they performed "chilkat dancing" shows for tourists at one of several "cultural centers" throughout the region, located in Sitka, Juneau, or Ketchikan — larger, predominantly white cities along the main cruise ship routes. These shows were primarily aimed at outsiders, tourists, although Native participants often found it their only exposure to the language and recreations of their grandparents. Most began in the 1960's, along with critical elements of a national Native American revivalism by what was perhaps the first generation of Natives to attend college outside the region in considerable numbers. Likewise this period also saw the beginnings of a new level of tourism in the area, with international cruise ships taking the place of past coastal ferries, beginning what has become the regions primary money-maker.

Standardized interpretations of past practices spread via these programs and cultural centers to village-based dance and cultural groups that, post-

ANCSA, began forming in the outer-villages. Most of the current performance techniques were established by the city groups as well, and were adopted by the village groups. So for example, throughout the region dance groups now sing an “arrival” or “entering” song, where the entire company comes into a room or onto a stage single file or in pairs, to the drumming of the group leader. All sing a similar “exit” song when leaving. These are meant to reflect past “feast” practices where arriving groups would sing from their canoes while host groups would sing from the beach. In between entrance and exit, dancers perform a number of “traditional” songs (meaning that the dance group leaders were taught them by an elder, or by another group leader who was taught by an elder), or, conversely, one of many new songs created by individuals in the last few years specifically for village/city dance group performance. The latter include the “Tlingit national anthem,” as it is sometimes called, which is performed by many Southeast groups, and the blanket dance, where the clans and affiliations of audience members are called out and those called dance up to a blanket spread out on the floor and make a donation. Past property claims on particular traditional songs are sometimes referred to or disputed by non-group members, but these claims are most often ignored and most groups sing songs that used to be the “property” of many different clans.

Importantly, all of the current dance group activities are decidedly performative. They are meant to be danced before an audience beyond the

members of the group itself. They are “outward” looking in form and organization. This audience might be the whole village, or some section of it. Quite often it is for an audience outside of the village, as when groups from the entire region gather for “Celebration” every other year in Juneau. One string of performances were put on for “the Hawaiians” — a number of young men and women from Hawaii traveling through Southeast Alaska on a large out-rigger canoe (which was actually towed from village to village by a boat provided by Sealaska) of traditional Hawaiian design and construction. All were Hawaiian Natives, and all belong to the voyaging society that had built the large canoe. The purpose of the visit was to show appreciation to Southeast Natives for the large logs used to make the hull of the craft, donated by Sealaska several years earlier.³ The Hawaiians traveled to outport villages and in each they were given a welcoming party with Native foods and performances by local dance groups. In the village where I was staying at the time, virtually everyone in the entire village turned out. There was a fire built on the beach, and several boats went out to greet the Hawaiian canoe as it came in, including a smaller but still large open canoe owned by the village ANCSA corporation for use by their own “Heritage” division. Some of the

³The voyaging society is a cultural heritage group whose aim is to preserve the making and sailing of the large outrigger canoes used to settle and eventually travel between the islands of Polynesia. The radical deforestation of the Hawaiian Islands makes it impossible to build large, single-piece hulls from Island trees, however, and hence the participation of SEALASKA.

Alaskan canoers had carved new paddles, and painted Native designs and crests on them. The remaining spectators wore what "Native" items they could, including ANCSA corporate jackets with Native style logos, button blankets that they had made (either in school or through the dance group), and Native jewelry.

In this particular village the oldest of the village elders was taken down to the village pier where the Hawaiian canoe was to land and he gave a speech in Tlingit about hosting visitors and celebrating with feasts. Once ashore, guests and hosts went inside to the gymnasium of the village hall where there were more speeches and a pot luck dinner. The dance group from the village performed first, and several very old heirloom blankets were brought out for the dancing. This created quite a stir for these blankets had not been seen in many of years, and were also the topic of several speeches. Most of the rest of the dancers wore items of their own making, including button blankets, spruce root hats, woven head bands, and helmet-like hats carved from cedar or spruce. Some women danced with their children, also in costume. About 30 dancers in all made up the group.

During the dancing the Hawaiians were invited to join in, and taught to dance the steps of the Alaskan dances. They had also brought along their own instruments and the idea that they were going to dance their Native dances, most especially the "hula," had prompted much expectation among the audience and especially the young men, for there were several young

women in Hawaiian group. Following the Alaskan dancers the Hawaiians sang several songs and made several speeches in Hawaiian. This impressed the audience because the young Hawaiians were fluent in their "own language." In most villages in Southeast Alaska only the oldest residents still speak any of the Native languages of the area, and few individuals younger than 60 are fluent.⁴ In a moment of high irony, when the Hawaiians did eventually dance the "hula," it was the young women in the group who played the drums and the men who bared their chests and danced the fast hip movements. The irony did not escape the women and older members of the audience, who cheered loudly at the end.

The audience for the performance included much of the village and residents of nearby villages where the Hawaiians were not scheduled to visit. The entire evening was recorded on tape for extended coverage on a local radio station from Sitka, and sections were rebroadcast for those villages where the Hawaiians did not stop. This was greeted with enthusiasm by those who had participated in the singing and dancing. In all there were perhaps three or four-hundred people involved. Most of the local ministers attended as well, and an invocation and closing prayer were offered by two

⁴School programs in Alaska have been influential in spreading some knowledge of the language, but little fluency is achieved by these programs and most individuals have an awareness but little use of Tlingit or Haida. Teachers in these programs point out that no one can learn to speak a language in one hour of class per week, but few school boards are willing to allocate more time or money to Native language programs.

different ministers. Parties were held afterward and the evening was generally considered a success.

3

The characteristic elements of this event are common to much of the cultural revival. There is ANCSA corporate patronage in the form of the original Sealaska gift of the giant logs, the Sealaska sponsored boat that towed the Hawaiian canoe from village to village, and the local village corporation purchase of the smaller canoe and their support of the village dance group. Countering this is a notion of Nativeness used by these same patrons to cover over or obscure the differences so central to the patronage process on which the event depends. And beyond this there is yet another idea of Nativeness — one tied to “traditional” crafts (carved paddles, button blankets, invocations of Native language) and the dance group performance (which is in most instances the emblem of the cultural movement). This more popular version of culture is quite distinct from the other, and set apart by participants from the processes of differentiation that turn the wheels of patronage indicated above. The final critical element is the decidedly non-local, public audience.

Of all of these, the first is perhaps the most immediately obvious to an outsider. Corporate board members here and elsewhere were well placed to use the events to trumpet their own accomplishments. Indeed, speeches

before events like “the Hawaiians” are pro-forma, and sponsorship entitles the village corporation CEO, the local Heritage Foundation Director (an arm of the village corporation) as well as several board members the opportunity for speech making and public campaigning. The “Native” identity invoked by the events also allows these executives to frame their own politics positions in these terms — minimizing their role as the primary executors of local development, corporate profit. and their own, considerable, compensation; and emphasizing their roles as interlocutors between “Natives” and the larger world. Yet the notion of Native that is involved in these events is dependent on the ambiguity of the term in its relative position in the larger political economy. The ‘traditional’ nature of critical elements serves to heighten the perceived risk that the larger-than-local forces pose for village residents, accenting the inward face of these brokers, while minimizing the fact that their very position depends on differences they help perpetuate. Thus it is important that all of the dance group members have ‘traditional regalia,’ which the two very old dancing blankets helped confirm.

The divisions between Natives and non-Natives becomes critical at these times. In this particular village, where Forest Service contract harvests and ANCSA corporation clearcuts have threatened many favored subsistence areas, corporate speeches centered around the “Native foods” that people use and that they need to help “maintain our culture.” No mention was made in any of the speeches of this logging. Perhaps even more conspicuous is the

fact that the local IRA committee's role had been usurped by the corporation, such that the corporation and not the tribe was at the center of the event. This is actually quite common — to the point where, ironically, many young people in the village consider the corporation to be the representative of the tribe. This even where corporation stockholders have voted not to issue stock to these same "new Natives"!

Throughout, however, it remains clear to many that the notions of Native and non-Native proposed by the corporate sponsors are not adequate to the notions of 'being Native' that many of the dance group participants have. The ambiguity of 'being Native' is not solved or even re-aligned by the notions of Native and non-Native that mark much of the official participation, despite the hopes of many cultural sponsors.

In fact, individual participation in the event was visibly marked by pride in being "Native," though. Everyone in anyway associated with the dance group danced that evening, and many wore elements of Native attire made specially for the performance. As mentioned above, most of those in the audience wore whatever clothing and jewelry they could that bore Native designs. Ironically this included corporation jackets and hats, whose logo is crafted in traditional northwest coast fashion. For many, this is the only "Native" ornaments they own. Others whose time and financial resources allow for such luxuries, wore newly fashioned shirts, vests, dresses, hats and headbands, of past and contemporary Native style. All of the dance group

participants had button blankets, and many wore cedar root, carved, or woven hats. As mentioned above, the village's most powerful family was able to have two of its members wear very old, traditional dancing blankets — a "chilkat blanket" and a deer skin blanket painted in Native designs. These caused quite a stir, perhaps because few in the village knew they existed, and even fewer knew specifically who had them or brought them to the dance.

For all those participating, the chance to dance and perform in front of "other Natives," to eat special foods and generally have a good time meant that they remained unconcerned with much of the politicking. When people did talk it was often about family politics: who had held on to those rare blankets and who decided who got to wear them; or why some particular individual always seemed to get ahold of the microphone and make the longest speech; or what sort of parties were going to go on afterward.

Most often these two sides or perspectives on cultural events co-exist reasonably well. Indeed, whatever the corporation might gain at local events is in fact too minimal to risk alienating shareholders and village voters more generally. So while some individuals well placed in ANCSA or key members of the important families are sure to garner the spotlight at every event, obvious manipulation is infrequent. On the other side, most participants pay little attention to the political machinations of people who try to use cultural events for their own purposes. Speeches are widely perceived as inevitable,

but most dancers and many in the audience “tune them out.” Some even point out, with much laughter, that the bumbling of those who try to “steal the spotlight” winds up hurting their reputation.

4

At times, however, others outside of the current political hierarchy have tried to use culture and local cultural events as a way of moving outside the patronage ties and status quo of the current political-economy. In these cases, the reaction of cultural leaders and sponsors is very different. In an example that received considerable national television and newspaper coverage, one semi-marginal village family in Klawock went outside the lines of political and corporate patronage to propose an alternative cultural politics with claims on the larger political system. This example is worth exploring in more detail because it raises the issue of what sort of alternatives might be available to people, and how these options are closed.

The events took place in September of 1994, and centered initially around a 1993 robbery by two young men, living in Seattle, of a pizza delivery man, during which they beat the man badly. Both boys had kinship links to the village of Klawock, in Southeast Alaska, and it was at the urging of some of the boys’ relatives that events unfolded the way they did. The original charges in the case were brought by the State of Washington, and eventually an unusual plea bargain was reached. Both boys pleaded guilty to the robbery,

but were turned over to a "tribal judge" from Klawock for punishment. In addition, the judge and his panel assured the court that the "tribe" would absorb the responsibility for the \$25,000 damages awarded by the court to the injured delivery man as a part of the settlement.

The main advocate for the plea bargain was Rudy James, also of Klawock, who claimed to be a "tribal judge" of the Kuiu Kwan or Kuiu Tribe of Alaska. In August of 1994 the boys were released by a Washington State court into James' custody, and returned to Klawock for a punishment hearing. During the hearing, James and 11 other "tribal judges" from around the region heard testimony from the boys, their victim, and their families. After deliberations, the judges sentenced the two boys to banishment on one of the more remote islands in the region, separately, for one year. They would be provided with the equipment necessary for the year by the tribe, but they would have to survive without outside help or contact with family and friends. For this reason, the location of their banishment was kept secret. Following this sentencing the boys were taken to the Klawock dock and from there taken by fishing boat to the punishment locations.

Reaction among other Native leaders was predominantly outrage. The local IRA council president resigned, noting that the recognized tribal entity in Klawock, the Klawock Cooperative Association, did not recognize the court or any status claimed by James. Tlingit and Haida Central Council President Edward Thomas sent an affidavit to the Washington State Court noting that

neither Rudy James nor any member of the court was recognized as “tribal judge” by the Central Council (the Federally recognized tribal representative for region); nor was James or anyone else empowered to pledge T&H tribal assets for the compensation awarded in the case. One Native leader working for the BIA agreed, saying, “This is theatrics. It has everything to do with Hollywood and nothing to do with truth and Tlingit culture.”⁵

Indeed the activity of the tribal judges seemed very sensitive to the numerous cameras and magazine reporters that arrived. For the most part the punishment had been decided before the hearing. The panel had spent the week prior deciding how long the banishment would be, and what sort of supplies the boys would be allowed to take with them and what would be forbidden. At the hearing itself, all of the judges wore ceremonial regalia. All were male, justified by “tradition.” According to one judge: “In our culture, we never let a woman tell the men folks what to do.”⁶ The boys also wore regalia, only it was worn inside out as “a sign of shame.” The hearing was preceded by a cleansing ritual in which a special plant was used to strike the walls of the local ANB hall while invocations were made in Tlingit. The court panel entered in procession to the beat of a traditional drum, and the boys were instructed to testify while holding sacred feathers in place of an oath — raven feathers for one boy, eagle for the other. Even the gathering

⁵Ketchikan Daily News, Sunday edition, September 3-4, 1994, p. A-3.

⁶ Ketchikan Daily News, Friday, September 2, 1994, p. A-3.

itself was given a Native title, the “Kuye’di Kuiu Kwaan Tribal Court,” although some pointed out that the Kuiu Kwan, or Kuiu people, were dispersed in the so-called Kake bombings by the Navy in the late 19th century. Indeed the traditional tribal name for the village of Klawock is the Henya Kwan and there is no current village whose residents are known as the Kuiu Kwan.

For many people in Klawock, the events were understood in local terms. By far the majority at the time (and more later) saw the trial as the effort of one family, that of James and his brothers, to move outside the traditional power politics of the village, controlled mainly by two families. Embert James acknowledged as much, saying, “This town is divided....there are some people here who are used to being the kingpins of this town, but this is not their show.”⁷

Outside of Klawock, where the particulars of family politics were less known, the reaction was different. People pointed out that over the next year, the boys’ families knew where they were, and were helping them out with supplies and visits. There were popular rumors that one of the boys had been seen around the nearby town of Craig prior to the end of his banishment. At one point, one of the boys was even rumored to have been moved, when friends had found out where he was and the information become common knowledge. Feelings about the court process itself were generally mixed.

⁷ Ketchikan Daily News, Friday, September 2, 1994, p. A-3.

Uniformly people felt that what the boys did was wrong, but many found the entire event an interesting contrast to their own court experiences. Many felt as though Natives had finally put one over on the “white courts” and this people approved of.

Some liked the idea of Native law, and many claimed to have a working knowledge of it, taught by undisclosed elders in the past. Others found the prospect threatening, noting “its always the same people bossing everything around.” When I asked if people would be interested in their local IRA council setting up a tribal court to settle disputes in the village, the near uniform response was “no.” Most of the interest in tribal courts was for their ability to intervene in state or federal court matters on behalf of Natives — to overturn subsistence violations, or fines from white courts, or taxes, or to turn back development on lands around the village. Others, though not as many, voiced the same outrage at the presumptions of the Kuiu court that Native leaders and important family members in Klawock had previously proclaimed. Nor did very many people show sympathy for a system of Native law based on ideas from the 19th century. I was told: “[My neighbors] smokehouse is on my land. If the court [a Native court] could get them to move it, that would be good. If not, I got no use for it.” Others found the prospect impossible, noting that few people who supported the prospect of a Native court had any idea what the old ways were like.

5

The idea of “culture” as the ideological glue of a new status quo appeals to many, especially those well placed to sponsor certain kinds of cultural activity (and not others). To do this, many of those best placed to shape the future of the cultural movement — that is, those individuals with patronage dispensing positions in either ANCSA corporations or important village families — often rely on the notion of Nativeness that appeals to those to the most marginal cultural participants. That is, many patrons find particular appeal in a notion of being Native that is untied to either shareholdership or family politics, simply for the fact that such a notion has both broad public appeal and the ability to cover over the structural dynamics of being Native under ANCSA. This point was made above but it is worth revisiting this for it is central to the way culture works in any contemporary sense.

In Chapter 4 we introduce two structural dynamics of ANCSA that shaped Native participation in the larger productive life of the region. The first is the fact that the Forest Service has made a policy of swapping unusable, village corporation owned land for smaller parcels of land elsewhere in the Tongass. Always this includes trading smaller lots for already used or unusable larger lots. The new lots are also potentially near other Native villages, forcing Natives to do to one another what the commercial producers

could not. As discussed above, the ostensible purpose is of these trades is to provide corporations with additional “developable” resources, though little mention is ever made that this continuation is destined to happen on an ever-diminishing scale. Nor do many acknowledge the fact that those who benefit most from these trades are the corporations beyond the village ANCSA corporations who buy, process, and resell the timber produced, for ANCSA corporation holdings are privately held and environmental laws for federal lands no longer apply, dropping further the costs of the timber produced.

Second, we noted that almost none of the village corporations have voted to divide their own stock holdings and issue shares to the “new Natives,” that is, those born after 1971 for whom no provision was made in the original ANCSA laws. At present, most new Natives only receive shares if they are given them by a close family member (in which case that person ceases to be a shareholder), or if a relative dies and they inherit shares from the deceased.

Structurally, these two facts define the political limits of “being Native” — that is, of participating in the larger political process on the basis of any ancestral claim to the region. Participation in these terms is limited in duration (depending on resources that are ever-diminishing) and fixed in extent (such that no new Natives can be made unless someone is willing to give up being one). One might go further and note that some elements of

both of these processes come from Natives themselves, as is obvious in the case of the 'new Natives,' but equally as true for the land swaps, for most involve approval by the shareholder referendum. Such a perspective means reducing Southeast "Nativity" to being a shareholder — something which ANCSA did and shareholders continue to do.

For many new Natives, for the landless, and for those whose participation has been minimized by ANCSA Native identity lies in participation in subsistence, or ceremony, or language, or in the community they feel with others of their family (in its broadest sense), including members of the family now gone,⁸ and those of their dance group. This is, they might say, what it means to be Native. And it is just this sort of notion, and the cultural politics that support it, that appeal most to those in a position to use culture to cover over the structural dynamics to which these notions are opposed. Thus, ironically, it is those whose positions owe the most to the current limits on being Native (through their own ability to negotiate these limits), that are simultaneously most inclined to support an alternative view and best in a position to do so.

⁸ Sergei Kan has argued that contemporary funeral practices reflect past social organization and that as a central part of past Tlingit culture, they remain critical elements of Native identity in the region. I discuss the relation of my own work to Kan's in the Source Notes for this chapter and in the notes to Chapter Two. Here it is worth noting that Pentecostals funerals do not involve elements of past Native funeral practices.

To do this, however, involves certain risks and actions that place culture at the center of ongoing struggles over what it means to be Native. For inevitably such a cultural strategy means accepting “new” traditions as ‘real’ traditions. This because those traditions original derogated as “new” are in fact the same traditions most available to, and most supportive of, peoples whose notion of being Native lies outside the dynamics of ANCSA and family inequality. This some people know already, and it is likely that Celebration will lose its “new” status some time soon.

The implications of these dynamics are both difficult and central to the current politics of the region. For as elites come to support popular notions of culture and Native identity, these become tied to local forms of inequality, however indirectly. That is, it is the more popular notion of being Native that allows some villages to vote overwhelmingly against issuing additional shares to “new Natives” while still claiming to support “Native culture”; or to agree to land swaps and the deforestation of their own and neighboring subsistence areas, while proclaiming themselves champions of “tradition.” Elite members of the community that gain by these sorts of actions openly back such popular notions, and in so doing risk politicizing them.

Still, broad based and inclusive notions of being Native and the sorts of cultural events that support these notions are popular because they lie outside of the specific limits of and straightforward links to the current political economy. They are, as such, more flexible, and as the case of the Kuiu Court

showed, potentially more radical. In this way this same popular Native culture is potentially revolutionary — in so far as it contains at least the possibility of a Nativeness with broad popular appeal that sees itself opposed to the sorts of political economic dynamics dictated by current structures.

Culture as simultaneously for and against the current political order — and in both ways crucial to the sorts of identities that most village residents seek and find personally rewarding — puts culture at the center of these same residents' vision of the future. Put plainly, it is no surprise given this dynamic that culture has come to be a point of struggle in what might and must be possible in villages throughout the region. Yet because it is unclear whether culture will overturn the current order, or strengthen its current hold, many remain suspicious of it. This, I will argue, lies at the heart of the Pentecostal rejection of cultural revival. And while this rejection is often framed in terms like "spirits" and "demons," it is, I think, no coincidence that such objects are described as invisible causes of divisions and disputes that bring outside problems into the village. This point is taken up in Part 3, to which we turn now.

Part 3 — The Churches

"We must frankly recognize the fact that we live in partial systems, and that parts are not interchangeable in the spiritual life."

— William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (1982:487).

Of the several themes developed thus far, two in particular are critical for understanding the practices associated with Pentecostal worship, and with this the disputes between church members and others in their communities over culture, spirits, and salvation. The first is the fact that the objective reality of "immaterial" entities is no different than the objective realities of more material entities or "habits." As such, our purpose in seeking to understand them must not be oriented to an attempt to reduce them to other sorts "realities" — whether these realities are called social structure, political-economy, or culture. Instead, our primary orientation for all of the practices associated with Pentecostal worship must center on the effort to grasp the nature of these entities, known (as Peirce tells us) the way all things are known, from their effects. This is the "partiality" of religious experience.¹

¹James Clifford uses the term "partial" in his "Partial Truths" (1986). Here he notes that "ethnographic truths are thus inherently *partial* — committed and incomplete" (1986:7). Here he argues that anthropology should accept this and try to build on it, rather than embracing some 'objective' (meaning uncommitted) and 'holistic.' Obviously, I would agree, though I would include more than ethnographic truth in this category (as, I believe, would Clifford). What remains to be explored by anthropologists — and here is likely the point where Clifford and I part company — is how this partiality is encountered ethnographically. Put another way, in what way are cultural truths — rather than ethnographic truths — necessarily partial? And how does such a view change what we look for in, or count as, culture?

The second issue raised thus far is the notion that representations can be thought of as having two different modes — Keane proposes we call these “distinction” and “delegation” (1997). These two sides — where a sign is said to represent its object through some arbitrary, conventional relation; or where, conversely, it is said to represent it through some claim to participate in its object — point to two different ways that representations can act on the world. The former, distinction, depends on agreement because it is, in effect arbitrary and conventional. The latter depends on context, for it is judged successful or not based on the legitimacy of its claim to be part of that which it claims to represent. This point, I think, is critical to James’ notion of why religious systems are not interchangeable (as above). Delegation is necessarily partial — with both uses of the term, i.e. “not whole” and “taking sides” — for legitimacy is also, necessarily, both of these things.

This likely requires some concrete example to make it more clear. A common form of delegation, notes Keane, is a congressional representative. The claims to representative status here depend on a candidate’s ability to be seen as a member of her district, like all of those whose votes she seeks. Her legitimacy depends on her actual ability to claim such a status, and should she be found to be too unlike her those in her district she risks a loss of legitimacy.² Once elected, though — and likely even during the campaigning

²Here I think specifically of an example from my youth were Congressman Barney Frank “came out,” if not entirely voluntarily, and everyone wondered whether he would lose his largely working class, largely

— representatives are expected to demonstrate their “partiality,” their devotion to the specific interests of a segment of their district. But note this does not mean the specific interests of all of those in their district — delegates are not meant to (or even thought capable of) encompass even the whole of their district. They are meant to be interested and their for partial, seeking some gains and not others, for some people and not others. Their legitimacy rests on this as much as it does on their being seen as a member of the district (though in fact these two mean mostly the same thing).

Returning, then, to the issues at stake in Alaska, when James writes that we live in partial systems he is noting something quite familiar to most people. When he adds that parts are not interchangeable in spiritual life he points to the idea that when we look into those things normally associated with religion — church service, prayer, worship, acts of faith — we must then keep in mind that the kind of representation central to such practice is not, or at the very least not necessarily, “distinctive.” That is, it is not meant to depict an alternatively ordered world of social and metaphysical relations, but to enact one. In such circumstances the “symbols” used are not interchangeable, for it is not enough that a symbol be used simply to refer to something else, for which a number of (alternative) symbols might do. To be legitimate, the symbols must themselves be part of, and partial to, the order to

ethnic district in Southern Massachusetts. He did not, largely due to campaign strategy that stressed his “partiality” — his record of having served the specific interests of his district.

which they refer.³ As such, delegative sorts of representation are central to “religion” in ways that are central to the relations between church members and those around them.

This is particularly true for Pentecostalism in Alaska. Church practice in the radical christian churches throughout the region is “partial” and “delegative.” It affirms an objective world of which it is itself a part, and which simultaneously seeks to bring into being. This sort of activity, I will argue, sets church practice apart from the sort of political/objective activity that might be considered normal to village life. It also sets church members in direct opposition to the sorts of objective realities that do not fit with church practice. Disputes with culture group members stems directly from this opposition. This, I argue, is its liberative aspect, and it is not tied to the successful possibility of the reality Pentecostalism proposes, but rather to its power to dispel the current reality.⁴

In Chapter 9 I introduce Pentecostal church practice as it exists in Southeast Alaska churches. This is, from what I can tell, very similar to Pentecostal practices elsewhere in the US and in other places as well. Three

³Hence the idea found in many religions that the central texts are, in effect, untranslatable. This was true for Christianity for its first 1400 years, and remains so for Islam and some aspects of Hindu worship.

⁴This is why it is such a mistake to look to theology for an understanding of conversion, as many interested in conversion still do (see Hefner 1993).

kinds of practice are discussed — prayer, gifts of faith, and bible study — in three contexts — weekly service, revivals, and in bible study/prayer groups. From this emerges crucial distinctions between the types of practices engaged in by preachers versus those of the church members themselves. This is particularly apparent when one considers the ways that local relations and histories are (and are not) made the subject of church speech. Gifts of faith are introduced in the context of revival, which is perhaps their most common venue. These are performance practices whose significance for church membership are discussed briefly at the end of the chapter. Bible study, in groups or as a part of the service, is critical for individuals as they seek the religious signification of their daily lives. This involves a very broad reading of the Bible, and may include the notes that are part of annotated editions, and even the speech of the preacher as important parts of “the text” of christianity. This sort of practice is, then, textually expansive, and so mirrors the practice of these groups as they seek to expand while remaining closed to outsider inspection.

Chapter 10 centers on church testimonies and other church-based discussions as they invoke the objective reality associated with church practice. Three elements of Pentecostal practice as it exists for church members in Alaska are apparent here: the dynamics of the above mention objectifications, as they are locally conceived; the necessary contrast of this objectification with that of otherwise ordinary village life (which church

members seek to replace); and the novel form of “subjectivity” that church practices entail. Together these three elements point to important social (and not necessarily theological) implications for church membership. Common throughout the region, they argue for an understanding of contemporary church dynamics in the specific context of regional politics and social change. The importance of such an understanding becomes clear when we look to the following chapter and the conflicts that have emerged church members and those involved in the cultural revival discussed in Part 2.

Chapter 11 takes up those issues introduced in Chapter 1 with “the Flo Ellers incident.” Past event in this village make it clear that the disputes brought out in this revival are in fact ongoing, though they appear episodic. The language of this opposition is important because it steers us away from a theology centered approach to these problems and their social manifestations. For what seems most clear in the examples discussed in this section is that the situation is not reducible to one set of beliefs versus another. Instead, it involves two different and mutually incompatible visions of community and its relation to the outside world. Discussion demonstrates the considerable contrast with Weber’s views of radical protestantism and its role in social change.

The final sections of Chapter 11 concludes the ethnography by bringing together the oppositional nature and radical subjectivity of church practice and church members with the issues of class formation raised in the

Introduction. Here it becomes clear that church practice remains central for the types of disputes it can provoke and the alternatives it proposes. These issues place church members at the center of local political disputes, as they have been since the late 1980's. Yet beyond their stubborn "anti-structuralism," radical christians are important for the sort of "post-structural" practice they propose. By this I mean simply the fact that church practice involves and invokes a different understanding of how structures — whether they be the theological order or radical Protestantism, or those discussed in Part 1 — come into being (peoples on being or that of those around them).

Chapter 12 provides an epistemological overview of the previous eleven chapters, using some of the issues raised to discuss the possibility of a post-structural ethnography more generally. It takes the form of an Afterword because it is meant to stand independent of the text and to make points not necessarily relevant to the ethnography itself; yet it depends on the proximity of the text for any sensibility it might possess.

Chapter 9 — Church Practice as Anti-Structure

It's winter in K—. I am a guest, and only just arrived, though I know the folks I am staying with pretty well and there is close to three feet of snow on the ground...the thickness makes a blanket, just sort of flopped over the village, muffling.

I came on the late ferry, 11:30 p.m., along with the Sitka Pentecostal Prayer Group, though this was unknown to me at the time. There were many cars to meet the ferry, and Joe's wife's brother is in his Salvation Army uniform. We, Joe and his wife and now, gradually me, gathered a few more folks and took them back to Joe's house. It turns out that the leader of the Sitka Prayer Group, Pastor David was staying at Joe's as well and at first there was quite a group there.

The visiting Pastor was going for a late dinner at the house of one of the members of the host prayer group and so we tagged along — Joe invited himself and I tagged along with him, making me tagged-tagged-along. Those hosting the trip are members of a prayer group associated with the Salvation Army Church here in the village. Even so, I think that the Salvation Army Pastor was not wholly in favor of the idea. He did a lot of driving folks around, but as I say, the minister of the Prayer Group stayed with Joe. Reverend David is a preacher for either the Assembly of God or the Church of God, Joe seemed to think the latter, though at one time he had been a

preacher for the AOG.

So we went to dinner with Rev. David and with, it turns out, his dad and uncle and a few other folks. The dinner was deer stew, and along with it was bread and butter and the inevitable black coffee — always taken black though sometimes with sugar. I sat next to David's father because his wife got up from the table shortly after we came in. She and all of the other women moved to the living room to watch Christian TV. The house was well kept and tidy and decorated indian style...the walls were bright colors, yellow and blue for the dining room and living room respectively, shelves for knick-knacks and mementos, mostly indian related from down south — dream catchers and black velvetene of men with feather war bonnets.

One of the guests from out-of-town was a Jimmy. It was obvious that the Sitka Pentecostal Prayer Group (which at this point I was still yet to have a clear picture of) was his life. Most of the folks there teased Jimmy, and he teased himself and took it well. It was affectionate, especially from the old men, though it made me wince a little when I heard it coming from Rev. David. He was clearly the idol of the other man, and this gave these remarks a special unkindness.

I do not pretend that the reverend and I did not clash — we really didn't say anything to one another the entire weekend. I introduced myself to him when the opportunity arose, but it was clear that between us there was to be no communication of any positive sort, so we both kept our distance.

I'm sure he resented my only partly sincere participation. My attempted nonchalance was ineffectual, as it often is, so perhaps this was what set it off. In any case he avoided me as well.

They had been joking with Jimmy about songs most of the evening. After dinner Rev. David said that Jimmy thought we should all sing a song. People moved to the living room and formed a circle, and the TV was left on. I was toward the outside, not yet realizing what we were to sing but certain that I would not know it in any case. When we sing the song goes through several repetitions and seems to change to a different song at one point and not change back, leaving me wondering if we have actually sung one song or two. After the song David leads the group in prayer, and throughout the prayer those in the group speak as well, though usually not too loud, with "Praise be the Lord" "Thank you Jesus."

Now past 2:00 we all donned shoes and left. Joe and I drove around the village a little. As we drove he told stories of "witchdoctors" who could run up cliffs, down chimneys and strange things. In this story it actually took the witch doctor two tries to run up the cliff, but no matter....

1

There are perhaps 20 or 25 evangelical churches, Pentecostal churches, and affiliated prayer groups in the villages and larger towns of Southeast Alaska that have significant followings. Beyond this there are likely just as

many mission churches without a significant following, but attended by two or three people nonetheless. There is usually more than one new church in each of the predominantly Native villages. Some are affiliated with national or international organizations — the Southern Baptists, Assembly of God, Church of God, United Pentecostal, or Four Square are all represented. Others are unaffiliated, or marginally affiliated. Those with national affiliations tend to be run by pastors who come from outside the region. And some of these are missionary churches as well, meaning that they are not self-supporting, and cannot choose their own pastors. Independent churches are not missions, of course, and these are the churches most likely to be led by a Native preacher. It is immediately obvious when one enters one or another of these churches, however, that this is one of the few social institutions in the village where distinctions between Native and non-Native do not apply. This goes for those churches with Native pastors or mission pastors.

Few of these churches were established before the early 1970's, when the Assembly of God began a number of missions in Southeast Alaska. Some of these missions were more successful than others, but the general success led other church organizations to begin similar programs. Part of the reason for their popularity was that the long-standing churches in the region — specifically those of the Presbyterian and Salvation Army — had difficulty maintaining regular church services. Despite their success in the early 20th century, neither had achieved the sort of independence and self-sustaining

participation that early missionaries had hoped in more than one or two villages. As a result, most of the pre-1970 village churches depended on outside assistance to help keep up the buildings and pay the salaries of the resident pastors. By the early 1970's both the Presbyterians and the Salvation Army were finding it hard to fill positions and maintain existing congregations. It was in this vacuum that the Assembly of God began their mission program.

Many current members of the newly arrived churches explain their participation in terms of these dynamics. Most were members of either the Salvation Army or Presbyterian churches when the new churches arrived. And many felt abandoned when their Presbyterian or Salvation Army churches were closed for long periods of time, or when pastors came and went, displaying little commitment to the community. Many began attending Assembly or other services when they were the only regular services in the village, or after a period away from any church, or "out of curiosity."

A number of the new churches attained financial independence and lost their missionary status by the mid-eighties. In part this was aided by the original strength of the missionary programs — most operated out of new buildings, rather than the churches built in the 1910's and 20's. Another factor was the "tithing" practiced by some groups, where church members are expected to turn over a portion of their income (often 10%) to support the

pastor and the facilities. For this reason some of the most financially successful churches are the newest ones despite the fact that these churches most often draw from the more marginal portions of the community. This has caused them to be viewed with even greater suspicion by non-members, and with some envy by other pastors.

The success of the early Pentecostal churches brought three consequences. The first was the arrival of a number of even newer, and sometimes even more dramatic or dynamic, evangelical and Pentecostal groups. The second was the increased participation of Alaska Natives in pastoral training programs and from this the creation of a number of village prayer groups/Bible study groups, run by church members rather than the church pastors. The last result has been a change created in many of the older Presbyterian and Salvation Army churches. Many have taken on a more Pentecostal air, and one Presbyterian pastor in a popular village church has a reputation of being "more Pentecostal than the Pentecostal preacher" in the same village. Almost all have been pulled toward the type of Pentecostal service and practice that marks the new arrivals.

In most villages there tends to be considerable movement between Pentecostal churches by church attendees. Some go to other churches only for special events — guest preachers or revivals that tend to break the monotony of regular service. Others will go to one church for a year, and then change congregations, at times ending up back at their original starting point some

three or four years later. In all churches, revivals — special services, usually during the fall or winter, that may involve guest preachers from out of town — attract members of all of the Pentecostal congregations in the village, and from nearby villages as well if the village is accessible to its neighbors. These meetings can be quite large, with 70 or 80 or even more people in attendance. They are, however, not held very often — maybe once per winter, maybe less.

All congregations in the Native villages tend to see seasonal fluctuations as well. During the summer months church attendance is low, with many folks concerned with summer activities like subsistence, travel, or seasonal employment. During the Fall, participation begins again and winter is the high point of attendance and service in every church. In addition, in many villages the prayer group, where there is one, meets most often during the winter. During the summer there is seldom enough interest to support a regular meeting, and most groups fade, only to be rejoined with enthusiasm in October.

Altogether the village congregations are not large by suburban standards. A popular church will have 20 - 30 attendees — 6 or 8 nuclear families, or 2 or 3 “families” in the village sense. Some are larger, of course, but just as many are smaller. Much of this has to do with the isolation of the villages, and the competition from other churches. As mentioned in the introduction, Kake has six active churches in a village of less than 1000 people. Two of these are quite small (one or two households) and the other

four are of relatively equal size.

2

Regular Sunday service at most Pentecostal churches follows a similar pattern. It begins with a “song service” — songs are sung from a hymnal, or from sheets handed around if the songs are new. Some are old Protestant hymns, others are quite new, and it is not uncommon to sing songs written by the preacher or his or her spouse. Christian television also has an impact here, for many people watch one of the several national Christian channels that are broadcast in most villages. New songs from these programs are very popular. Quite often members of the congregation will play instruments to accompany the singing. Indeed, successful churches often have expensive amplification systems that support electric guitars and microphones, even though the church buildings do not seem so large that they would require them.

During the song service there is no pre-set number of songs to be sung. The pastor will usually have picked out several that support or introduce the subject of the day’s sermon. In addition members of the congregation are invited to — and often do — propose songs. These can come out of the hymn book, or might be a “special.” In the latter case the church member proposing the song will often go to dias or front of the congregation and sing, either accompanied by the instruments or not. This is more common at a revival, but also happens during regular service and when it does, it marks these

services with a special air. Most of those at the service participate in the singing enthusiastically. Some have instruments of their own, tambourines or shakers, that they will bring along. Many people in the village point out that this sort of participation was true of early church membership throughout the region, and the Salvation Army bands of the various villages were always well supported and very popular though this is not the case today. Still many Southeast Natives, even those who do not now attend church, can sing traditional hymns.

Song service usually takes up about 30 minutes of the regular services, and it is followed by, prayer, readings, and a sermon. The prayer is usually begun with a request for prayers by the pastor. He begins by announcing his own prayer requests for issues that are central to the congregation as a whole — for ill relatives of members who are away and cannot request the prayers themselves, or for larger issues in those churches with a national affiliation, like mission work. He will then solicit prayers from the congregation. These are generally volunteered in large numbers — prayer for sick or troubled relatives, home lives, absent friends — and some are left unspoken, when a topic might seem too personal or controversial to mention. The preacher will generally make a list of these prayers and this list will be repeated when he and the group pray. Prayers for help are more common than prayers for guidance, and prayers for success are the least common.

When the congregation prays they stand, bow heads, close eyes and

join hands. The prayer leader, usually the Pastor, will recite all of the requested prayers, including those of his or her own with which he began the prayer requests. The prayer is usually done in a dramatic voice, with modulating volume used to accent certain words or phrases in a way that can be described as penetrating. While the congregation members' heads are bowed, the prayer leader's head begins bowed but normally rises, like the volume of the voice used in prayer, and at times he speaks directly at the roof of the church. While praying, the members of the congregation will say aloud their own prayers, though their heads normally remain bowed and their voices lower. The modulation in people's voices draws attention to their own emphases in the prayers they utter as they follow along with the prayer leader. Thus it might sound like....

prayer leader: [gaining volume and pitch, until the final syllables]

...and we ASK you Lord, praise Jesus, to remember the Dear

FRIEND of Anita, as she enters the hospital, this coming Tuesday.....

church member: [quietly, timed to coinciding with "as she enters"]

...yes Lord, for Anita's Friend....

The style of prayer practiced by most prayer leaders is very similar — and drawn, one might guess based simply on cadence, word choice, and even assumed accents — on the Southern Baptist style of prayer of the mid-twentieth century that has become the sort of emblem of the evangelizing preachers on Christian television. Not all prayer leaders assume this style, of

course, and some of those who do actually come to Alaska from the Southern US, and therefore the accents are not so clearly effected. Yet by far the style pervades most prayer and prayer leaders, even those born and raised in Alaska who do not otherwise speak in that fashion.

Prayer is generally followed by readings from one or another protestant Bible. Annotated Bibles are especially popular among church members (for reasons discussed below), but the King James Bible is usually preferred by pastors and used for readings in church services. The latter may reflect a preference for the archaism of the language used in the King James Bible, and these are sometimes used in the wording of prayers or sermons. Quite often, in regularly attended churches where things can be arranged before hand, the readings will be done by members of the audience, at times standing where they are, and at other times going up to the alter. Most people bring their own Bibles to church, and some bring more than one version, and time is usually taken to allow the congregation to find the passage and read along. Those who bring two Bibles will often compare the readings in the two versions. The readings and sermon are sometimes done together, with the preacher or the day's speaker reciting both the readings and then speaking accompanying sermon. In virtually all cases the readings are selected to introduce or underline certain elements of the sermon that will follow, establishing a clear emphasis on bible reading and interpretation. During the service, the pastors seldom explain Bible passages but rather use them as

verbal texture that will be evoked in the sermon. This may be why church members prefer the annotated version of the Bible for their own use.

Beyond this, however, the annotated versions of the Bible are valued because they expand the text of the Bible itself, rather than for any historicity they might add. Church members spend considerable time in Bible study and interpretation, and the textuality of the Bible is a significant factor in their relationship with church practice and membership. And while it is common for many Pentecostal churches to insist on a literal translation for points of doctrine, much of the emphasis that church members place on biblical understanding is based on seeing the significance of elements of the Bible in their own daily lives. This perhaps further explains the preference for annotated versions, for in expanding the text, they multiply the potential signification of any particular Biblical passage.

Sermon topics vary and are generally held to less than 20 minutes. In contrast to church members' prayers and testimonials (discussed below), sermon topics seldom address village happenings. Nor, in general are worldly, "business" or "economic" topics ever broached. By far the majority of sermon topics remain quite clearly pointed at traditional sorts of theology, rather than at local happenings, and in this way contrast strongly with the prayers that precede them and the interpretation and discussion of the readings that happens outside of church. People react to the sermons in much the same way that they react to their own Bible study, however, and

that is to weigh the images and interpretations against the events and issues of their everyday lives, such that sermons on traditional theological issues tend to be heard as multiplications of the text as well. There is, however, a definite sense that the separation of the sermon from the personal lives of the individuals in the congregation is appropriate. People will react negatively to any overt reference or obvious connection between the sermon topic and the life of one or another person in the congregation — any hint of being “singled out.” Such incidents have split some churches and caused long-time members to leave for other congregations. This fact has led many non-church goers to assert that church members do not really go to church to live a better life, but rather to be told glowing stories of an afterlife, noting.... “Anytime anyone says anything to them they change churches....”

3

Revivals are infrequent occurrences, happening once per year or once every few years in most villages. Quite often they are associated with a sponsoring local church. But the visiting preachers as well as the audience drawn to the revival are always from many separate churches and denominations. Crowds for a revival can be large, and some will travel by ferry to attend revivals held in other, more distant villages. Quite often as much as half of the audience at a revival will be from other villages. Many revivals are themselves traveling groups, going from village to village

throughout the Southeast region and into other regions, holding revivals in many places along the way. In such cases they are organized by the revival preachers with the support of the host churches along the way. Some of the revival participants will travel with the preachers as well, at times spending several weeks traveling and attending services. The meetings they hold can take place during the day or at night, but the most active revivals usually happen in the evening and continue past mid-night and into the early hours of the morning. In some villages the meetings go on for several days as well, with one or two services each day.

Revival services follow a pattern similar to regular Sunday service. They begin with the song service, although the production is generally larger and more rehearsed. As many as 6 or 7 musicians and singers will take a place by the altar and perform songs. The audience generally knows these songs, as some are taken from a hymnal and many are the more popular songs from Christian television or radio, or even from Christian music tapes and CD's that have wide popularity in many villages. Local musicians of the host church may be asked to join in, but the lead is generally taken by the revival preacher. He selects the songs and singles out audience members for song requests, calling those he knows by their first name, preceded by "Brother" or "Sister" — "Sister Mary", or "Brother Tim." Those making requests are often invited up to the altar to lead in the singing, and they usually do so. Likewise, a number of "specials" are usually performed, which

are carefully rehearsed as well. People singing “specials” that are not standard hymns will sometimes bring cassette recorders up to the alter with them and play tapes with appropriate background music.

Song service is the first of several opportunities for individual expression at a revival. People will frequently preface a selected hymn or “special” with some words about why they chose it, or its particular significance *to them*. In such cases, unlike in the sermons discussed above, singling out other audience members is quite common, as are expressions of personal feelings or happenings. Many will bring someone with them to the alter to support them and help lead in the singing — a friend, sibling, parent, or (less often) a spouse, sometimes holding hands or joking together. If the sound system has more than one microphone, the preacher retains one and the other is left for those who come up to the alter. In these cases, and even sometimes when there is only one microphone, the revival preacher will usually stay on the dias and offer support to or joke along with the novices.

Throughout, the song service is lively, not least because the musicians who will break into an up-tempo, tambourine ringing song if things appear to be slowing down. It is also during the song service that the first interaction with the supernatural may take place. Like Pentecostal churches in other areas, those in Southeast Alaska practice “gifts of faith/gifts of the spirit” and acknowledge two forms of spirit possession — possession by the Holy Spirit or, conversely, by demons that seek to undo the work of the Holy Spirit and

frustrate His gifts. It should be noted that both of these are far less common during the song service than later in the service. Thus some may speak in tongues momentarily when discussing the choice of a song, or some may get carried away by the Holy Spirit in the passion of dancing much more vigorously and uncontrolledly around the aisles. These are generally brief incidents, however and do not generally affect the musicians or the preacher. The preacher will often use the opportunity to interject between songs that the Holy Spirit has seemingly entered the congregation and is “with us today/tonight.”

Song service can last anywhere from one to two or more hours. It ends with the preacher usually taking back control of the proceedings. The musicians will acknowledge this by putting down their instruments, though they most often remain on the dias along with the preacher. As in regular service, song service is followed by prayer and by the request for prayers from the congregation. When given from the congregation, these prayers are generally very similar to those offered on most Sundays, though they are more impassioned. Prayers are asked for those in the community who have left the church — that they may return — and for those who have returned only recently, or are attending a revival for the first time — that they be “born again” in Christ, and thus become a regular member of this or another congregation. The request for prayers can also be joined with or take the form of altar testimonies. Here people take the dias to address the audience, make

a confession, announce their intention to be reborn in Jesus, or tell the story of their rebirth.

Testimonies are always about the village, the people in it, and the relation of the speaker to them. In ways that re-emphasize much that was noted above, testimonies are opportunities for people to discuss their own conclusions about the signification of local events, happenings and relations — most often in relation to specific bible passages, but sometimes just in reference to the sort of ‘general order’ theological symbology of Pentecostalism more broadly. Throughout it is a process of drawing the lessons of salvation from daily life, and from those individuals around them (most of whom, if they have had an impact on a persons’ salvation, are likely themselves to have been reborn and are just as likely to be in the audience). These are always very personal statements, revealing of both the speaker and many of those who hear them. Old personal feuds or antagonisms are raised, sometimes to announce forgiveness, sometimes as testimony to forgiveness already made and now kept — “two years ago I stood up here and said that I would never again....and I since that time I have not. And I have Sister — to thank, especially for the times when I wanted to....and she said....”

And while testimonies are ostensibly about a person’s own faith and discoveries, almost every speaker raises issues of very contemporary social relations and processes. Divisions and relations between “important families” are frequent topics, as are divisions within “families.” Indeed few

personal and inter-personal issues seem inappropriate when the speakers are members of the community. People will speak of former marriages or affairs that they or their spouses and ex-spouses have had; falling-outs with siblings or children; “bad blood” between neighbors.

Perhaps the most common theme, though, is alcohol. Drinking problems are common in many villages, as are problems with drugs. Few villages have bars or even liquor stores, and many are ostensibly “dry,” but all have bootleggers who buy out of the village and resell locally at greatly inflated prices. Most testimonies involve a confession of being a former “hard drinker,” and of having hurt spouses, children, friends and neighbors as a result. Altar testimonies actually seldom involve announcing the intention to stop drinking — more often they take place after the drinking has stopped, and are thus used to announce that it has been some number of months or years since the speaker last had a drink.

People exhibit a great deal of emotion when giving testimonies, but very few are overcome by their emotions while speaking. This is surprising in that such topics are not common in conversation and the emotional pitch of the revival is very high. Some have practiced by giving multiple testimonies over the years. But others, giving their testimony for the first time, seem surprising calm even when discussing very difficult subjects. At times the stories and examples are as long as 10 or 15 minutes. Most end with a request for prayer (which is the ostensible purpose for open microphone).

When the preacher does eventually take back control and pray, his replicates the cadence discussed above, though the level and volume of audience participation is much greater. People predictably yell and shriek during prayer at a revival, and in a spontaneous fashion, less in time with the prayer leader. Gifts of faith become more common at this time. The preacher will frequently speak in tongues while making his prayer, and the audience will weep, or speak in tongues, or move erratically, sometimes shaking and sometimes falling down. Most people pray aloud, and loudly, while the prayer leader is praying, such that the volume of prayer is constant and rising gradually throughout the prayer to something of a crescendo after several minutes. The body movements of those not so visibly moved by the Spirit are similar to those of regular service. Most begin to pray with their eyes lowered and hands held with those nearby. But quite often at a revival people will raise one or both hands when praying, and look directly up at the ceiling while saying their prayer aloud. Many will sway and most seem to punctuate their prayer with jerking body movements. Yet even those who do not move so dramatically seem still moved by prayer. They flinch and bob and sometimes shake softly, while speaking their own prayer more softly but still audibly.

During and following the prayer many in the audience will exhibit gifts of faith or manifestations of spiritual struggle. This can include the preacher. On one instance I saw a preacher overcome by a demon upon finishing his

prayer and prior to the start of his sermon. The manifestation of the possession was a loss of strength and pain in the side. One of his regular congregation members — this was a traveling revival but part of the preachers own congregation had joined him at this particular meeting — called out to the others, “come on [name of church], your minister needs your help.” All of the members of his own congregation who were present then went up to the dias and gathered around him, laid hands upon him, and the leader of the assembled group repeated “God cast out this demon that has entered the body of this man.” All prayed in a loud murmur, with very little else said that was understandable and the preacher recovered after a minute or two. During the time he was down most of the rest of the revival audience actually stayed seated. They didn't pray, or not uniformly anyway and only a few seemed to have any idea of what else they might do. It was my impression that this was not necessarily a normal part of even a revival service in this village, though immediately afterwards few seemed distracted by it, nor did any one comment that it seemed out of place or suspicious when questioned about it later. It was, perhaps, unusual, but not unordinary.

Sermon topics at revivals tend to focus on salvation. Perhaps as important, most have a chronological aspect as well, stressing that the “second coming” can happen at any time, and that those who would be saved must be ready to go at any time. The apocalyptic immediacy of the imagery is

frequently joined to a discussion of rewards, emphasizing the previous themes. Thus at the revival discussed above, the sermon topic was drawn from a passage in the book of the Revelation, the theme of which was that some individuals, when they get to heaven, will get a golden crown. This was based on a reading from the Book of Revelation of a vision whose author said that upon arriving in heaven and seeing the holy host, some wore crowns. The interpretation of the pastor was that these were God's elect, and he went on to describe various kinds of crowns, some more spectacular than others, and to ask his audience which, if any, sort of crown they were likely to receive when they got to heaven. The issue raised was clearly one of ranking and it seemed primarily merit based — merit being defined by constancy, strength and urgency of belief. This urgency was reinforced by a second passage from the same part of the text that those who were to be saved right away upon the second coming would "meet Him in the air." The implied reading (those who were not saved would have to wait and face a later judgement) was used to urge those in the audience who were considering it to be reborn during the healing ceremony that was to follow the sermon.

The speaking style for most revival sermons is different from that of prayer, and less easily traced to the television evangelists and Southern Baptist tradition. Many preachers call on the audience for a certain amount of participation — "and they all said..." "Amen!" In my experience, though, audience members seemed to exhibit as much patience as enthusiasm when

listening to revival sermons. Thus many village residents are likely to sit and nod and say "amen" when asked, but few among those I have spoken with worried deeply about either the pressure exerted in such speeches, nor their internal consistency or sense.

After the sermon the preacher, or another of the guest preachers, may have a an "altar call," this one for special, individual prayers made by the preacher — often involving requests for healing. Here the revival preacher will normally exhibit speaking in tongues and the use of holy oil or water. Most often a line forms of those who seek healing or special prayer, and they will approach the altar one person at a time. The preacher will either use holy oil or water, or lay hands on the petitioner (or both), and then grasp the head of the petitioner in both hands and pray quietly, seldom understandably. After such prayers, the petitioners will return to their seats and continue to pray, or if in the course of prayer they are overcome by the Holy Spirit, they will faint and be caught by two or more of the preacher's helpers. Those "laying with the spirit" are carried to the back of the church and laid in aisles or in empty pews. Those whose unconscious actions are more erratic and dramatic may be watched over to make sure they do not harm themselves.

Other "gifts of the spirit" are common at this time. Among the healed are some who are overcome by tears, wailing, joy and fits of hysterical laughter. Many dance and sing erratically as the musicians will play almost

continuously, with the rest of the congregation singing and dancing or moving rhythmically at their seats. Most of the audience stays standing and praying in one way or another for much of the time. The scene can become very chaotic, and most of the responsibility for maintaining a working situation falls on the close associates of the preacher who are more accustomed to these circumstances. They help clear the aisles of those laying with the Spirit, and aid those whom the Spirit has overcome.

Not everyone at a revival practices the "gifts of faith." In a revival of 100 people perhaps as many as 30 or 40 will respond to an "altar call" for prayer and healing, and of these perhaps 20 or 25 will be overcome by the spirit and lose consciousness or become affected in some dramatic way. Many simply stay at their place and remain standing, praying, and singing. The preacher may also call out some in the audience who do not volunteer to come up to the altar for prayer and healing. These might be individuals who have come up to the altar and given testimony previously, or whom the preacher feels are close to being born again. Here the preacher must exercise judgement. I have not seen anyone called up who did not go, but those I spoke with felt untimely, unwanted attention would likely result in the loss of the person "singled out" as a potential new member.

When the line for prayer is finished and the preacher has called out all of those he intends to call out, then the music is slowed, then stopped, and the congregation allowed to settle. Those who have lain with the spirit have

usually regained consciousness and control by this time and have retaken their seats. Usually all of the dancing has subsided as well, and the weeping and laughing is either finished or muted. Then the preacher will ask the whole congregation to join him in prayer. All stand at this point and once again join hands. Like the opening prayer, this one tends to be loud and performed with a particular cadence. Often it will reiterate themes from testimonies and from the previous prayer, and will be one of the few times that the pastor is able to single out individuals in the audience. This is often heavily coded so as to be less obvious, and prayer of this sort always lacks the personal issues and references of testimonies, song requests, or prayer requests. This prayer, often closing the revival, is generally lengthy, sometimes between 5 or 10 minutes. During it "gifts of faith" will be exhibited, including speaking in tongues by the audience and the preacher. Few here will wail or laugh again, as they did during the altar call, but many sway and sometimes move spasmodically while in prayer. As before, the prayer of the audience is loud and less synchronized to the patterns of prayer used by the pastor than at a regular church service.

Revivals normally involve more than one service. If taking place over a weekend, two or three services may be held. Interspersed between the services are other social functions, like group meals and visits. Often after the service a reception will be held, with coffee and cake. Here people have a chance to visit and to see those from out of town, or to talk to the preacher

about the service. As mentioned above, some revivals and revival personnel travel from village to village over the course of several weeks.

4

Beyond the regular services and revivals, some Pentecostal church members will form “prayer groups” or “Bible study groups.” Usually specific to a particular village, these gatherings may draw from several congregations. The names signify different sorts of emphasis, though the activities of both sorts of groups are actually very similar. Both practice prayer of the sort common to revivals and Sunday service alike, with a single individual or “leader” taking the role normally assumed by the Pastor — collecting and noting the prayers, introducing one or more themes for prayer, and so on. Likewise both groups tend to spend time discussing Biblical passages, forming their own interpretations and discussing these. Unlike formal service, discussions of this sort will often involve taking direct examples from village happenings, or from the daily lives of the speaker. In this way individual members allow themselves considerably more liberty in introducing personal issues than is allowed the preachers. Like testimonies, these sorts of discussions often raise very personal issues.

Prayer groups tend to be more heavily attended by women than men. On the other hand, prayer group leaders are men. This does not necessarily mean that the topics tend to be dominated by men, however, for quite often

women take the lead role in introducing and maintaining discussions and prayers.

The members of prayer and Bible study groups are very well known to one another, and the groups are usually small, drawing between 5 and 10 people. Most meet weekly in the home of one of the members. They are at once insular (in that their activities are not usually discussed outside of the meetings) and expansive (in that they will actively seek new members and make a considerable effort to see that new members continue to attend).

This pattern is perhaps true of the more radical churches as a whole. By way of example, one church, the host of the Flo Ellers revival, reflects its insularity in the architecture of the building used for services. From the outside there is very little to indicate that the building is a church — there is no sign, no steeple, no list of times of service. Made of corrugated aluminum, it resembles a large storage barn for a public works department. There are no windows, and no panes or openings in the doors. Indeed, from the outside there is no indication of what might be going inside. For someone wishing to attend services, the only option is to be invited. Otherwise one could not ever know when the church might be in service. At the same time it is among the larger churches in the village, large enough to hold most of the village's entire church-going population. And for a while it was the most popular church in the village, with as many as 50 or more regular attendees. It is, on the whole, very inward looking, both individually and socially.

Service schedules are arranged in advance, but changed with little notice other than word of mouth, and thus one who is not already part of the church will have little luck in gaining access unless actually sought out by the group itself. At the same time, the church was known for its tendency to recruit new members, through individual invitations to church functions and the expectation of regular Sunday attendance with time.

These two features arouse much suspicion among non-church members. Many have commented on the insular nature of church groups, and of prayer groups in particular. Some voice resentment at the active recruiting, noting that once someone expresses an interest in a church, there will be someone from that congregation at their house all the time until they actually join (at which point they are expected to help do the same for other prospective new members). Most of these accusations are true, though the suspicion they arouse is less a sign of visible personal concern than it is a realization of a social dynamic quite apart from that of the non-church community.

Prayer group and bible study group members often encourage this perception by marking themselves as members of such groups or churches. Black tee-shirts similar to the popular black "rock concert" tee-shirts or "Harley-Davidson" motorcycle tee-shirts but emblazoned with religious and often radical statements are popular among some members. At one revival I saw a shirt with a picture of a crucified Christ-figure on the front along with a

mock Harley-Davidson logo with the slogan “Jesus Christ Lord of Heaven.” On the back it had more iconography and symbols on a cartoon-like landscape with the slogan underneath “worship the best or burn with the rest.” Of course not all, and probably not even most church members would feel comfortable with such a statement, but the evocation of the insularity of the church groups was very visible.

5

Several observations can be made here by way of concluding the chapter. Two aspects of Pentecostal practice emerge from the specific practices discussed above. The first is the importance of what we might call “religious signification” in everyday life. This practice is central to church members but forbidden, in a sense, to church pastors. Pastors who single out individual church members will alienate not just those members, but everyone — for it is commonly felt that a preacher should “help people,” when they need his help, and “offer guidance” when asked, but that it is “not right for him to make too much of other people’s business.” Altar testimonies, prayer petitions, the way people tend to listen to church sermons (i.e. what lessons they draw, what sorts of implications they find useful), and even the type of Bible most people prefer, reflect that such standards do not hold for other members of the congregation. People can and do refer to other congregation members during testimonies, very often when those individuals are present.

Prayer groups/Bible study groups are perhaps most emblematic of this practice, and it is significant that pastors seldom attend (or are invited to attend) these groups.

The inward looking and intensely insular nature of these groups and practices stand in contrast to the outward looking nature of most of the cultural revival, and this, as much as the actual content of the movements, distinguishes the two. This carries over onto the bearing of persons, for church members tend to be reserved in public, though the preachers are definitely not. Culture group members tend to be more outgoing and play a role in many non-cultural public events, from basketball games to village meetings. Dance groups perform in the village hall/school basketball court, and only when there is an audience. Church group members perform only behind closed doors, where there is not audience (everyone is understood to be a participant), in buildings with few or no windows. The dance group puts up signs to announce their performances; the Pentecostals seldom post signs announcing meetings.

In some ways the attention to community relations on the part of church members — when family relations, personal relations, even village corporation relations become issues for testimony and prayer — make the churches a seemingly ideal means for the construction of community relations outside of the structure of family or broader political-economy. According to some preachers, the relative isolation of the villages and their

'subsistence lifestyle' [sic] make them ideal places to build a "Christian community." Yet the impossibility of this is made plain by the problems inherent even in this one summation. As noted above, no village has subsistence autonomy — for reasons that lie in the village and outside it. Likewise, the possibility of relations outside of the local structure of family, ANCSA, or contemporary timber politics is limited. These structures are the objective reality of village politics. Church members are perhaps more aware of this than their pastors.¹ People will act outside of family or corporate relations in their interactions with other church members, but few would assume that this dispels those relations.

For this reason as well, churches are actually very limited in their ability to curb or sanction the conduct of their members. The lack of a central sanctioning figure (the preacher is barred from this, as above), means that the relations that emerge between church members tend to remain very voluntary, and often reflect some aspect of non-church ties. Thus any one singled out by another church member on any basis is likely to receive support from still others in the congregation. If not he is likely to leave that particular church. Such dynamics are reflected in the fact that there are,

¹ One question raised incidentally by this material is whether the pastors are conscious of the dynamics discussed here. This is difficult to answer, for most pastors give a very idealized version of their own relation with their congregations while at the time demonstrating a very careful understanding of what they may and may not do or say. In all likelihood many would disagree with the representation made here, arguing for less distance between their own church activities and those of their congregation.

inevitably, “sides” in every church. Taken together, this keeps church groups from being controlling entities even for many of their most devoted members.

What is central in most aspects of individual participation is the actual signification involved in church practice. This is what people learn in the nights of visiting that occupy the time between expressing an interest in the church and actually becoming a member. This includes the language used in church functions by members and preachers. This language is the prerequisite for participation in the objective reality that Pentecostalism proposes, and thus represents both its possibility and its fulfillment. Examples of testimonies are given in the next chapter, and these contain the elements of the language involved.

Gifts of faith — the second crucial issue that emerges from the practices cited above — are an extension of this language. They too are both a means of and evidence of religious signification of the life of the individual involved.

For non-Pentecostals gifts of faith — the speaking in tongues, laying with the Spirit, faith healing, uncontrollable dancing or laughter, and spontaneous expression that accompany Pentecostal services — are invariably viewed as play-acting or performance. And in this view they are correct, though not in the presumed counter-assumption that more reserved expression (or no expression at all) is somehow more sincere or true. Piety is always “an act.” The question is what sort. Most Pentecostal church members

state clearly that such acts are a “sign” of the Holy Spirit entering their bodies. And theological assumptions aside, we must consider these acts as signifying practice, with all the complexity this entails. As signifying practice, they are necessarily both organizing and communicative (though these aspects may often appear distinct). In this way gifts of faith demonstrate full participation to other members of the church. And because the gifts are conventionalized (like many Pentecostal churches there are clear patterns and styles of speaking in tongues, of laying with the spirit, or even of the apparently chaotic dancing that will occur), people get “better” at them — and some will say “so-and-so is very good at speaking in tongues.” New members are apparent as new members when they first attempt the gifts. Yet because the performances are public, they also represent a commitment to other peoples claims to such gifts (if not necessarily to all of them, then certainly to the possibility for all). In this way they not only express the objective reality that Pentecostalism invokes — of spirits that are active in the real world, meaning here and now — they confirm this reality in others.

Still the confirmation of the gifts themselves is usually described as an internal process. People know they are coming, know they are happening, when they “feel the spirit come upon them.” As Peirce once explained, and others continue to demonstrate (Sacks 1995), all sense perceptions are themselves signs, interpretations, and so their implication — their “meaning” — if not their actual characteristics are mutable. What’s more,

because they are internal they are in a sense unrefutable, in one's self or in others. As such they do not necessarily present an experiential problem for those who receive them.

But even beyond their plausibility, such gifts are important for what they can say and do, that other sorts of signifying practice — like language — cannot. Levi-Strauss hints at this when he says that myth is tied to language beyond the fact that myth was told in language, or even in a language. Myth is tied to language, he notes, because it is a kind of language — one capable of asking and expressing questions of the world that ordinary language is not (1963). He goes on from this point to conclude that as such, myths are amenable to structural analysis. What he does not say, is that as a form of language, myths might be amenable to analysis as speech as well. So while he demonstrates in interesting ways that myths might be read as *langue*, we might ask, in this instance, how they might be considered *parole*. For gifts of faith are themselves a sort of language as well, capable of posing questions, positing answers, and organizing experience; but they do so in a way that is dependent on particular claims to context, experience, and legitimacy.

The point here, then, is not to propose a structural analysis of Pentecostal symbolics. What must remain before us is the question of what sort of objective manipulation does Pentecostal practice as a whole make possible. It all begins, as most church members will tell you, with understanding the importance of the fact that "Jesus loves you."

Chapter 10 — Church Practice as Post-Structure

“Man as an objective, sensuous being is therefore a *suffering* being — and because he feels what he suffers, a *passionate* being. Passion is the essential force of man energetically bent on its object.

“But man is not merely a natural being: he is a *human* natural being. That is to say, he is a being for himself. Therefore he is a *species being*, and has to confirm and manifest himself as such both in his being and in his knowing. Therefore, *human* objects are not natural objects as they immediately present themselves, and neither is *human sense* as it immediately *is* — as it is objectively — *human* sensibility, human objectivity. Neither nature objectively nor nature subjectively is directly given in a form adequate to the *human* being.”

— Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844* (1964:182 *emphasis in original*).

Much of the description in the previous chapter might easily represent Pentecostal worship in other parts of the United States, or even in other areas of the world where Pentecostal missions have grown popular. Yet here, and I suspect elsewhere as well, the movement itself and the practices associated with it are far more revealing of the immediate social and personal dynamics of the particular churches and church members. By way of example, most individuals in Alaskan Pentecostal churches, like most Pentecostal churches “down south,” practice a form of expression of faith called a “testimony.” A testimony is simply the story of how one came to be saved, and as people come to be conscious of the day to day manifestations of their salvation, their testimony grows or is multiplied. Testimonial stories often involve supernatural interventions in the life of the speaker — hence the idea that following these encounters the individual then acts as a “witness for Christ.”

When encouraging others to speak of their salvation people will say, “Go ahead, give him [i.e. the person listening, in this case the author] your testimony.”

Testimony stories often appear as a paradox. They are highly personal, even intimate stories, yet they follow very predictable sorts of patterned, narrative development. On the personal side they involve elements that must be described as local, and often these elements are critical to the conversion/salvation process. In the accounts that follow several elements — like the BIA, the local tribal council, and even particular (and for most of those listening, identifiable) neighbors — are named and arranged vis-a-vis the narrative.

Throughout these testimonies, however, patterns emerge beyond the simple structure of conversion narrative. Testimony is central to church practice, for beyond gifts of faith, it is the major means of church member participation in church service and activity. As such, church testimonies carry within themselves the problematic of the Pentecostal movement itself. As indicated at the close of the previous chapter, this begins and ends with the notion that “Jesus loves you.”

1

The first testimony is from, Tom A—, is a retired fisherman (partly disabled as the result of a stroke), in his late sixties who has been a member of

the local Assembly of God Church since the mid-1970's. In fact, he was among the first important converts after the Assembly opened this church several years prior. Up to that time the church had served mainly itinerant white workers (working on Sealaska's first logging projects), and children from the village in an after-school program. Tom was among the first Natives to join, a process which eventually led to the Assembly of God Church becoming a self-supporting congregation of primarily Native membership. His wife Kate is also a member, who joined after he did. Most often she defers to his testimony, saying that her inspiration came mainly from seeing the changes that salvation had brought to her husband.

Both were saved, however, as members of the Salvation Army, moving over to the Assembly Church only after their salvation. Both said that they moved because they had felt there was "something missing" at the Salvation Army Church. Kate noted that she had never seen anyone at the Salvation Army Church pray with a hand above their head, something she interpreted — I think — to mean a different approach to communion with the Holy Spirit. Underlying this, however, is the different level of participation offered by the Assembly Church, for both described their enthusiasm for their salvation by describing church (and often meeting/service based) practices. Both were led to the Assembly Church by a Native-led revival featuring a visiting Makah pastor from Washington State. At that revival, they noted, many people from the village's other

congregations attended, and perhaps 30 or 40 people were saved. This was, in effect, the start of the Assembly Church as a congregation and was perhaps the first turning point for Pentecostalism in the villages.

One other point is worth noting before moving on to the testimony itself. Though Tom and his wife are Native and both would once have been considered central figures in their "family," the "family" itself is now relatively small and somewhat torn by his and his wife's salvation. Several of their children still drink, and this has caused some tension. One son lost a seine boat in an accident, which his father blames on his (the son's) drinking and the devil (who is ultimately responsible). In addition, their public affiliation with several of the more radical Christians seems to have limited the amount of extended family members that might otherwise have made this family a larger and more important group. Altogether this makes their "family" one of the more dispersed and least politically powerful in the village, though the role of Kate in one of the village government positions counters this a little. In all, the family holds no power on the village corporation board or in any of the corporation hirings. All this is true at the present time despite the fact that they have potentially what might be considered among the larger kin networks in the village.

Tom's story is as follows (paraphrased, as written in my field notes):

When Tom graduated from High School at Sheldon Jackson [the all-Native boarding school in Sitka] he came back to the village to go fishing.

His father had been a fisherman, and Tom had grown up on the boats, along with his father and brothers. This was in 1948. His brothers were all still in the service, and his father had died in a shooting in the village while they were away. His mother had died when he was young, and so the loss of his father left Tom relatively alone at 20 years old. At the time he drank liquor, he notes, but not so much as he did later. He had plans to avenge his father's death, but was waiting for the return of his brothers, and looking for a fishing job.

Shortly after returning to the village he was approached by several members of the Juneau Area Office of the BIA and the village Tribal Council. The BIA had initiated a series of loans through the Indian Reorganization Act of 1936/38 [which did not really reach Alaska until after World War II]. The Tribal Council was going to use money loaned through the BIA to buy the cannery in the village, and to loan some of the money to individuals who could then buy seine boats and go fishing for the cannery. They wanted Tom to take on a loan and to become a seine-boat skipper. He was nervous at the time but felt like he couldn't say no to the Council, and he had always wanted his own boat. The BIA representative were all whites: "caucasians, like you", he said.

By the time he got his boat it was the mid-1950's. They had a few good seasons, especially after the fish traps were outlawed. But by the early 1960's the cannery was closed and they were sent to fish all over. Fishing

was bad at this time, and lots of canneries were closing. This was when he began to drink more heavily. With no family, he had to settle for what crew he could find, and these were usually hard drinkers as well. The more people that left the village, the less choice he had in who he could take on. His own drinking got so heavy that he had trouble even keeping a crew, and his wife began to drink as well.¹

By the late-1960's Tom could not afford to keep fishing. The boat had deteriorated and he could not keep a good crew. Technology was improving the seining fleet across the region and especially the new boats from Seattle and Washington State, but for those who could not afford improvements things got worse. At the time he blamed God for his troubles, he says, and for the loss of both parents, and was very bitter. One day Tom was sitting in his living room considering suicide, and he asked God for a sign or some miracle to give him faith and spare his life. Just as he was asking, someone knocked at his door. It was one of the local ministers who said that he was just walking by but had a feeling that he

¹During this time fishing was on the decline region-wide and the cannery, like the several other Native owned canneries in the region, was in a constant state of flux. Year to year operation depended mostly on the ability of the Juneau Area Office to secure BIA loans to cover operating costs. Eventually all of the BIA-financed canneries failed, but this was gradual, with one cannery in one village closing first and the boats from that village being sent to fish for one of the other BIA-financed canneries that still remained open. By the mid-1960's, though all had ceased to operate regularly, and the four cannery owning tribal councils had accumulated several million dollars in debt.

should go in and pray with Tom. As he stood at the door he just kept saying, "Jesus loves you, Jesus loves you." This Tom took to be the sign that he was looking for and he started to feel better. The next day was Sunday, and the pastor asked him and his wife to come to church that day.

They went to church together for the first time that Sunday. During services the preacher asked Tom to come up and pray. He said that he didn't know how, but the preacher said that he would lead him through it. When they had first come into the church, a man had come in behind them — a "caucasian," who had sat in the pew at the back. When Tom did go up to the altar to pray, the "caucasian" followed, and kneeled behind him and prayed: "he was talking to God while I prayed." After the service the preacher invited everyone to stay for cake and coffee, but the caucasian left. When they sent someone to look for him, he was gone. No one knew who he was, nor had anyone seen him before. After much conversation over the next couple of days, people decided that he was an angel. Tom said that he knew it to be so because after that day he never had the desire for another drink. Since that day, he has been a "good witness" for Christ in the village.²

² It is important to note here that it is possible to look at Pentecostalism entirely in this light, as a means of moral or behavioral reform with functional consequences that lend to its popularity and survival. My analysis goes in a different direction, but one consequence of this is that I do not address the "morals" question in any through way. It remains a fact that a more full analysis of Pentecostalism means addressing this element as well.

2

Pentecostal churches have been most successful in those villages hardest hit by the economic collapse of the 1960's and 1970's. Within these villages and wherever these churches have proved successful, they have drawn new members from those made most marginal by the vast economic changes of the past 50 years. In the hardest hit places, this might include half or more of the Native population. In villages with high unemployment and consequent poverty, two or more radical churches have sometimes found success. This has not always been at the expense of the other established churches. Indeed, doctrinal differences and even differences in practice are not always the cause of an individual choice of church, at least not at first. Rather, both the Salvation Army and Presbyterian churches have often become the province of one or two powerful families in each village. These families dominate church orientation (often to the open dismay of resident preachers) and the "salvationist mission" of the church is subordinated to other causes or other dynamics. One active Salvation Army pastor told me that his initial success in bringing people into the church (especially those, like Tom, who have never been to church) is countered by his inability to retain them. The new prospects are easily dismayed by family politics within the church — which recent converts perhaps more than old members see as a contradiction of church purpose. New members then seem to seek out the

more radical, and more institutionally independent Pentecostal churches.

The marginality that drives membership in Pentecostal churches also plays a role in determining “content.” Drinking and abuse (sexual, physical, emotional) are consistent themes in church testimonies, and are the topics used to hook new members and to related to new members the signification of church practice. “I used to be a real hard drinker, but Jesus turned me away from all that,” a new prospect will be told. Irene, a more recent convert to a well established Pentecostal church, notes this as a crucial part of her own conversion [from a recorded testimony; explanations and comments added by the author at time of transcription from notes and recollections]:

[Irene takes the podium. She is wearing a green sequined jacket and blue stretch pants and her hair is dyed red. She wears glasses with thick frames and speaks with a sort of graveled voice. She is about 35, I think, though at first glance she looks older. She knows the Pastor from their youth even though he now lives in another village and preaches to a congregation there. He has said throughout the evening that he had once been a hard drinker, and it is apparent that she knew him as such, and, that he knew her as such as well. When she speaks, he remains behind her on the dias, and she speaks into the microphone facing the congregation. But her testimony, at least at first, is directed to him. Later she names several in the room in particular incidents, but not before her

younger sister joins her at the podium in a show of support.]

“Every time you [to the Preacher] would come to town you would see me but I would try not to see you. Sometimes I’d go down to — [the name of the bar in the village, one of the few villages to have a bar] just because I knew you wouldn’t come in there. And then if I saw you you’d say, “Irene, I’m prayin’ for you.” And that used to make me so mad, because I would think what’s he got to pray for me about, I do what I want and if I want someone to pray for me then I would do it. And there was one time when I was just standing by the store when you come in and then you were waiting for me outside when I come out and you said, ‘lets pray together,’ but the whole time we were standing there prayin’ I was just wishing that you would stop and go away. Now it’s been about two years since I’ve had a drink, but I still think about it every day but I know that’s not me talking it’s the devil.

[Here she pauses because she is near tears, but surprisingly her voice is unwavering. Her sister joins her on the dias. They look nothing alike at the podium. Her sister is younger and heavier, and a regular church member in the congregation hosting this meeting. After she comes up, Irene starts again....]

“Now I never thought I was a very good person and I still don’t know how Jesus could find it in his heart to love someone like me. I’ve been known around this town for the things I’ve done. And I know that I have

said some pretty terrible things about some of the people here in this room. And I know some of you have said some terrible things about me. But it was always because I was real hateful towards people who thought I was no good. And I knew that some people, like when Sister M—, a few years ago said what she said about me to the whole town, that made me real mad, and so I would get drunk and then cuss and holler and make myself look real sorry. But I know that that was the booze, and that the devil, once he gets ahold of you, he will do things that make you want to keep on drinking and being hateful towards your fellow man. And like I said, I ain't a good person, but Jesus loves me and he is stronger than any demon that could come around here. And I know that all I got to do is stay by him and he will help me. But like I say, there ain't a day that goes by that I don't want another drink and so I know I'm still fightin' but that Jesus is right there fighting for me too."

[Later, in the same revival, Sister M—, feeling wrongly accused, goes to the podium and makes a speech in the form of a testimony about how hard it was to forgive Irene for something she had said to a member of her family prior (apparently) to the incident referred to in Irene's testimony. It is obvious she feels wounded and wrongly accused and she cries while at the podium. By the time she is speaking, the emotional pitch of the revival is at full swing and many people's emotions are right at the surface. The pastor gets her to move on by suggesting that she lead in a song, apparently

knowing that she prides herself on her singing. Prior to this, though, Irene continues speaking, now again to the preacher.]

“When you came to town a couple of years ago and you saw me I had been off booze for about two weeks and I was trying to quit but I was having withdrawal and not knowing if I was gonna be able to make it or if I was gonna die or what. And then you said, if you are gonna die, you should accept Jesus as your savior and pray to him so that when you die he can find it in his heart to stand up for you when sins are reckoned. And so that was when I started thinking about Jesus and how he could love someone like me and I still don’t know how he could, but I’m countin’ on it. And I didn’t die [laughs, congregation laughs as well], and it’s been two years since I had a drink and I just wanted to say thanks ‘cause otherwise I don’t know where I’d be right now.”

3

The two testimonies together, Irene’s and Tom’s, present examples of several important issues raised thus far. The local elements of the story — the BIA and Tribal Council; the collapsing fishing economy; the death of Tom’s parents and his families participation in World War II; Irene’s reference to local talk and a shared history with the preacher — are all resignified by their respective positions in narratives that, like many conversion narratives, follows a pattern. Thus there is often a progression

where life prior to being “born again” follows a general spiral of loss and self-destruction coupled with the denial of the self-involvement in the problem. Following rebirth, both of these factors reverse themselves: life is made good again, and seen as getting progressively better; and the denial of responsibility is overturned, though at the same time control is relinquished yet again. In the latter instance, though, control is seen to rest with Jesus and not with worldly circumstances, and those things that had formerly been blamed on others are taken to be one’s own fault. The pattern helps resignify the elements involved in the story and other church members can see their signification by their placement. Thus when someone begins a testimony with, “When I was younger I used to like to go to Juneau on the weekend and go to the movies,” those hearing the testimony know right away what sort of role “Juneau” and “the movies” will take in the story that follows, and in the path to rebirth.

The elements of religious re-signification include many different kinds of relations and institutions: ANCSA corporations and local family politics, and even very personal relationships. Some will testify that they are up there to ask that the congregation help their spouse (often husband) find Jesus and join the church so that he can find the strength to stop drinking and be a better person. Indeed the extent to which he is not already a “better person,” and just what this term is meant to relate, are likely known already by most of the audience. What becomes important, then, is that testimony signifies such

things according to its own ties. Narrative relations rewrite personal relations, at least for the extent of the service. This is what theorists of religion mean when they say that religion *rationalizes* people's experiences. But it must be remembered that many forces outside of religion do this as well, often in equally cosmo-historical terms. Thus it might be better to speak of this as a "re-signifying practice," and more importantly, to note that all such practices have as their implicit backdrop another system of signifying practice which they stand against or in contrast.

As noted above and in the previous chapter, this signification is captured for many people in the phrase, "Jesus loves you." Most Pentecostal church members will state plainly that understanding the significance of this phrase is the first step in living "a new life" or, which means largely the same thing, of "being reborn." The phrase itself hints at two things which are central to the process of resignification. First, that to understand who Jesus is and what this love means, one must read scripture, which is itself the source of the majority of the signification involved. This is the new *objective* reality that church membership promotes. Thus apart from the reference to local events in a new narrative form, the testimonies also invokes a host of supernatural entities that are, for all intents and purposes, objectively real.³

³That is to say, they are known by the speaker to have a material existence and social consequence outside of his belief of them. This is the essence of their *objectivity*, their object-like nature, as the term is used here. This use of the term "objectivity" is not difficult, nor even particularly new. It is, however, unconventional within anthropology. Along with the related

This we examine in more detail below. Here it is enough to note that the narrative form adopted by these speakers is itself a novel, objective construction with potentially different notions of causality.

The second critical observation that follows from the importance of the statement “Jesus loves you” is that it comes as a revelation to majority of those who come to discover it. This is significant because it reveals the marked contrast between the reality proposed by Pentecostal practice and people’s prior notions of signification or objectification, in which they obviously feel unvalued and insignificant. This is Irene’s point in stating and repeating her own disbelief at the prospect of salvation, for the nature of her experience prior to being born again was entirely the opposite. The power of such a statement, then, is its implicit contrast to the present — the present objective reality of family and regional political economy that results in poverty and desperation, abuse and alcoholism. To say to yourself that “Jesus loves you,” as both of the above testimonies make plain, is to undertake both of these two processes — to invoke a host of new significations and to note these in contrast to those of one’s own current conceptions. This is the power of “confession,” as the term is sometimes used, but it must not be lost sight of that as above, confession requires some other system of valuation for any possible efficacy.

term, “subjectivity,” it is discussed briefly at the end of this chapter and then taken up in earnest in the Epilogue.

4

A second important avenue of objectivity which testimony makes plain is the involvement of supernatural entities (for lack of a better term) in the activities of daily life. This is very clear in the testimonies above. When people say that drinking is a demon or caused by the devil, they do not speak metaphorically. Though invisible, such spirits are real, with an objectiveness unhindered by the fact that they are, most of the time, invisible. The same holds true for those spirits whose work is to help in the process of salvation. These include the Holy Spirit, who is the most important of these entities, and who is God himself in the form of an active presence in "this world." Along side the Holy Spirit there are also angels, and guardian angels in particular.⁴

Guardian angels are like devils and demons in so far as they are active in the world regardless of human knowledge. Indeed, an individual need not be "saved" to have a guardian angel.

"When I get to heaven I'll know my guardian angel by the way he's beaten up and full of holes. He saved my life several times that I'm sure

⁴ It should be noted that many Pentecostals resist (whether through theological instruction I don't know) the Manichean idea that there is an equivalence in these two sets of entities. The power of the Holy Spirit, people will say, or the power of Jesus, far outweighs that of the devil and his helpers, who rely on human frailty and invocation (whether conscious or not) for their efficacy.

of. I was checking a saw when I worked at the mill when the blade caught a spike that somebody missed.⁵ When I looked up, there was holes in the walls on both sides of me and all around in the ceiling and sticking out of the log, but I didn't even have a scratch. So I'll know my guardian angel by all the holes he took for me that day."

Guardian angel stories frequently invoke work circumstances. Quite often, in fact, they center around industrial accidents, whether in logging or fishing or mill work or even mining, because many Pentecostal church members come from the villages' wage workers, and many have held jobs in these industries.

The way that such stories have been used to account for, and indeed compensate for, these incidents have led some to charge Pentecostals elsewhere with political passivity. Where work and community relations are seen to be shaped by spiritual forces, and thus relatively uninfluenced by individual activity, people are less likely to take matters into their own hands or to see possible answers in their own activity (see Greenhouse 1986; Stoll 1994). There is some truth to such charges, of course, and subordinating worldly events to a struggle between the active forces of demons and angels

⁵ By way of explanation, the blades in timber processing mills are large band-saw blades, a long hoop of thin steel with teeth along one edge. The saw blade passes over pulleys on the top and bottom — usually located on the floor above and the floor below the room where the logs are cut — and turns in a single direction. A metal spike, sometimes used in rafting, other times used as industrial sabotage by ecologists, that is left in a log will, when struck by the blade, break the teeth from the blade and send them flying around the room.

may be the cause of some working-class quiescence, as Marx himself sometimes charged.⁶ Yet these claims often ignore the fact that the relevance of these sorts of examples are often limited to specifically religious circumstances. This story was told to a large group at a church dinner. Later, outside of this context, the same individual noted that he quit that job immediately after, saying that there was no sense staying in a job where you could get killed that easily, no matter how much they are paying you. Like testimonies, much of the power of these narratives (and thus any quiescence that might result) seems dependent on particular audiences and circumstances.

Knowing this, we might consider that more is at stake than simply an alternative objective world. As raised above in the context of “confession” and in the previous chapter, all such objectifications are dependent on a known alternative for their own possibility, distinctiveness, and importance. This holds true for the invocation of spiritual entities as well. Put plainly, guardian angel stories are told only where there is an audience willing (potentially) to verify the objective reality of the entities involved, *and* where the significance of the telling — i.e. those forms of relation and causality such notions might come to replace — is also well known. Where one of these contexts is missing, the stories will not be told, or not told in the same way.

⁶This is the point of the often misapplied “opiate of the masses” quotation.

Like guardian angels, demons are active without people's direct understanding or acknowledgement of them. And they are considered potentially active in the life of anyone, believer or non-believer, saved or unsaved. Yet unlike guardian angels, who are ever-present but whose ways are unknown, demons and the devil are not always present (though they are always potentially present); instead they must be invoked. Once invoked however, their manifestation is not limited to any individual; made present by even just one person, they will affect an entire village. And, again unlike guardian angels, their ways are known. They work through "sin," and frequent and unremorseful sin is both an invocation and evidence of their manifestation. Such sins are often discussed in church meetings, and here their associations with demons is frequent and direct:

"There was a time when the devil had me in his hand. I would drink and cuss and swear and be a real embarrassment to my parents. Those were my hard livin' days and before I found Jesus and that was when I didn't have no knowledge of devil, but he had me. And every time I would be drinking I'd get this feeling like I wanted to fight or holler at people, and I had a real foul mouth. And now I know that this was the devil talkin' through me, and that I had brought the devil down on my family cause my parents had been real God-fearin' people when I grew up, and it really pained them to see me like I was. And I sometimes think that it was his

[the devil's] way of getting back at them. 'Cause when I was drinking I was a miserable person, and I made them all miserable and caused them a lot of pain and hurt."

"People who [practice "Indian dancing"] don't know that by bringing spirits into the town like they do that it affects the whole town and that even good people will get caught up with it and lose their way. Once the devil gets ahold of a town, then it's very difficult to get him to let go, 'cause he holds on tight to what he's got."

The Holy Spirit, however, is unlike either spirits or demons/the devil. The Holy Spirit is seen to be the active presence of God (creator) and Jesus (God in human form) in the world. During worship he comes into the bodies of Pentecostal church members, and "gifts of faith" are seen as evidence of his presence. While anthropologists might see this as a form of spirit possession, church members do not view this as in any way an equivalent to the type of "spirit possession" that they accuse Native dance group members of practicing, or the type of demonic possession that is manifest in drinking or sin more generally. The two — visits by the Holy Spirit versus spirit or demonic possession — are said to be entirely different states, accomplished in different ways and with unrelated manifestations.

Gifts of faith were discussed in the previous chapter and little more

need be added here except to note that unlike guardian angel stories, which are often told to other church members, demon/devil stories and visits by the Holy Spirit have as their implicit backdrop relations with the community in which the church itself exists. That is, both of these notions engage not just a discourse or objectivity whose dynamics are well known and strongly contested, but people of the community for whom that objectivity is presumably emblematic; and even beyond this, a community for whom such objectivity may be complicitous.

This is easy to see in the devil stories told above, where the actions of anyone in the community can endanger the salvation of even those who have been saved. Here the potential danger of spirit/demon invocation becomes the collective concern of those who know about such things, regardless of the intentions or beliefs of those whose practices are being questioned or opposed. The insistence on community responsibility is an insistence on "community" in an older sense, of the common lot of those who live together. Differences in the community are, as such, spiritually suspect, and mutual accountability is held at a high priority. This is apparent within church groups, but it also extends to those in the community who would not consider themselves saved. This is a crucial point for the following chapter, for it lies at the heart of the eventual conflict between church members and the culture groups.

With visits by the Holy Spirit, however, a curious counter-dynamic is

seen. While gifts of faith are seen as the attainment of a certain spiritual communion (with others in the church as well as with the Spirit of God), they are seen by non-church members as being emblematic of the Pentecostal movement as a whole. The term “holy rollers,” used in derogatory fashion in Alaska as elsewhere, is a comment on the fact that those who “lay with Spirit” will sometimes roll around the aisles of the church. No doubt the architectural privacy that accompanies most worship (no windows, limited information on meeting times and places) represents something of an attempt to limit the public face of such practice. Unlike dancing, the only acceptable audience for it is the other participants.

But such measures are limited in their effect, and all groups, in the search for new members, must open their doors to those whose reaction will be uncertain. For this reason the practices of Pentecostals are well known in the community, and the particular practices of particular individuals are also well known. In villages where tensions between church members and a cultural movement have moved into the open, culture group members will challenge the idea that their own practices involve dangerous spirit possession. They point to the practices associated with “gifts of faith,” asking how church members know that they are not being fooled into possession by demons. Such accusations have caused churches — especially those in villages where tensions have flared — to close themselves off further from the remainder of the village.

Already a closed group, this has meant more intense, self-imposed isolation for some groups. Thus, when prompted by perceived threats from the activities of the cultural group, Pentecostals finally do act publicly, their actions seem remarkably sudden and unanticipated to those they oppose. To them it seems as though a group that seldom participates in any sort of local political life, or even local social life, thrusts itself suddenly into the middle of what are for participants and culture movement leaders, critical social and political practices. And, some culture group members point out, all the while proclaiming apolitical motives. Examples of this critical dynamic occupy the majority of Chapter 11.

5

Before moving on to the relations of these two groups, i.e. Pentecostal church members and those of the culture groups, it is important to note that these two movements are not necessarily equivalents or alternatives, ideologically or otherwise. For while both offer contrasting objective readings of the experiences of their members, the role of members in the resulting reality is in fact quite different. Central to this movement and just as often overlooked by outside observers is notion of *human* subjectivity proposed by church practice. This is also a critical difference between Baptists and more orthodox Calvinists that Weber neglected — likely because it leads away from the sorts of conclusions he sought. This we explore in more detail in the

following chapter, but some consideration is necessary because the notion makes sense of the final term in the Pentecostal trilogy of “Jesus loves you.”

Several obvious differences in the objective realities proposed by Pentecostals on the one hand, and the culture group on the other, lead us toward this point. In Chapters 7 and 8 we noted that what it means to be Native was both unfixed and the focus of much political manipulation. Some of these issues show up in testimonies and other church-based expressions as well, though here in very different form.

“Native,” generally signifies something quite different when it is invoked in testimony and other church based rhetoric than when it is invoked in the contexts discussed above. By way of example (again from my notes):

M—, is Native and an active member of one of the more radical churches in the region. She doesn’t usually vote in village elections, she says, and has little to do with most of the village meetings, for her soul is “Christ’s,” she says. She grew up in the village and worked in Juneau for a few years. She had also at another time tried working in Anchorage in a hotel, but found the work repetitious and returned to the village to be with her family. Her father and mother were both Native, but of “mixed-blood,” and she says that she has “some filipino and some white in me [her].”

M— first started going to church when she was little. Her

mother worked during the summer and Jean D— took care of her and her brother. And she would take them to church during the summer for Bible school and to other services like the Wednesday service. Jean D— was white, and the preacher at the church was white. That was before the church got popular. After she came back to the village, they had this guy come through who was a Native preacher, and who came to speak at a revival. He had worked down south [meaning in Washington State] in an airplane factory and had become involved in the ministry down there. He gave good sermons and told people about how Jesus was coming and it didn't make a difference if you were ready or not, and that he was going to come and save the good, "his people," and punish the others. Most of the people who went weren't sure whether they were going to be saved, M— said, because not many of them had had much to do with church or "with Jesus as their personal savior." But for most of the people there, she said, because they were the kind of people who hadn't done a whole lot that "counted against themselves," they thought that they could be saved by being born again. None of the real "big whigs" in the village were there, though, she said, and for her it was obvious why. They couldn't be saved unless they were willing to give up what they had in this world, and for them that was a lot more than for some others. She said that she thought that people thought more about it when there was Native

preaching because they knew that he knew about their lives, and that he knew that most of the people there needed to be saved. When she had heard white preachers talk about these things in the past, she said, it had always been “like a speech.” But she felt that the Native preacher really wanted to save souls.

It is significant that the Native preacher had worked down south in an industrial job, a prospect that is common to many of those in the village without strong family patronage ties to the ANCSA corporation or village bureaucracy — those made marginal by these structures who are, simultaneously, the most likely prospects for Pentecostal participation. The implied point is that this minister would, as a result, know about people’s souls and want to save them in a way that a “white” minister could not. Such a notion stands in marked contrast to the way “Native” is understood or made useful to the culture movement, the BIA, or ANCSA corporate boards. Note here also that it is unclear whether the Native preacher was Tlingit or not, as M— would identify herself to be. In fact, as mentioned above, the preacher was a Makah Native from Washington State. Yet for M—, he was “Native” in the same way that she was, subjectively, in the sense of what he or she could be made subject to.

This point is critical and so it requires some explanation. Most often subjective and objective are used to note the difference between the way the world is encountered (objectively) and how one “feels about it” (subjectively.)

These definitions are inadequate outside of any positivist metaphysics, and up to this point in the book the term objective has been used as Bakhtin and others have used it (see Chapter 12: Epilogue): to denote those aspects of the world known by someone to exist as real entities outside of any relationship with the person doing the thinking. Subjectivity, then, is simply the realization that objective reality requires the participation of a speaker/thinker. That is, subjectivity is to the idea that all reality is “subject to” participation. This is not to say that nothing exists outside of a conception of it, though it is obvious that such things do not figure even into the “objective reality” in which we live. Rather, it is to work in the opposite direction; it is to note the dependence of objective reality on a particular kind of relation, and to place action around this dependency at the front of any conception of it. Subjectivity, then, is not how one feels about things that are already “out there”; nor even to say that such things are dependent on some conception for their reality (which is true, but not sufficient). It is to place this dependency at the front of any understanding of what this reality is.⁷

⁷ Objective realization can, as Hegel argued and Marx relates, confirm itself in the incompleteness of the world around it — “Revelation in conception is the creation of nature as the mind’s being, in which the mind procures the affirmation and the truth of its freedom, [that is, freedom to create form from its own conceptions]” (from Hegel’s *Philosophy of Mind*, in Marx 1964:193; comment by author; see also Heidegger 1983). Yet, the dependency that is subjectivity accompanies all objective conceptions of the world. Thus James’ notion (see Chapter 5) that one cannot begin to know Orion (as a star ‘out there’ in scientific terms, or, in Hegel’s terms, as the possibility of a fulfillment of an idea of “star” within one’s own consciousness) until one knows it to be a stream of light, very feint, seen only

The difference, then, between being “Native” objectively — defined by the possession or absence of things, aspects, or objects (like tradition, or language, or blood quantum) — or subjectively — in relation to what one can be made to do, by whom — remains central to the ways that Pentecostal practice stands apart from other forms of social life in the village. This is how Pentecostalism is different in social, and specifically *not* metaphysical, terms.

This is a critical point because up to now it has been possible to see the differences between Pentecostal and other movements mainly in terms of “worldview:” that Pentecostals believe in the activity of spirits in certain ways that others do not — that church practice as simply a more egalitarian and more supernatural version of the popular side of the culture movement discussed in Chapter 8; they might, as it were, even be alternatives (as in Burdick (1993).

The different role of subjectivity inherent in Pentecostal practice leads us in a different direction, and toward a deeper understanding of the clash between church members and culture groups — different, that is, than the idea of two ideologies competing for a limited number of potential adherents.

at night, and configured a certain way, that *anybody* with eyes will see. The objective implications of this vision of Orion are manifold and perhaps even now the point of disagreement. But this makes no difference, for agreement or confirmation is not the point. At stake is the initial subjectivity required for any objective statement, true or untrue. Thought, we learn from James, is “subject to” other thought, conception to other conception.

For even though Pentecostal practice offers an objective conception of the world that is an alternative to political-economic or cultural practice, it is also one that acknowledges the subjective dependence this objective world requires: “Jesus loves you,” with the accent on *you*, in its most personal, subjective form. This means, as any practitioner will tell you, something entirely different than ‘Jesus loves the poor,’ which for Pentecostals may be a statement of fact, but it is not a statement of salvation. To be true for salvation, it must be personal — hence the point of making Jesus “your personal savior,” as it is commonly phrased.

Note that the meaning of this is not that such statements are individuating, though this is surely one consequence.⁸ Rather, such a notion is “subjugating;” it makes salvation and “you” coterminous. “Jesus died for *your* sins,” not for sin in general. When one takes this to mean that these churches (and radical Protestant practice as a whole, or any church without a formal hierarchy) create an individuated relationship with the Divine, one confuses the results of practice for the theology used to justify it. Instead, it is the acknowledgement that subjectivity is the nature of objective reality — that to be “real” is to be “real for” something, or better, someone — that sets these movements apart. In this sense, without “you,” Jesus does not fail to exist, but fails to be Jesus, i.e. the savior. Pentecostalism makes subjectivity

⁸ Individuality is, however, a critical element in determining the long-term survival and popularity of the such practices in the contexts of an economic system that requires it (see Schneider (1990)).

the basis for its objective possibility. People who believe know that Jesus depends upon their faith, their active acceptance, to be what he is. This sets the Pentecostals apart from those other associations and broad objectifications discussed in Parts 1 and 2 above.

In a sense, then, this final notion completes the term "Jesus loves you," filling out the trinity of Pentecostal practice. "Jesus" is that objective side of a new system of signification, and entity out there that can be experienced through the Holy Spirit; "love" provides the implicit contrast with the current objective order, an order that here values people very little; and "you" shows the dependency of this objective order, its subjective relation to individual acceptance and participation.

Chapter 11 — Church, Class, and the Remaking of Local Inequality

¹And when the day of the Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

²And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

³And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.

⁴And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

⁵And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under Heaven.

⁶Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language.

⁷And they were all amazed and marveled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans?

⁸And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?

⁹Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia,

¹⁰Phrygia and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes,

¹¹Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.

¹²And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this?

¹³Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine.

¹⁴But Peter, Standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words:

¹⁵For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is *but* the third hour of the day.

¹⁶But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel;

¹⁷And it shall come to pass in the last

days, saith God, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and you old men shall dream dreams:

¹⁸And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy:

¹⁹And I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke:

²⁰The sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come:

²¹And it shall come to pass, *that* whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.....

³⁷Now when they heard *this* they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, *Men and brethren*, what shall we do?

³⁸Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

³⁹For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, *even* as many as the Lord our God shall call.

⁴⁰And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.

⁴¹Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day were added *unto them* about three thousand souls.

⁴²And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

⁴³And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.

⁴⁴And all that believed were together, and had all things in common....

Holy Bible, King James Version. Acts, Chapter 2.

1

To begin to untangle the importance of Pentecostalism's "new subjectivity" and its centrality to ways *classes* are made, transformed, and are themselves made subject to — subjects of — history, we must take up again the conflict between Pentecostal groups and their self-chosen adversaries, the culture groups. The most visible element of this confrontation was the "regalia burning" that followed the Flo Ellers revival, introduced in Chapter 1. But other incidents in this same village and in other villages make clear that the tensions indicated by this conflict are not restricted to one church, one village, one preacher, or one year. Though consistently shifting, the engagement is ongoing and as such, critical to the issues of class and classes raised along side the Ellers incident, also in Chapter 1.

The long passage from the "Book of Acts" that introduces this chapter raises several of the key issues that bring together the preceding chapters of both Part 2 and Part 3. This passage is the foundation for much Pentecostal practice, and is from this passage that the term "Pentecostalism" comes. Originally part of the Holiness or Holy Ghost movement, Pentecostalism continues to hold to the idea that the Holy Spirit is active among believers, and that the visible manifestation of this activity is the evidence of speaking in tongues. The passage also raises issues of adult baptism (a common practice), prophesy (which is sometimes practiced by preachers at revivals),

and salvation through Christ. Beyond this, however, the passage raises several issues of context that are bound to strike church members in Alaska as particularly relevant, and poignant to their own experiences: the charges of fakery by outsiders, or the presence of non-believers more generally and their (mis)understanding of the nature of Pentecostal practice. Perhaps just as important is the fact that Pentecostalism, in Acts as well as in Alaska, takes place within the context of viable, popular, and reasonably well founded alternatives; the skeptics in Peter's audience were, after all, "devout men." Further, the issue of alcohol and drunkenness is of particular relevance for many church members, as discussed in the previous chapter. These issues played particular and well defined roles in the events that led up the incendiary revival as well.

2

For the community in which the Flo Ellers incident took place, the social tensions that erupted were not new, nor even very far below the surface. In the year prior to the incident a less obvious, but equally revealing conflict had split the village along similar lines. This conflict centered around a radical drug/alcohol treatment program that had been held in the village, whose methods were thought to be very dangerous by the more radical christians. This program had it roots in an even earlier set of problems within the village, for in the year prior to the intervention, the

village had had the highest suicide rate in the United States and among the highest “accidental death” rates as well. The accidental deaths very often bordered on a sort of passive suicide — as in deaths due to exposure or accident when the deceased was heavily intoxicated, for example.

Alcohol problems had been widespread in the village since the early 1960’s, and likely before. Yet in some ways the drinking, though fairly widespread and at times heavy, was not so different from similar problems in other working class villages. And along these lines, problems were kept in check by these same forces — individuals who drink to drown the drudgery of a life of work cannot stay drunk too long, and must “sober up” and go to work to keep their jobs. Fishing communities in particular seem subject to these sorts of patterns, prompted by a work schedule where boats and their crews “make a trip” (fish for several days), “settle up” (pay out the shares owed the crew in one lump sum from the proceeds of the trip), and then “tie up” (remain at the dock) for several days — until the next quota opening or until the boat can be refit and the crew made ready. With money and time, drinking is common, and some remain at it until the boat is about to go. Yet once at work, alcohol is forbidden on almost all working boats.

The above pattern does not apply to everyone who fishes out of the villages, though it is common enough to be well known to those around fishing in Alaska and elsewhere. Two recent factors have altered the pattern, however, and created a host of new, larger problems. The first is that the

gradual decline of the fishing industry in most villages has meant fewer boats (and hence fewer jobs) and more lengthy lay-offs between trips. This has left many outport residents with increased financial problems, more time on their hands, and fewer immediate incentives to stop drinking if they start. And while new sources of money has attempted to lessen the financial side of the problem — welfare and related programs have grown steadily as the fishing industry has declined, and NOL money has helped hide the steady decline of the village fishery — they can do little to remedy the overall impact of the decline of an entire pattern.

In the past, drinking and the destruction it caused had been accepted (if not entirely approved of) in part because it remained within certain boundaries — boundaries provided by the pattern of work itself. This is true as well for Billy, discussed in Chapter 6, and many of the village working poor, for whom alcohol is a regular and predictable part of their lives. Yet the changes in the pattern and boundaries of drinking were thought by many to be at the heart of the suicides and deaths. Unbounded drinking was the cause of more drastic and damaging sorts of conflicts or abuse within households, and in several suicides alcohol was directly involved. ANCSA cash payments had actually exaggerated these effects in several village.¹ It was shortly after

¹This was not entirely a surprise, and when cash dividends were first proposed many people in the villages noted with uncharacteristic bluntness that if the corporation began giving out cash in large amounts, several in the village were going to “drink themselves to death.” Protest along these lines was unheeded and the dividends were paid. Several deaths followed.

the large NOL payments began to flood the revival village that the suicides and accidental deaths in there grew to such disproportionate numbers.

Teenage suicides that accompanied the period compounded the sense of crisis that pervaded the village. Several of these were in homes with chronic alcohol and abuse problems as well. In all eight suicides occurred in a single calendar year. In a village whose population is around 700, this is greater than 1% of the population, and being primarily young people, almost like losing two entire school grades.

The state reacted by sending counselors and aid workers who targeted young people particularly, in the effort to stop what seemed an epidemic. The root causes were left for the time being, for it was assumed that they would require much more local participation. Into this opening stepped the Bahai church, already resident in the village but with few active followers. The Bahai organization is a syncretic missionary movement aimed mainly at indigenous peoples in colonized areas of the world, and especially Native Americans. Mission dogma is fluid, an amalgam of spiritual beliefs and practices drawn from many "indigenous" traditions, including Native American ceremonies. Following the deaths and suicides, the local Bahai Church proposed a radical alcohol intervention, run by Native Americans from the mainland US. A dozen people were invited to attend what would have been a two-week program of spiritual and personal revitalization.

The program aroused suspicions among the Pentecostals within the

village almost from the start. Part of the problem was that the participants in the program were not allowed to discuss its nature with those who were not attending. The secrecy heightened fears and rumors were rampant in the village, though in fact the program quite clearly mirrored similar tactics used by some of the Pentecostal churches. Second, there was a well publicized element of Native American spiritualism that accompanied the program. For many church members this hinted at the invocation of demonic forces. Fears were enhanced by an individual who left the program after only brief participation, and who, according to some, told exaggerated stories about the it and the beliefs of its directors. The result was a rapid ground-swell of protest from the Pentecostal members of the community. A village meeting was held and pressure was brought to bear on the tribal government — which had basically sanctioned and unofficially co-sponsored the program — to withdraw its support and force the program leaders and sponsors out of village. Informal pressure was brought to bear on participants as well, and before the end of the second week, the organizers were isolated and most of the participants had withdrawn. Plans for a follow-up program were canceled.

The recriminations that followed were even more exaggerated and unreliable than those that followed the Flo Eilers incident. Many blamed the Pentecostals for the suicides, for one particularly painful double-teenage-suicide happened in a home where the parents had recently been “reborn.”

Detractors said that the children had been made ashamed of their Indianess and taught that their values were wrong; and some felt like the parents of the children had become so convinced of the need for their own salvation that they had lost sight of their children's needs, feelings, or understandings of the situation. On the other side, church members blamed the tribal government and the cultural movement for long ignoring the smoldering alcohol and abuse problems in the village. Rather than addressing and redressing "sin," they noted, the cultural movement had invited in outsiders and their demons, temptations, and distractions, which pulled people away from what they felt to be the only possible answer to such overwhelming sorrow and pain — salvation. Most Pentecostals in the villages today remain leery of those in the tribal government who are affiliated with the culture movement, and they often speak with great suspicion of the tribe sponsoring people to "write grants" to bring in projects like the Bahai intervention, or state psychologists.

In many ways this confrontation set the stage for the Flo Ellers incident. The lines were clearly drawn between the Pentecostals on one side and the cultural movement, tribal government, and ANCSA corporation on the other. At issue was the effort of the cultural movement to place a vision of Native culture at the center of public life, with some in the Pentecostal movement simply reticent, and others more directly opposed to a resumption of Native spiritualism in any form within the village. With the end of the

Bahai intervention program the conflict subsided, just as it later did following the Flo Ellers incident. Yet even now tensions remain. Recent changes in the same church that sponsored the revival in which Ellers spoke would suggest that passions have not cooled on their side, for the congregation recently split over questions of the role some members now play in local cultural events versus the place of the preacher in singling out those members who may have “backslid.” At present the cultural movement in this village remains strong, though its dependence on the general prosperity supplied by ANCSA, and on the village corporation more directly, would seem to worry some participants.

3

Remarkable throughout the Bahai intervention and the Flo Ellers revival that followed is the amazing ability of Pentecostals to wreck havoc on the settled life and organized structure of village life. Pentecostal politics fly in the face of past and present village structures, for they deny the “Nativeness” of ANCSA and the patronage of village families, and they are extremely reluctant to become involved in village government or in the BIA or T&H bureaucracies. They also oppose the ANB, which they see as an organization suspiciously tied to the culture movement and, perhaps more importantly, the cause of village gambling (in ANB sponsored Bingo and “pull-tabs” fund-raising). But beyond this, church members continue to

make their most active stance against the very ideology that links broad (if ambiguous) individual participation in current structures — that is, the culture movement itself, and especially its most emblematic element, the village dance group.

In a sense the disorder of these politics is matched by the chaotic nature of Pentecostal worship. As discussed in Chapter 9, church services —whether they be ordinary sunday service or a visiting revival — are marked by high amounts of individual participation and, at times, intense simultaneous individual participation. This is most apparent in collective prayer during sunday service and during the laying on hands sessions in revivals. At these times direct, personal contact with the divine over-rides any sort of collective order to the point where the service becomes entirely chaotic, with every individual voicing her own prayers and acting upon his own “gifts.”

Together, these two elements are at the center of Pentecostal anti-structuralism, strongly present in both church practice and church member confrontations village politics. This is critical because it is, in fact, this anti-structuralism that most non-church members resent. As mentioned above, many culture group members belong to one or another non-Pentecostal church, like the Salvation Army or Presbyterian churches that are found in virtually every village. Further, the cosmologies presented in non-Pentecostal churches is itself not so different from that held by the radical church members. The widest gap between the actual church participation of

culture group members and Pentecostals is in the types of practices associated with church membership, including both the worship practices social practices of the Pentecostals. In short, from the perspective of the cultural group it is the anti-structuralism of Pentecostal church practice that separates the two groups.

In the passage that introduced this chapter, Peter cautions the crowd that the inspiration they see is not caused by wine: “For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day.” The implications — that such behavior is extraordinary (and not just a more usual form of disorderly behavior) because it happens at a time when such disorderliness is, in effect, not sanctioned or expected — points out an assumption that underlies the intermingled orderliness and disorderliness of structure and power introduced in Part 2. Namely, that there are, ironically, rules about disorder and its place.

Analytically speaking, it is unclear in this instance or in the those discussed in Part 2 (thinking here of the disorder that results from peoples confrontations with bosses or the law) whether these rules emerge from people’s attempts to limit the disorder imposed upon them or are instead complicit with the same structures that lies behind the chaos of village life. This is the essential contradiction of the cultural revival as discussed in Chapter 8. The implicit uncertainty behind the limits on disorder may be the

reason that Pentecostalism seems so entirely radical to many village residents and culture group members. For in the end, as Peter points out, the anti-structural practice of Pentecostalism is not remarkable for its disorderliness, but rather for being a form of disorderliness that exists outside the usual acceptable boundaries of disorder, like drunkenness. To rejoin several issues raised above, then, we might begin with the idea that Pentecostalism takes on its most radical anti-structural meaning when it becomes a kind of disorderly disorder — one not caused by structures (like laws or families) or dependent upon them (like culture).²

4

One final point will serve to move us from the specific confrontations between church members and the culture group to the issues of class and classes with which we began. In the last chapter I introduced the idea that Pentecostal practice denoted a different sort of subjectivity for church members than that which was carried on by those around them. By this I meant simply that Pentecostal practice made the objective reality it proposed consciously dependent on (subject to) their participation. This is a critical point in Weber's discussion of the relation of protestantism (including Baptist forms of protestantism like Pentecostalism), for it underlies the connection

²This idea and the use of the passage from the Book of Acts were suggested by and developed in conversation with Gerald Sider.

between a notion of predestination and the actions of believers in the world.³

It enters the conflicts discussed above in two ways. The first is that it pushes those who do enter the conflict on the Pentecostal side to do so. They are Soldiers of Christ only in so far as they fight his battles, however these are conceived. Beyond this, however, there is a second way that seems more important than the first. Returning to Weber, in his work on the *Protestant Ethic* he argued that it was this subjectivity that pushed radical protestants to construct a world in which their salvation was already present, already apparent to themselves and those around them. I want to argue just the opposite here. What seems most important in the disputes discussed above is that subjectivity of Pentecostal relations — as they come to the center of village social and political life — has the ability to unseat the easy construction of the world. In effect, what we see above is the power of Pentecostalism to show all reality, and especially that of the “worldly” world (of business, ANCSA, timber development, and money), as subject to human participation and a “self” so conceived.

This is perhaps a legacy of Pentecostalism's early roots in working class

³ The idea begins with Luther, that “the objective historical order of things in which the individual has been placed by God becomes for Luther more and more a direct manifestation of divine will” (1958:85) and finds fulfillment in Calvin’s later reformers. The doctrine that emerges, that “the Calvinist, as it is sometimes put, himself creates his own salvation, or, as would be more correct, the conviction of it” (1958: 115) restates what I am arguing here. For Weber, the transition between these two apparently irreconcilable ideas follows (doctrinally and personally) from the hypothetical question “Am I one of the elect?” (1958: 110).

Los Angeles in 1906 (Anderson 1979; Chesnut 1997), for unlike Weber's early bourgeoisie, Pentecostalism has always been most popular among the most marginal. And unlike the particularly individuating theology of Calvinism that Weber discusses, Pentecostalism has always been practically concerned with (i.e. centered around practices that are) community building. The subjectivity that emerges from these practices stands in contrast to that described in Weber's particular Calvinist theology.

One last contrast with Weber serves to bring out these differences. In Weber's argument about protestant adoption of the notion of a "calling," he points out that it was through insisting on the difference between simply performing good works and living a life that was to be a work in itself, protestants develop the idea of a rational personality (1958: 117-119). Such a personality was to have at its core a consistency and unity of purpose that was capable of demonstrating election to God's chosen. These were the living saints, as he discusses them. Whether such a unified personality is possible, here or anywhere, is not at issue. Rather, what seems particularly telling is that such a notion parallels closely the idea of identity, and Native identity in particular, as it has been mobilized politically and, to an extent, as it is required by the state (think only of Murkowski's sharp criticism that Natives are willing to log "their own land" and only wish to see logging halted on public lands).

Pentecostals acknowledge or require little consistency in their

members, calling on their them to “make a break from yourself,” or “turn your back on your old life.” To be part of a church is to “leave your old self behind.” But this does not mean that it can be done once only, for “sin is in all of us [and] only Jesus can take that away, and only at the final judgement.” Until that time, people are fated to battle sin, in themselves and as it appears around them. This is why Irene can feel part of the congregation and deserving of salvation even though she cannot understand how “Jesus could love someone like” her. Consistency, whether it be “inside” or “outside,” is not the goal of salvation, it is its enemy, for if “you haven’t changed, you should. And if you have, you should again.” The last point was made by a revival preacher during the Fall of 1995 and was among the most widely discussed and supported elements of the event in the days that followed.

Together these issues point to church practice as not just outside of but radically opposed to critical elements of the current political order. Their near complete rejection of contemporary political values and objectifications marks them as volatile political actors, though as such their political activity is essentially unpredictable. But what seems clear is that their opposition seems less tied to a specific objective order than it does to standing outside the current one. The implications of this for the world wide popularity of radical churches is worth considering. Perhaps Pentecostal practices find such wide spread popularity among the world’s poor not because they represent an

alternative to the given realities of work, international capital, and political oppression (which on the surface they might seem to do but seldom are able to do for long) but because they reveal and overturn the objective reality of these things. To paraphrase Eric Wolf paraphrasing Hegel, for something to be real it must first be possible. Salvation in any real universal sense, then, must begin with the doubts and desires of its potential followers. Pentecostal practice, and not theology, is primary evidence for this concern.

5

All this is not to say that church members are simply a class among classes, no different than those against whom they are presently posed and potentially united. This I discussed in the close of Chapter 10 and it warrants consideration in the present discussion as well. Perhaps the most important feature of Pentecostal practice in the context of *class* (singular) formation in the region in the fact that church members as church members can not be accommodated to the traditional objective politics of the region or current objective analysis of the observer (which two are, as Marx taught us and Foucault reminded us, always linked). That is, Pentecostals succumb to neither bargaining against their “needs,” nor analysis of their “motives.” Discourses of identity, culture, and class all seem distractions from the truth of salvation, they might say, and are as such part of the problem of suffering in the villages, not the answer. Pentecostals are, in this sense, post-structural.

This is crucial for understanding just what sort of historical practice they potentially represent.

In Sartre's attack on the "Problem of Mediations" he takes a stance quite opposite that of Thompson introduced in Chapter 1. He notes that one totalizes too quickly "if one transforms — without evidence — signification into intention, and result into an objective deliberately aimed at." In such cases, inevitably, "the real is lost." Knowing this, "we must at all cost guard against replacing real, perfectly defined groups... with insufficiently determined collectivities...."(1963:45). At stake, says Sartre, is the way representation makes possible the reality of specific structures, and without which, no structure is real. In his case, the bourgeoisie cannot exist, indeed cannot come into being in specific historical terms, without temporary and perhaps illogical self-representation. For Sartre, it is the historically specific relationships between signification and intention that are paramount in historical considerations.

This is what in Chapters 10 we called "subjectivity," and we noted there that church practice demonstrates a different sort of subjectivity than do other practices, and specifically the cultural practices discussed in Chapter 8. These differences thrust themselves forward for consideration because they argue so clearly for a different view of this process than does Sartre.

Pentecostal subjectivity shows the power of church practice to dissolve the detached "representative" nature of social action (its metaphoric

possibility, so central to Sartre's discussion) with an insistence on its subjective actuality. Put plainly, Pentecostals do not aim to act as though they were Soldiers of Christ, they act because they are Soldiers of Christ. Nor is this simply an artifact of belief or requirement of faith. Without their actions, such a soldiery does not exist, with all the 'real' consequences this entails. This is what makes them so different from Weber's Calvinists, whose actions are meant to denote salvation — unable as they are to procure it — in which they do thoroughly and honestly believe, but which belief makes no difference to its actuality. It is they, and not village church members, who seem to answer the description of Sartre.

Such considerations remain critical because Pentecostal social action remains at the center of a very different historical dynamic than does those that which surround it.⁴ Church practices like salvation or regalia burning may also be considered in this light. They too are not meant to represent a particular reality, but to enact one. As such they speak to a different sort of historical dynamic, one in which actions are not reversible as are, presumably, the metaphoric representations discussed by Sartre. Like the items thrown into the fire during the Flo Eilers revival, they can not ever be gotten back. This is why the fire is itself such a powerful practice. This is also

⁴This is also the danger of the Kuiu Court discussed in Chapter 8. Unlikely as it is that such a ceremony will be taken to accurately represent 19th century culture, its danger lies in the fact that it might be (mis)taken(?) to be current Native culture.

why it raises so many fears for those not involved and the prospect of salvation for those who are.

This special subjectivity stands not just as alternative but as challenge to the sort individualistic, volunteeristic notion of culture as it is practiced today. For church members, culture — unlike salvation — is something you can opt out of. This is what Ellers implies when she says there won't be any Chilkat dancers dancing in heaven. Culture can be repented, salvation cannot.

6

Returning to the issues with which this dissertation began, Pentecostal church practice remains at the center of *class* (and specifically not *classes*) formative processes in Southeast Alaska for the very difficult possibility it represents. It is the anti-structural history and post-structural subjectivity — and *not* the utopian project proposed by its theology — that makes church practice so crucial to the reformatory project that is *class*. Thus I argue that the essential challenge to “class” in the region is the coming/bringing together of church members and those of the culture groups. This is the “must and cannot” of contemporary village politics. At present such a notion remains at the edges of village political reality, for many Native leaders know that the possibility of a future beyond ANCSA involves both of these groups, though few have any clear idea about how reconciliation might be achieved.

Edward Thompson ends the "Introduction" to a later collection of essays by noting in effect that class must, in a sense, stand 'outside' of political economy and its current alternatives if it is to play the role that historically it must.

As capitalism (or "the market") made over human nature and human need, so political economy and its revolutionary antagonist came to suppose that this economic man was for all time. We stand at the end of a century when this must now be called in doubt. We shall not ever return to pre-capitalist human nature, yet a reminder of its alternative needs, expectations and codes may renew our sense of nature's range of possibilities" (1991:15).

Pentecostals share that doubt. In an era in which the collapse of that "antagonist" has left political economy looking even more "natural," even more "for all time," church practice stands as an active and, for those involved, powerful reminder that alternatives exist — right now. "Be ready at any time to meet him in the air," is a common revival enjoiner. Salvation is always a current project. It is in this possibility, or the possibility that others who are not now church members might find in it, that makes Pentecostal practice as such a critical element of both class processes and what ethnography in might contribute to understanding class itself.

As ethnography, this remains essentially an unfinished, indeed unfinishable task — a notion that brings us closer to the very struggles we seek to understand. For if ethnography is about making the unfamiliar seem ordinary and the everyday seem strange, it is also about still about bridging gaps between people while at the same time elevating the possibilities these

gaps represent. In this task ethnography remains doubly intertwined with the politics of the people we work with, and doubly relevant to the history that Thompson proposes. At a time when ethnography has been barraged by a host of criticisms, this recognition asks us to reconsider what is lost in an ethnography of anything other than the here and now. The answer — for ethnographers, choker-setters, and Pentecostal church members alike — is much.

Chapter 12 — Afterword: notes on post-structural ethnography

"History is the history of the unceasing overthrow of objective forms that shape the life of man."

— Georg Lukacs, *History and Class Consciousness* (1971: 186).

1

This dissertation is written during something of a historical juncture in anthropology. It comes at the end of the two great and at times countervailing inspirations of the last three decades. The first is the post-colonial critique *by* anthropologists, which frequently takes the form of historical anthropology. Seemingly from the beginning it has inclined to the left, at times outwardly marxist, at other times only liberal. The second — which need not have run so directly against the first, but coming later it's oppositional stance was a form of empowerment — is the post-modern critique *of* anthropology. In its most common form it has taken the form of the "literary" movement in anthropology, though it too has many incarnations, some not so clearly in contrast with the former. Overall this movement has lacked a coherent political stance, neither necessarily left or right.

The disassembly of these two trends is well underway and neither is likely to hold a significant place in anthropology at the beginning of the next century. The former, historical anthropology, is dealt with mainly in the body of the text itself and need not be reviewed here. There I have argued that, as a form of critique, it is perhaps best served by a more presentist view.

More important at this point, however, is the relation of this work to those criticisms of ethnography raised by post-modernist writing. The preceding monograph takes its shape in response to the two criticisms that are the center of this movement. The first is the critique of “realist” ethnography and the implicit authority of the ethnographer. The second is the broader critique of structuralist exposition which stems from many of the same sources discussed below.

The rejection of “realist” ethnography — an idea underlying much previous ethnography whereby there is some direct correspondence between the text and that which it seeks to represent — has taken many forms, ranging from fieldwork accounts, to multi-vocality, to complete constructionism (or “ficto-criticism”). All have reoriented ethnography away from some supposed objective (or object-like) correspondence with something presumed more real than itself and toward its social impact. Self-conscious writing and experimental attempts to re-orient the representational functions of ethnography have tried to decenter the ethnographer or the ethnographer’s project within the final product, replacing it with a “palimpsest,” in Joan Vincent’s terms, of representational strategies. Success has varied, though one consequence of self-conscious writing is that it too frequently turns into autobiography, few of whose pitfalls have ever been formally acknowledged by its practitioners, though in gossip circles this criticism is predominant.

The rejection of structuralist exposition, on the other hand, follows many of the lines laid out by the phenomenologists discussed below. Briefly put, the grand theories and supposed tectonic structures that are presumed to underlie social phenomena have been rejected in their role as “ultimate” causes, and in their place are [placed?] the local meanings and everyday systems, sometimes even just the phenomena themselves. This has produced ethnographies that eschew any connecting stance, priorities, or agendas outside of the immediacy of the local situation. What follows from this is sometimes historical, but not in the grand, Hegelian sense; it is, rather, history as “one damn thing after another.” This is often understood as a form of pragmatism or phenomenology because it rejects any attempt at fitting the experience of the ethnographer or her subject into pre-existing theoretical frames, seeking instead the specific logic of the local.

For the most part both these criticisms seem justified. Ethnography has always seemed ill-suited to metatheoretical practice. Tied as it is to specific places and to “experience-near” sorts of encounters, it has always surpassed facile attempts at quantification and comparison. Ethnographers are poor sociologists, and growing poorer by the day. But too often this fact is used to justify ignoring the immediate, experiential centrality of certain kinds of metatheoretical entities whose presence in the lives of anthropological subjects is critical — entities like the State and governmental interference, Capitalism and capitalist firms, or media. Put plainly, to note the often

fetishized existence of these entities is not sufficient reason to dismiss them. In pragmatist terms, fetishes are real — or as real as anything else — in-so-far-as they have real effects. Both political-economists and their critics have too often missed the point that the fetishes themselves must be studied *for their fetish nature*.

Nor, as discussed above, have ethnographers done a very good job of seeking to understand the every day consequences of the inevitable conflict between the day-to-day experiences they see and the ideologies (or metatheories, or systematic objectifications, all of which mean about the same things) *that are a part of that experience*. These conflicts remain at the center of the project this book begins.

Both of these criticisms also take issue with representation as it has commonly been conceived, and rather than address them point by point it seems more valuable to simply state what I have done in response. The work now concluded is a representation of the conflicts and tensions that are, I argue, critical experiential elements in the daily lives of the village residents with whom I lived and worked in Southeast Alaska. The mode of representation chosen is not, however, devoid of metatheoretical content. This may seem a contradiction, given what has just been said of the methods I have chosen, but it is not.

One initial observation, drawn loosely from Peirce will make clear why this must be so. We begin with the self-obvious (but under-appreciated)

notion that representations are all representations — no different in kind from one another, regardless of origin or intention. This is not to say that they are not different, for they are as different as “night” and “day.” Each is important mainly for its social life, and individual content, construction, and context of production vary greatly. Nor are such notions tied to particular representational media, like language. For Peirce representations included self-experienced “sense data” as well as more obvious constructions (like ethnographies), all of which are subject to similar sorts of dynamics. In short, everything that is perceived or encountered is, in this sense, a representation.¹

The novelty of such an approach is not that everything is a representation, though — this has been basic to philosophy since the middle ages (see below) and likely much longer. What seems more important is that any absolute means of evaluating such representations, or any we have come across so far, is false. Nietzsche, of course, makes this the center of his philosophy as well, and hence his centrality to deconstructionist efforts.

¹ Durkheim’s discussion of collective representations contains several comments on William James’ discussion in his two part work on Psychology (see Durkheim 1974; James 1950). The issue for Durkheim was whether signs continued to exist once they have lapsed from the consciousness of the perceiving individual. For James the answer was no (though it might be recalled to consciousness in any number of ways); for Durkheim “collective representations” continued to exist in so far as they altered the “collective consciousness” of society at large. Unfortunately, when Durkheim attempts to resolve this argument, he mistakes James’ work, and cites arguments and pages that do not exist in the text — see note by Pocock (Durkheim 1974: 11).

Further, this is admittedly a very anti-positivist stance, for it implies that absolute distinctions — including, most especially, truth — are misplaced when applied to representations, or to most things. Pragmatist philosopher Richard Rorty notes this when he writes: “Truth cannot be out there — cannot exist independently of the human mind — because sentences cannot so exist, or be out there. The world is out there, but descriptions of the world are not. Only descriptions of the world can be true or false. The world on its own — *unaided by the describing activities of human beings* — cannot” (1989:5; *emphasis added*).

This point has been made in anthropology in the past as well, though here I argue that the consequence is not necessarily the automatic rejectionism of the post-moderns. For what seems most critical in such a framework, though it is little discussed, is that some more relative distinctions, other than truth, between representations are still possible. Following James, then, we must admit that some representations are more useful than others. And with Rorty, we must note that the world becomes useful, for us or for anyone, only when it can be conceived of as true or false.

Some explanation is necessary because such ideas are often misunderstood and on the surface potentially contradictory. To begin with, this is not an argument for utilitarian sorts of evaluations, though pragmatism has often been unjustly categorized as such. Utilitarianism implies a strict means of evaluating representations that pragmatism denies

and usually categorizes with other sorts of truth claims; in short, utilitarianism is a form of idealism, not pragmatism (see Rorty 1989: 3-22). By useful, it seems more accurate to speak of representations whose anticipated effects, given a particular context, might be called desirable or even reliable.

However, with use and desire explicitly a part of the ethnographic project, a second dilemma emerges. For if ethnographic representations are not unlike other representations, they are still produced under very different circumstances than, say, those that anthropological informants make themselves, or, contra-Clifford, those of a novelist. Knowing this, the ethnographer must ask the question: what are the ethical implications of “useful” ethnographic representations of other people? Useful to who? At whose expense? And how are we to know what the eventual uses of our representations will be? These are crucial questions, and questions that pure constructionism or “ficto-criticism” has avoided by turning away from traditional ethnographic representations and toward pure fiction. Yet if we find this last solution wanting — and I do, minimally because understandings of use must be predicated on anticipated reactions and it is perhaps a sign of the limited usefulness of such representations that makes their production so liberating — then what are our alternatives?

One answer, I believe, is to question the very division that supposes representations of “them” are not representations of “us.” This division also owes its origin to a much older anthropology, but it has somehow escaped too

close scrutiny by post-modern critics. Indeed contemporary anthropology has become more otherizing than at any time in its past, for often those most otherizing efforts of the past were predicated on a sort of mechanical differentiation (I think here of some culture and personality studies). Today's ethnography is not, and difference seems to spring primordial from the earth. In place of this — now more than ever — we seem to require some means, some theory or proposed overarching understanding that connects the representations of “us” and “them.” For here I want to argue that efforts to bridge this gap seem not only interesting but necessary for responsible ethnographic production in an era where the possibility of an objective correspondence between ethnography and subject seems hopelessly lost. If such a solution seems to be a renewed advocacy of meta-theory (or at least of a theory that incorporates anthropologists and their subjects under a single representational frame), that is because it is, although in a very particular and pragmatic sense. Put plainly it seems to me that metatheory remains a crucial context for ethnographic production, if not necessarily its aim.

And indeed such a solution does not mean that ethnography need be oriented toward such theory. This is the purpose of anthropology more generally, of which ethnography remains not an adjunct nor even necessarily a supporting method, but rather a separate sort of production whose goals must be therapeutic (in Wittgenstein's sense, such that ethnography encourages the rearranging of related and unrelated representations to

provide a break or jolt in the habits of our own “synechism” (to again quote Peirce) and perhaps that of others as well). For my purposes, ethnography must be done in the context of a particular anthropology. Though neither necessarily for it or against it, it must of necessity be from it.

My own anthropology is essentially marxist.

2

The pragmatic turn (of which this work is a part) is somewhat new to anthropology, though certain pragmatist notions have been foundational for the discipline for much longer. Most recently pragmatism has come to anthropology intermingled with a revival of phenomenological methods and emphases, for the two are, to an extent, compatible. These two discursive nodes (for they are not really schools or paradigms) are sympathetic partly because they represent two moments in the general linguistic turn of philosophy that marks the entire late-nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Both might be considered a later reaction to Kantian structuralism as well, though most often quite independent of one another. Early in this period there appeared a number of phenomenologies, all part of the general mid-to-late-nineteenth century deconstruction of Kant’s metaphysics — for by the late 19th century the blush of enlightenment philosophy had faded and the

“no-ology” (Peirce’s term, pun intended) of Hegel had come to be seen as insufficiently grounded for the expanding, and predominantly material context of the world. Thus while Hegel may have been the first modern to use the term phenomenology, Peirce felt free to note, when writing his own phenomenology, “I know that there is another series of elements imperfectly represented by Hegel’s Categories. But I have been unable to give any satisfactory account of them.” (1955: 74).

Much of the preceding work is framed by the particular critique and consequent phenomenology of M. M. Bakhtin, whose early writings on the “philosophy of the act” have only recently become widely available (1991; 1993). Bakhtin is not generally considered a central figure in phenomenology; writing under the pen name of Volosinov he is usually invoked as an early advocate of certain post-modern tenets such as multi-vocality, drawn from his *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* (1973). But Bakhtin’s phenomenology, coming as it does at a time when phenomenology had yet to become fixed on a specific approach to experience, retains a flexibility that makes it useful for the present essay. What remains critical in the philosophy Bakhtin proposes is that his phenomenology is prompted by a rejection of Kant’s ethics, and not Kant’s metaphysics. For Bakhtin the crucial question of experience, then, was not how it might be perceived or categorized, but the manner in which it prompts one *to act*. This sets his phenomenology off

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from most others, then and since.²

Bakhtin begins by noting that all objective representations (or “objectifications”) of “being in the world” — whether in art, history, academic discourse, or popular politics — capture only a portion of the experience entailed. Always, he notes, some element of the “once occurrent” nature of being in the world is lost. Yet the practice of objectification is made the cornerstone of Kant’s ethics, and indeed from Kant, the cornerstone of ethical action for all modernity. For Kant, ethical action is possible only by abstracting from the given situation to a more general one; that is, one can examine the ethics of an action only by asking if such an act would be acceptable if performed by anyone in such circumstances. At the center of all ethical action, then, is the frank objectification of experience, and the removal

² “My confirmed and acknowledged participation in Being is not just passive (the joy of being), but is first and foremost active (the *ought* to actualize my own unique place)” (Bakhtin 1993: 60).

And further on:

“This valuative architectonic division of the world into I and those who are all others for me is not passive and fortuitous, but is an active and ought-to-be division. This architectonic is something-given as well as something-to-be-accomplished, for it is the architectonic of an event. It is not given as finished and rigidified architectonic, into which I am place passively. It is the yet-to-be-realized plane of my orientation in Being-as-event or an architectonic that is incessantly and actively realized through my answerable deed, upbuilt by my deed and possessing stability only in the answerability of my deed.” (1993:75)

This is also his critique of Bergson, see 1993:13; and an implied critique of Husserl (see note #16, 1993:83).

In this way his views parallel Kierkegaard (see, for example Kierkegaard 1962), but this is limited to the idea of participative action, beyond which the links are more tenuous.

from the process of the 'once-occurrent' nature of experience itself. Bakhtin writes:

The evaluation of a thought as an individual act or deed takes into account and includes within itself the in full the moment constituted by the theoretical validity of a thought *qua* judgement, that is, an evaluation of the validity of the judgement constitutes a necessary moment in the composition of the performed act, although it does not yet exhaust the latter. For the theoretical validity of a judgement, on the other hand, the individual-historical moment — the transformation of a judgment into an answerable act or deed of its author — is completely immaterial. I myself — as the one who is actually thinking and who is answerable for his act of thinking — I am not present in the theoretically valid judgement. (1993: 3-4).

This is but one element of Kant's general structuralism,³ but for Bakhtin it is the most important, for with such a notion all valid action is necessarily reduced to what we might call partiality — a term which retains the dual meaning of "not whole" and "taking-sides" or "interested."⁴

³ Bakhtin's text is without notes of its own, but based on the example he draws it is likely he has foremost in his mind Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*:

Kant's classical example against ontological proof, that a hundred real thalers are not equal to a hundred thinkable thalers, has ceased to be convincing. What was historically on hand once and only once in the reality that was determined by me in a once-occurrent manner is, indeed, incomparably heavier (1993:8).

This he refers to as the "lightening" of the very term "Being" or "Reality" accompanies the philosophy of the 19th and 20th centuries.

⁴ Bakhtin does not use the term partial or any near translation, at least specifically. Yet he does emphasize that only the once-occurrent act of being has wholeness, and that all objectifications of it do not.....

"This act is truly real (it participates in once-occurrent Being-as-event) only *in its entirety*. Only this *whole* act is alive, exist fully and inescapably — comes to be, is accomplished. It is an actual living participant in the ongoing event of Being: it is in communion with the unique unity of ongoing Being. But this communion or participation

For Bakhtin a notion of meaningful action outside of this sort of objectification was not only possible, but was, in fact, widespread. For Bakhtin this was “participative thinking”: the linking of a “performed act” and “its product....to the unitary and unique context of life....to determine them in that context as an indivisible unity” (1993:19). In philosophy, he notes, such a notion was common until recently.⁵ But it is equally important that this practice is not limited to philosophy. In fact, just the opposite, for it “is accomplished by every moral act or deed, and it is understood by elementary moral consciousness” (1993:75). Participative thinking is, in fact, common to all action as it is actually performed. It seems to be missing only in those systems of abstraction that take the form of ‘laws, norms, or general

does not penetrate its content/sense aspect, which pretends to being able to achieve full and definitive self-determination within the unity of this or that domain of sense or meaning (science, art, history), although, as we showed, these objective domains, apart from the act that brings them into communion with Being, are not realities with respect to their sense or meaning.” (1993: 2; *emphasis in original*).

James Clifford noted in the introduction to *Writing Culture* that “[e]thnographic truths are thus inherently *partial* — committed and incomplete” (1986: 7), pointing out this same duality. For Clifford, however, this is simply a characteristic of a genre, not of being in the world, and hence the problem of ethnography, as such, is more limited. When we recognize that the problem of ethnography is not limited to ethnography, we begin to see the importance of doing ethnography, for it is one among few potentially self conscious engagements with this problem.

⁵ “Participative thinking predominates in all great systems of philosophy, either consciously and distinctly (especially in the Middle Ages) or in an unconscious and masked form (in the systems of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries) (Bakhtin 1993:8).

It is worth noting that Peirce always claimed to be “realist” in the Medieval sense, affirming something very close to Bakhtin.

propositions,’ to paraphrase the remaining paragraph. This, participative thinking as moral activity ‘in the world,’ *is* the everyday activity of people.

Two points from Bakhtin’s phenomenology, then, are central to the approach I propose. The first is the idea that the objective reality of any situation is a reflection of the historical/discursive construction of the particular objects involved. Thus, when we discuss ANCSA above, the corporate boards, proxy battles, and shareholders *are* the objective political reality. Likewise in Part 3, the images and entities that seem so central to lives of the Pentecostal christians — the spirits, Holy Spirit, demons and guardian angels — must be understood as equally real in objective terms as is ANCSA. For these too are objectifications of parts of experience, backed-up, as it were, by the discursive and active importance placed on the objects themselves. Yet for all of these sorts of objects, their importance lies necessarily in their social impact, for it is only through social life that the partiality necessary for the objective reality of any particular set of objects is reproduced. They are, that is, social objects.

Note, however, that this does not mean that the discourses that use them must remain consistent, rational, or systematic. The theological orderliness of spirits and salvation is of little importance in understanding their reality or present importance; the “legitimacy” of particular regimes of power only seldom affects their tenure. Nor, for that matter, can their

rationale be sought in the collective needs of the people who make them present, a point made implicitly by the conflicts in “being Native” discussed in Chapter 8.

The second point from Bakhtin which orients much of the remainder of the text is the idea that experience remains at the center of social life, both as its focus and, conversely, as the source of its undoing. Here Bakhtin’s understanding is perhaps less developed than Peirce’s, but the conclusions Peirce reaches would likely appeal to Bakhtin. By experience here, then, we do not mean simply sense experience or ‘percepts,’ as Peirce called them. These too are framed by habit and are perceived only as representations. Rather, by experience we mean something more along the lines of what Peirce called synechism — the fact that ideas, perceptions, and objective representations are never engaged in isolation, but rather, always, in association with other ideas, percepts or objects. These others are the context, the activity of the self on the world that is “experience.” This is, I think, something of what Bakhtin meant when he said that, “Every thought of mine, along with its content, is an act or deed that I perform — my own individually answerable act or deed [*postupok*]. It is one of those acts which make up my whole once-occurrent life as an uninterrupted performing of acts [*postuplenie*]” (1993:3). Synechism is, from Peirce, that uninterrupted “being in the world.”

From this we can draw the following conclusions. First, experience in this way acts in one direction only. This point I raise early in the text and it is, in fact, definitional: experience is that which cannot be either reclaimed or undone.⁶

Second, and perhaps more importantly, is the fact that for Bakhtin the activity that is experience existed not in some passive reception of the world which, though not explicit, is apparent in Peirce, Bergson, Husserl and others of his contemporaries; rather, Bakhtin's experience is rooted in actions performed upon the world by the self (in the form of that continuous once occurrent "being"). Being is acting, for Bakhtin; and as such, being (in the sense human being) is being (acting).

3

A new vision of ethnographic authorship seems to me a necessary outgrowth and essential expression of these two trends practice. Authority, which for so long has not been distinguished from authorship in any social

⁶Levi-Strauss once noted that directionality was main distinguishing factor between *langue* and *parole*, or language structure and speech: For language itself can be analyzed into things which are at the same time similar and yet different. This is precisely what is expressed in Saussure's distinction between *langue* and *parole*, one being the structural side of language, the other the statistical aspect of it, *langue* belonging to a reversible time, *parole* being non-reversible (1963: 209). Levi-Strauss does not view these two sides, and their respective "times," as either equal or in conflict. In what follows this passage he makes clear that anthropology's interest lie with the former. Just the opposite is being proposed here.

science field, seems intensely counter-productive to it. In the first place, authorship seems the first and most central means for dissolving supposed differences between the representations produced by anthropologists and those produced by ethnographic subjects, fiction writers, bureaucrats and so on. Ethnographers who write books not *of* themselves but *as* themselves take a step toward a lasting split between these difficult positions. The reasons for such a step are important and, given the criticism of the past 10 years, timely.

Free of authority, ethnographic representations can engage other representations in more ways. Indeed, this is often the case for ethnographic representations when their supposed authority has waned. Malinowski's diary freed his ethnography from authority and allowed a host of new engagements for his other texts. Many of these were critical, but it should not be lost on the contemporary reader that Malinowski's texts now speak to a range of new and more widely placed audiences, in markedly different and often un-anthropological ways. All this is owed largely to the lapse of his authority. And while it may bother ethnographers that their work be read as traveler's accounts, pure fiction, romanticism, or even novels, it is up to the new generation of ethnographers to embrace multiple readings as a confirmation of ethnography's growing importance. Ethnography authored by specific individuals rather than a field or discipline can and will be more multifaceted, sooner.

NOTES ON SOURCES

When anthropologists and sociologists (though less so historians) have looked at “religion,” their foremost concern has been to differentiate it from other social activities based on the supposed unique nature of the concerns of “religion” itself — its relation to the supernatural, sacred, or divine (Geertz 1973); its institutional basis in churches (Weber 1958; Greenhouse 1986; Yengoyan 1993); its role in “world-building” as part of a previous imperial, or now modernist project (Hefner 1993a; Freston 1993; Horton 1975) or as resistance to this project (Brusco 1993; Comaroff 1985). This has served as a means of generalizing about and differentiating between religions largely in terms of divisions that were already present on the ground. Few other than historians, however, have been concerned with the relations of “religious” groups to other sorts of groups also engaged in the processes not linked specifically to religion. Often these relations may be more important to the effects religions produce than the theological order they propose.

Where exceptions have occurred and anthropologists have considered churches in relation to other groups, it has generally been at the expense of any consideration of the importance of church activity as an orienting process. Instead church membership and conversion has been made a means to non-church concerns, like changes from milpa production to expanded production for the market (e.g. Annis 1987); as a means to replace or complement other kinds of healing (Chesnut 1997); or shifts in avenues of political expression

and mobility (Gill 1993; Green 1993). That the terms, activities, and orientations of church membership might themselves be issues for the understanding of social change has received less attention. Yet many of the more common phrases of pentecostalism — the terms people use to discuss, justify and explore their own practice — are central to understanding the ways that churches themselves create change and impact local political situations. Knowing this, it becomes more important that we consider the discursive significance and social rendering caused by many churches in terms usually reserved for accepted sorts of historical actors, like classes or tribes.

Such statements evoke the social constructionism that has become popular in Foucauldian sorts of history and anthropology (Mitchell 1989; Abu-Lughod 1990; Tsing 1993). But this approach is also unsatisfactory, though for quite different reasons. For the most part discursive history and social constructionism has been satisfied to point out that all element of history and social life are beholden to systems of signification that bear only a tenuous link — and many would say none at all — to any sort of natural meaning or unmediated experience (Stedman Jones 1983). Instead, all meaning, including experience, derives from social interaction and participation in discourses whose dynamics frame and limit meanings of all kinds. This would include meanings as diverse as the experience of ones own body, or the categorical, cultural distinctions once popular in Levi-Straussian structural anthropology. Seen as the basis for history, the discourses

themselves often seem ahistorical, and authorless. Thus, though called post-structural, such an approach is more likely hyper-structural.

In more sophisticated form there has been a return to the idea that these same meanings are most often contested, ending in a struggle for meaning between competing discourses. Anthropologists who examine these struggles then place an emphasis on the acts of decision and strategy undertaken within conflicting groups (Comaroff 1985; Stedman Jones 1996). This emphasis on practice has put motion back into post-structuralism and social constructionism. And it has allowed historians and anthropologists to put more directed sorts of change back into the understanding of history and social life. But most often where this focus has involved those sorts of small-scale practices common to anthropology, no effort has been made to see in them anything but the smallest of changes. Put plainly, such practices are seldom used to account for or seen as capable of producing the radical ruptures in meaning that precipitate social disjunctions out of scale with “struggles over signification.” Even a notion as nuanced and exciting as Raymond Williams “structures of feeling,” (1977) deals only with mundane every day sorts of meaning production in such a way that it loses its potential to ever create radical historical ruptures. There is no notion in the current anthropology of practice of *contradiction* — no sense of a set of tensions whose continued fulfillment leads not to a conservative reproduction of themselves (Mitchell 1988), but rather whose realization necessarily results in

the radical transformation of the entire process that brought about them about.

Notes on Sources for Chapter 2

For the early history of American Alaska generally see Bancroft (1970) and Hinckley (1972; 1996); Nichols (1924) provides a description of the early neglect of the region. For the position of the frontier in the place of American industrialism (Alaska still proclaims itself the "Last Frontier"), see Slotkin (1985; 1973). Archival and manuscript sources are listed in the bibliography under the "historical manuscripts section"

Anthropological work on the northern Northwest Coast is as old as anthropology, yet the majority of the documentation produced reflects little of the political or economic context of the work itself. Swanton's work among the Haida (1905a, 1905b) is largely "recovery" work, as was his work with the Tlingit (1908). DeLaguna's monumental *Under Mount Saint Elias* (1972) reflects some of the early contact history, but her aims also lie elsewhere. Her edited (and practically co-written, for the sections added to make sense of the original manuscript make up more than a third of the final work) collection of Emmon's writings (see Emmons 1991) likewise has little to say of the historical transformation of the region to which he (Emmons) was perhaps the best witness. Much the same hold true for work among the Canadian Haida or the neighboring Tsimshian. Boas (1916), Garfield (1939), Barbeau

(1917) have little to say about the cannery boom along the northern British Columbia Coast, though it was in full swing by the 1910's; see Knight (1978), Barbeau (1947), and Niblack (1888).

P. Drucker's work is one exception within anthropology (see Drucker 1957; 1958; n.d.) though most of his historical work outside of his monograph on the Native Brotherhoods aims at the period prior to his own work on the coast (see, for example, Drucker 1965). And there have been several dissertations with a more recent historical slant (Vaughan 1985; Langdon 1977; also see Wyatt (1985; 1987) but only Langdon takes a specifically presentist approach. M. Harkin's recent Heiltsuk monograph (1997) takes history as his topic, but in many ways the romance of pristine living has been replaced by the romance of hybrid contact. Of course Joyce Wike's early dissertation led the way in studies of contact, followed by a regionwide (indeed continent wide) contextualization by Wolf (1982). Studies like Wolf's, Wike's, and Harkin's help us rethink the context of earlier work in more productive ways, and they provide context for early ethnography, but even these works fail to provide necessary context for recent ethnography. Yet little recent ethnography has been undertaken outside of a focus on what of the past can be recovered (Kan 1987; 1989; Blackman 1982; Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1994). While enlightening past ethnography, they simultaneously darken their own.

The recent literary/historical monograph on the "Potlatch Papers," by

Christopher Bracken (1997) is also an interesting non-anthropological approach to the context of early fieldwork further south along the coast. Douglas Cole's work on the history of the anti-potlatch law (Cole 1985; Cole and Chaikin 1990) provides, like Wolf's and Knight's work, an entirely alternative view of classical ethnographic subjects in the region. And Stearns (1981) paints an interesting picture of the missionization of the Canadian Haida.

The cannery history of the coast is yet to be written, though portions of its accompanying political dynamics have been explored by non-anthropologists (for example Price 1990, Case 1984). The documentation on canneries abounds (Cobb 1919, 1930; DeLoach 1938; Gregory and Barnes 1939). My own preliminary work in just one town is available in Dombrowski 1995. A list of manuscript sources is available in the Bibliography under "Cannery Manuscript Sources." Early mission and traveler sources from this period are prevalent as well, including especially the missionary/Bureau of Education manuscripts for almost every village (Bureau of Education, Alaska Division, m.s.'s). Some work on this era has been done by Ted Hinckley (1982; 1996) and, on the earlier Russian attempts at Sitka, Sergei Kan has provided much invaluable translation and interpretation (1988; 1991); Richard Dauenhauer provides an interesting addition/interpretation in Dauenhauer 1982.

BIA reports, hired out to anthropologists, contain an elaborate picture of the social conditions in Alaska during the period in which anthropology was fully ensconced in debates about “northwest coast culture.” I think here especially of BIA 1938-41(ms), and reports by Goldschmidt and Haas (1948) Lantis and Fuller (1948), Camarot and Wentworth (1958), and LaVerdure (1961). This was also the period of intensive political activity on the part of Southeast Natives, a startling picture of which is available in the Curry Weissbrodt Papers — the archives of the successive representatives of T&H Central Council in its suit for land compensation. The Haidaburg Reserve is documented in Curry Weissbrodt m.s. C1-11.1, and in the paperwork surrounding the Folta Opinion (1952).

The changing economics of the region, as a prelude to limited entry, are interestingly documented in two different ways by G. Rogers (1960; 1972) and Rogers et al (1974) on the one hand and R. Cooley (1963) and Crutchfield and Pontecorvo (1969) on the other.

Langdon (1980) remains the best source on the initial rationale and early impact of the limited entry system (also Adasiak 1977); and his later work (Langdon 1989) provides a criticism based on a longer historical view. Lizik (1983) provides a second view that confirms much of what Langdon’s early data suggests, while Morehouse and Rogers (1980) provide immense statistical evidence that documents the transformations caused by the management regime. Dinneford and Hart (1987) show that little reversal of

the initial trends 15 years after their implementation. Guimary's (1983) report on the condition of historic canneries offers compelling visual testimony of the death of the industry. On the global status of fisheries see work by James McGoodwin (1990), Acheson (1981), Anonymous (1988), Durrenberger and Palsson (1988), and McCay (1981).

Historical work on West Coast unions and labor patterns have been largely ignored by anthropologists. Masson and Guimary (1981) give an interesting thumbnail of what remains the untold side of American colonialism in the Pacific, namely the vast movement of labor across the region in the period prior to the beginnings of World War 1. I relied here for statistics and overview on an unpublished masters thesis in Business School of Columbia University (Abogast 1947).

Notes on Sources for Chapter 3

I first began to formulate the idea of "family" when I read Claudia Lewis' *Indian Families of the Northwest Coast* (1970), though this is not because Lewis uses a term in the sense it is used here. Lewis' "community study" approach to the "Camas" Indians, as she calls them, focuses mainly on the "disorganization that often accompanies the impact of modern life on Indian groups in America...." (1971:3), which comes later in the work to mean a lack of the values normally associated (often fictitiously) with "white" nuclear families. For the most part, Lewis sees the family as what is left when

other forms of social organization are stripped away through a history of colonialism (though she does not quite use these terms either), and an anachronistic retention of “native” values.

As is clear in the chapter, I view the family as an entirely contemporary phenomenon, without relation to past forms of social organization of the “values” associated with these forms.

Classical ethnography and interpretation of northern Northwest Coast kinship would include early research by DeLaguna (1952; 1960; 1970), Emmons (1991), Garfield (1939; 1947), Jones (1914), Kraus (1956), Murdock (1934), Oberg (1934; 1973), and Swanton (1907; 1908). For interpretations the list is virtually endless, but see Adams (1981), Drucker (1955), Kan (1989) Murdock (1934), Rosman and Rubel (1986), and Suttles (1960).

The continuation of “clan” organization is a second issue. Some, like Kan (1991; see also Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1987) have argued that clans continue to operate, especially in the context of potlatch ceremonies. This would seem true to an extent in Sitka, judging by Kan’s data, and perhaps in Angoon, though in neither of these towns do clans have any corporate existence outside of ceremonial contexts. In other areas the “moiety” division between Ravens and Eagles is enjoined for some ceremonial purposes, like the sort of funeral services Kan discusses, though here it is worth questioning the use of the term moiety for the groups are seldom exogamous. Vaughan (1985) makes a similar point.

Perhaps more interesting is a report to the BIA by two anthropologists, Lantis and Fuller (1948, m.s.; the report was never accepted and exists only in manuscript form). The report gives a town by town breakdown of household expenditures and incomes, local business accounting (including the income of particular seiners) and includes for some towns information on parentage and place of birth. Importantly, Lantis and Fuller refer throughout to "families," even for groups of more than one household and more than 10 people, perhaps indicating that the term was used even then as it is today. Just as often, however, family is used to refer to households, as it is by people today as well, which is indicated as such (1948:15). In one case they indicate that "family" may also mean clan, though it is unclear whether this means clan in the restrictive unilineal sense of the past (1948:13).

Clear throughout the report, though, is that while families at the time continue to move around for work and subsistence (especially during the summer), it is households and groups of bilateral kin that move, husbands and sons and their families on boats, a woman and her children and perhaps a parent to the canneries. Nor, as with the Goldschmidt Haas report (1946) is there any indication of clans retaining control over subsistence resources. By 1948 areas tend to be considered to belong to towns, though often in 1948 past clan jurisdiction was still remembered.

When discussing incomes, Lantis and Fuller note that additional income earners greatly affect the overall well being of the household. But

when enumerating the types of additional workers they included wives, sons, daughters. Extended kin ties (however conceived) seem to play little role in household economics. When they do, the emphasis is on bilateral linkages and the parents of grown children. They conclude: "Such a family is known technically as an 'extended family.' Important to this study is the fact that it is almost invariably also an 'economic family'" (1948:16). Finally, Lantis and Fuller note that many of the services once shared by clan members (used in the corporate, 19th century sense) have been replaced by cash transactions: "Children are paid for running errands and tending neighbors' babies. Men are paid for any boat construction work on other than the parental or possibly a brother's craft. Women are paid for clerking in a relative's store...." (1948: 56).

Notes on Sources for Chapter 4

Much has been written on ANCSA (Public Law 92-203, 1971). A review of the legal and economic conditions that preceded the act see University of Alaska, Review of Business and Economic Conditions (1967); the Federal Field Committee's report (1968); and Robert Arnold's Alaska Native Land Claims (1978). Thomas Berger's *Village Journey* (1985) shows clearly the dissatisfaction with the Act present in villages throughout Alaska even after the beginning of the oil and timber booms. For the North Slope perspective

see Chance (1990). For the role of the Alaska pipeline and the discoveries at Prudhoe Bay see Berry (1975).

Early evaluations of the economic feasibility of the village corporations comes from Gorsuch (1974). More recent evaluations of Southeast corporations is available in Schiller (1984), Colt (1991) and especially Knapp (1992). Advice for corporations from the original ANCSA lobbying group, the Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) reveals the anticipated impact of the "1991 revisions"; see Alaska Federation of Natives (1988). Two three part series in the Anchorage Daily News by Hal Bernton are critical for understanding the context of corporate harvest in the mid-80's (1985a,b,c), and the importance of the NOL issue (1987a,b,c). I have also had the chance to see annual reports from the late 80's from Kake Tribal Corporation (1988-9), Hoonah (1988), and Goldbelt (1989 [the urban corporation for Juneau area natives]), see also Ortega (1988) for a description of late-80's corporate successes.

On issues of Federal Law and Native Americans valuable guides are Deloria and Lytle (1984); Taylor (1980) and Washburn (1984). Cohen's famous *Handbook* (1942; revised 1982) remains invaluable; David Case's *Alaska Natives and American Law* (1984) undertakes a similar task for Alaska specifically. An interesting alternative raised by Berger but yet to become a critical factor in Alaska, is a strategy of pursuing status international law, see National Lawyers Guild (1982) and Barsh (1984).

The situation of the “landless” is discussed in Gorsuch et al (1994), and the 1994 Senate Bill proposed by Senator Murkowski (1994, S2539) is discussed by Sanders (1995) and SEACC (1995).

Sources discussing timber harvests in the forest, outside of the context of ANCSA are discussed in Chapter 5. ANILCA, and its effects on subsistence are discussed in Chapter 6.

For the role of tribes and native groups in resource producing industries see Jorgensen et al. (1978; 1984); Faiman-Silva (1997) provides an overview of the Choctaw Nation’s role in timber production in Oklahoma.

Notes on Sources for Chapter 5

Thomas Berger discusses ANILCA in *Village Journey*, noting that it was largely the enforcement regime created under ANCSA that prompted Alaska Natives to join with conservation interests and lobby for reform (1985:63-72). The act is known formally as the Alaska National Interest Land Conservation Act (1980). Its most important provision is section 8.10, where the balanced use provision is spelled out. Here, however, the wording of Congress, in specifying its intent, is worth noting (from Berger):

The Congress finds and declares that — the continuation of the opportunity for subsistence uses by rural residents of Alaska, including both Natives and non-Natives, on the public lands and by Alaska Natives on Native lands is essential to Native physical, economic, traditional, and cultural existence and to non-Native physical, economic, traditional, and social existence (in Berger 1985: 64).

The difference between “cultural” and “social existence,” and their apparent

mutual exclusiveness is not explained. The significance of the “rural preference” noted here is discussed in the Chapter 7.

Importantly, while ANILCA restored rights extinguished by ANCSA, it did so only in limited fashion, i.e. along side other uses, like commercial fishing, mining, foresting and other forms of development, which takes place *on the same land*.

ANILCA created a host of problems in local administration, and the spate of Alaska State laws that followed greatly exacerbated the confusion. For a relatively recent view of the State Fish and Game Departments understanding of the laws and their history, see Alaska Department of Fish and Game, “Report on Implementation of 1992 Subsistence Law” (1995). Here the history of Alaska’s 1978, 1986, and 1992 Subsistence Laws are discussed, as are the case histories by which they were all overturned (e.g. McDowell v. State of Alaska; the “Madison Decision”; the “Katy John” case and State of Alaska v. Secretary of the Interior Babbitt).

For information on local subsistence practices and harvest levels in Southeast Alaska, the State Fish and Game Department has published a series of studies, including: Ellanna and Sherrod (1987); Leghorn and Kookesh (1987); George and Bosworth (1988); Cohen (1989) Firman and Bosworth (1990); and Schroeder and Kookesh (1990). The amount of material on current use in these volumes is impressive, and all seem relatively accurate given my own research in the area — with one exception. It seems, given

what I have seen and been told by some users, that the harvest levels for those most actively involved in subsistence use, are consistently under-reported to Fish and Game, and hence in their reports. For example, it is perhaps no coincidence that no household reports harvesting more than 12 deer, given that this is the legal maximum per household. Some families take as many as twenty deer annually.

There is one further problem as well. In all of these studies the majority of the interpretations continue to be based on aggregate numbers and village wide averages. In one brief exception, Schroeder and Kookesh (1990:114-116) provide charts on deer harvests by household. Here, half of the households in the village report harvesting no deer, while the highest users are again said to have harvested 12. And while the 1985 average for Hoonah is 2.09 deer/household, 21 households took twice this number or more, and 34 households harvested none (1990: 115). Reasons for — and the impact of — these differences are not explored.

Historic use within the region is documented in Goldschmidt and Haas (1946), Lantis and Fuller (1948), and Langdon (1977). Oberg's classic 1938 monograph (see Oberg 1973) and Emmons (1991) provide accounts of earlier use. Suttles (1987) contains several "classic" discussions on Northwest Coast subsistence practices, concerned mainly with the 19th century, which offer valuable comparison. Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer (1987) have collected a number of stories that speak to the importance of subsistence practices within

past village communities.

Leacock and Lee's edited volume on Band politics (1982) is critical in two aspects. It raises the issue of hunters and gatherer's in state societies — see essays by Lee and Hurlich, Feit, and Vachon — and the idea of differentiation with apparently "egalitarian" groups — see Briggs and Lee.

Sources and notes on the politics of subsistence use are discussed in the notes for Chapter 7.

Notes on Sources for Chapter 6

The timber industry in Southeast Alaska began at the turn of the century, for such was the rationale behind the original creation of the Alexander Archipelago National Forest in 1902 (see Proclamation 1902). On the history of the Tongass see Gruening (1954), Rakestraw (1981), Conrad (1977), and Price (1990). On the geography and resources of the forest see Alaska Geographic Society (1985), Hutchinson et al (1975).

Discussions on the contemporary structure of the industry in Alaska are available from Alaska Loggers Association (1988), Schiller (1984), US Forest Service 1989, 1990), Rae (1988), Knapp (1992), and Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund et al, Plaintiffs (1994). Alternative views on logging broadly considered can be found in Hidy et al (1963), Machlis and Force (1988), Carrol and Lee (1990), and Brown (1995). On environmentalism as a movement and

its impact on the timber industry see Wondolleck (1988), Buttel (1992), and Caldwell (1994).

Little has been written on Native American labor in the timber industry. See Faïman-Silva (1997) for an exception. Likewise, much recent discussion of Native Americans in wage labor in general have focused on historical participation; see Littlefield and Knack (1996); but see also Anders (1980), Katzer (1988), Knack (1989), and Biolsi (1992).

For native labor the Northwest Coast as a whole Knight (1978) remains unsurpassed; see also McDonald (1994).

Much of the theoretical material used here is discussed in the notes for Chapter 12. Anthropologists working with similar ideas would include Jackson (1996), Helliwell (1996) and Mimic (1996) and Desjarlais (1996), who has been working on issues of private conceptions of struggle. Williams (1977) remains a crucial text for this sort of work, despite the criticism offered here, as does Appadurai (1986). Dewey (1958; 1960) as usual, remains my under-appreciated guide.

Notes on Sources for Chapter 7

On the topic of subsistence production within larger systems of production, expropriation and domination I have counted on Gavin Smith's *Livelihood and Resistance* (1989), especially Chapter 6, where he notes that

experience might “occur behind the backs of people in a way which actually contributes to their subjectivity” (1989:223). Smith’s model of experience is complex, as he notes, and critical to any understanding of experience in political practice. Particularly important is the way that “contentiousness provoking heightened political discourse....is lost as that experience becomes translated into an account appropriate to the task of relating “what happened” in the past” (1989:228). What seems relevant to ask, here, though, is “what happens” to those whose experience is lost to narrative — are they lost too? And if they not part of the narrative order that emerges, are they not free to associate their experience in other ways? This is jumping the gun, some, because these questions underlay both the next chapter and all of Part 3.

Also on the logic of subsistence production see Sider 1989 and his critique of Meillassoux and Chayanov; and Warman (1980). James Scott raises the issue of the experience of domination best in his early work (1976); though the confrontations always seem, for lack of a better phrase, very predictable; for me, the thorough understandability of confrontation seems impossible. Sider remains the only one of these authors to raise the issue of internal inequalities as they come to effect local/larger disputes, which is crucial to the current argument and largely missing from most anthropology of subsistence production (see Deere and Janvry 1981; Wilmsen 1989 as exceptions to this).

Asad’s critique of Geertz notion of religion (1983) remains at the center of the critique of law presented in this chapter. Geertz’s own notion of law

(1983) has much in common with his discussion of religion (1973) and so extending Asad's criticisms was actually very straightforward. Much of the basis for this critique is actually laid out in the Afterword that follows the ethnography.

For a summary on the current standing of theories of law in Anthropology, see Merry (1992). I've also always been intrigued by Douglas Hay's essay on authority (1975); and Peter Lineaugh's essay in the same volume (1975), expanded now into a full length monograph (1992). There have been interesting overlaps between pragmatism and law, specifically in the legal realism movement — "Mr. Justice Holmes," as Peirce refers to him, was part of the "Metaphysical Club" that met, "sometimes in my study, sometimes in that of William James," Peirce recalls (1955:269). Rumble (1968) remains a good guide to the early concerns of the movement. As is want to happen with pragmatists, the theoretical novelty of the movement was sometimes lost to its efforts for reform.

On the ability of "order" to reduce society to chaos see Anastasia Shkilnyk's *A Poison Stronger than Love* (1985), which remains a book no anthropologist could write, for reasons that haunt every honest field worker. On violence generally, and state violence in particular see Feldman (1991), Taussig (1987), and Brown (1995) for the general post-structuralist turn and for violence as a type of governance, in Foucault's terms.

Notes on Sources for Chapter 8

This chapter shows the extent to which I am indebted to Historical Anthropology as the necessary foundation for the type of pragmatist anthropology proposed in the remainder of this book. Most especially this includes the work of Gerald Sider, Eric Wolf, and Joan Vincent. Sider's Newfoundland monograph (1986), "Parrots" (1987) article and his *Lumbee Indian Histories* (1993) form the basis for the critique of culture more generally offered here, and it was at his urging that I began work on village level inequality as the context for cultural production. Wolf's *Europe and the People Without History* (1982) and Vincent's *Teso in Transformation* (1982) are critical in understanding the political context of cultural production alongside production for the world market. On state interference in and manipulation of this process I have found E. P. Thompson (1966; and the collection in Thompson 1991); Timothy Mitchell (1988); Anastasia Shkilnyk (1985); Michael Taussig (1980; 1987); and Eric Hobsbawm (1973; and with George Rudé, 1973) particularly useful.

The reference to the 'invention of tradition' is, of course, to the Hobsbawm and Ranger volume of that same name (1983). See especially articles by Hobsbawm ("Mass-Producing Traditions"); Ranger ("The Invention of Tradition in Colonial Africa"); and Cohn ("Representing Authority in Victorian India").

For the discussion of experience in the chapter I am particularly

indebted to Gerald Sider's "Against Experience" (1997). Other essays in this volume are important for beginning to approach social "silences," and perhaps "silence more generally." Here see "Introduction" by Sider and Smith (1997) and "Work and the Production of Silence" by Lamphere (1997).

Notes on Sources for Chapters 9 and 10

Perhaps the most influential source on social studies of religion has been Weber (1965; 1958). A discussion of this fact, as well as Weber's treatment by others in Sociology is available from Hefner (1993), whose own approach notes criticism of Weber but does not deviate markedly from him. Others in the collection do (see Merrill 1993; Ranger 1993). The most classical formulation in Anthropology of Weber's view is, of course, Geertz (1965; 1973). This was discussed in Chapter 7 (see also Asad 1983).

Yet given his importance to Sociology and to Geertz and Weber's own interest in ethnographies of religion, it is perhaps surprising that few anthropologists have directly followed his lead. Even Peacock, when writing about a group of "protestants" that Weber visited, takes a Durkheimian view (Peacock 19??). Indeed Durkheim (especially 1912) has proved the more consistent inspiration. As Morris (1987) points out, Durkheim has been influential two different ways: for his emphasis on community and through the notion of religious symbols. The latter was more popular in the past than at present (see Turner 1967, 1974; or Levi-Strauss 1969). The former was

critical to early anthropological approaches (e.g. Evans-Pritchard 1937), and has recently had something of a revival (Taussig 1992).

More influential on the approach presented here and in the following two chapters has been the work of Taussig (1980) and Ong (1987), and the study of specific historical churches (in the broad sense of, for example, temporally and geographically bound versions of christianity — see Schneider and Lindenbaum 1987; Asad 1993). I have also found suggestions in theories of performance (where these have been directed toward anthropological situations; see Turner 1987, Schechner 1993). Particularly interesting, though I received it only after completing the manuscript is Cynthia Keppley Mahmood's *Fighting for Faith and Nation, Dialogues with Sikh Militants* (1996).

Contemporary approaches to Pentecostalism and other Baptist sects include works by Greenhouse (1986), contributors to the volume by Hall and Stack (1982; especially Grindel 1982), the collection of case studies in Garrard Burnett and Stoll (1993), and the recent ethnography of Chesnut, *Born Again in Brazil* (1997). History of the Pentecostal Movement in North and South America include those by Anderson (1979), Burdick (1993), and Cox (1995).

Jean and John Comaroff's discussion of reformed churches in Southern Africa propose a model that questions the colonization of consciousness and the consciousness of colonization (Comaroff 1985; Comaroff and Comaroff 1991). Though I find their work sympathetic to what I try to do here, there are

critical differences in the way culture and representation are thought to proceed, and hence a somewhat different approach to some similar social processes.

Religious conversion was an early topic in Native American Studies, and I still find James Mooney's *Ghost Dance* monograph (1896; and 1965) to be at the center of what ethnography in Native North America might yet be. Beyond this, the topic received little treatment until Wallace raised it in the 60's (see Wallace 1969). The collection of essays by "Natives and Christians" assembled by Treat attempts to address why this is (see Treat 1996); and to remedy the situation. As with so many issues around Native American history and politics, Vine Deloria Jr. (1992) anticipates much of the current discussion.

In Alaska the majority of the work on conversion has centered on the 19th and early 20th centuries (Drucker 1958; Kan 1985, 1989; Oleska (1987), even when people themselves have raised the importance of church in their ongoing lives (see Blackman 1982; Eastman and Edwards 1991), a point Kan (1991) comes closest to addressing.

The relation of current church movements to previous practices on the coast have been dealt with only briefly by Sergei Kan (1991). Links to shamanism are doubtful, however, in any current context (though see Hugh-Jones [1996] for an interesting counter example from South America). More

interesting might be the connection between current church movements and the Indian Shaker churches further south, or the prophet movements of the late-19th century that occurred along much of the Northwest Coast. Indian Shakerism (sometimes called Western Shakerism) was and is mainly centered in Washington State, Western Oregon and Northern California, and Southern British Columbia (see Ruby and Brown 1996). Early anthropological interest in prophets and shakers includes pioneering work by Mooney 1896; and later contemporary work by Collins 1950, Smith 1954, and Barnett 1957, and Suttles 1957. Shakerism and prophet movement are interest not because the practices are similar, though they may be (a mistake made when pentecostals are compared to shamanic sorts of possession); but rather because they occur in a similar period of dramatic change and prove widely popular in participative ways. Shamanism was never a “popular” movement, though many may have employed shamans and thought their work effective.

Issues of Testimony have been dealt with only briefly by several of those above who have researched pentecostal or Baptist practice more generally. Greenhouse (1986) discusses “witnessing” (which includes testimony and efforts aimed at recruiting non-church members to the congregation), but relates no direct testimony and only discusses it briefly. The importance of church service is discussed by the contributors to the Garrard-Burnett and Stoll (1993) volume, but the language and role of any

sort of expression of faith is not dealt with directly by any. Chesnut (1997:79) gives examples of several testimonies (as does Burdick 1993) which, though familiar, remain quite distinct from those discussed here. Interestingly, Chesnut also provides an interesting description of exorcism practices that parallel those used in Alaska churches.

Notes on Sources for Chapter 11

Anthropological work on magic, witchcraft, and most importantly, witchcraft accusations is so immense that only a portion can be reasonably covered here. As a backward looking orientation to this literature I found Stanley Tambiah's *Magic Science and the Scope of Rationality* (1990) particularly worthwhile. The reference in the chapter is to Evans-Pritchard's *Azande Witchcraft* (1939), which first pointed anthropologists away from the beliefs themselves, and toward the relations which they make, mark, bridge or break. Growing up in New England I read Boyer and Nissenbaum's *Salem Possessed* in a high school history course, which prepared me for this argument. Taussig's *Shamanism, Colonialism and the Wildman* (1987) places this discussion in a global historical context. Conrad's *Nostromo* (1960) captures, in ways I don't pretend to approach, the power of the idea itself, something yet to be reckoned adequately in our field.

The question of subjectivity is equally broad, especially in the context of marxist notions of class consciousness. My thinking in this area draws from a

four-year labored reading of Lukacs' *History and Class Consciousness* (1971). Coming, as it does, from the same period as much of the work discussed below (especially that by Bakhtin, Heidegger, and James), the language is sympathetic to that developed throughout this work. Like Bakhtin, Lukacs struggled with Kant's system of ethics and the problem it creates for and of "a thing in itself" — whether that thing be an object (James), sign (Peirce), experience (Bakhtin, Husserl, Heidegger) or now finally a class (Lukacs). Lukacs resolves the problem by arguing that form cannot exist as such, but must be tied to specific content (1971: 124-131). This is something of the argument that underlies this entire monograph, whereby the formal theological/cosmological arguments (of theology, or structural anthropology), are seen to be inseparable from their experience and content. Lukacs' debt to Weber along these lines is acknowledged early in his essay (1971:ix).

Yet the parallels here are not meant to downplay my differences with Weber. The notion of subjectivity finds parallels in Weber's writing, and especially his work on *The Protestant Ethic* (1958). But as discussed in the chapter, my understanding of the implications of this, and particularly the place of church members in the larger political-economic history, is very different.

Notes on Sources for Chapter 12

Anthropology's brushes with phenomenology have come much later

in the disciplines history than one might expect, given their similar concerns. This is particularly true of American anthropology, ensured perhaps by a peculiar 1950's empiricist-positivist turn (something of an oxymoron, given what will be said below) that was accompanied by increasing intellectual isolation — even at the moment of American anthropology's greatest outward reach (see Vincent 1990: "The politics of acculturation" 197-212). It was not until the 1960's that similarities between the anthropological problematic of culture and behavior were thought to potentially draw on the phenomenological distinction between *weltanschauung* and *lebenswelt* (see Bidney 1973; Husserl 1970; and Jackson 1996a). In Husserl's writing, *lebenswelt*, lifeworld, is contrasted with *weltanschauung*, "worldview" which is meant to denote a logical or rational scheme for ordering the unwieldy *lebenswelt*. The two are not opposites, but neither are they sequential. For Husserl they were alternatives, to an extent, and *lebenswelt*, or life experiences had to take precedent over any particular ordering scheme, including science or national socialism, the two immediate contexts of his writing.

Most often anthropology has used culture to denote both, and failed to see any conflict between the two. For Bidney, putting *lebenswelt* at the center of anthropological inquiry held the promise of a less rationalizing, more intuitive and immediate understanding of individual life. This is seen by Jackson (1996a) and others as continuing fertile ground, hence his advocacy

for a re-examination of this literature. Throughout, however, little attention is given to the implicit, and sometimes explicit conflict between these two — that is, between *lebenswelt* and *weltanschauung* — as this conflict comes to exist socially. Thus while many within and outside of philosophy have championed the cause of “experience” against any and every philosophical system, few have concerned themselves with the everyday manifestations of such conflict outside of their own circles.

Here Raymond Williams is perhaps most useful. In *Marxism and Literature* Williams makes clear that such a conflict between everyday sorts of experience and its socially given, rationally ordered meanings is ongoing and pervasive (1977; see especially “Language”: 21-44). Williams’ use of Bakhtin (writing under the pen name Volosinov) is based mainly on his *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* (1973), where Bakhtin argues for a speech centered understanding of language, and against the implicit psychologism of most philosophies of language. Williams draws heavily on these notions for his understanding of the conflict which Saussure refers to (in language) as *langue* and *parole*. Two important works by Bakhtin were not available to Williams at the time of his writing, however. These are *Toward a Philosophy of the Act* (1993) and *Art and Answerability* (1990), both of which are based on very early (immediately post-revolutionary) writings. Here Bakhtin engages a broad arena of thinkers, including Rickert, Husserl, Bergson, Goethe, Plato, Schopenhauer, and of course Kant, and takes up the conflict between

experienced and received visions of the world in explicit (if less systematic) fashion, making clear the similarity of his early views to those Williams espouses.

Two aspects of my use of Bakhtin in the text require some additional justification and explanation: his notion of an active phenomenology (and the difference between this and the more orthodox phenomenology of Husserl, Heidegger, and others); and the overlap with the pragmatism of Peirce, and to a lesser extent Dewey and James.

For a definition of “orthodox” phenomenology I have relied on Husserl’s *Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology* (1931); and his *Cartesian Meditations: An Introduction to Phenomenology* (1960). Good discussion of the importance of these works for social sciences can be found in Maurice Natanson’s two edited volumes *Phenomenology and the Social Sciences*, (1973), where the Bidney article referred to above appears (see Bidney 1973). Here, it is worth pointing out, Bidney also discussed the links between James and Husserl, discussed below. For Heidegger the key text remains the 1977 collection *Basic Writings* which provides an overview of his entire writing career. For work contemporary with the writings of Husserl and Bakhtin see, of course, *Being and Time* (1927). I relied on the Cambridge Companion Series — for Kant (Guyer 1992), Husserl (Smith and Smith 1995), Heidegger (Guignon 1993) and Wittgenstein (Sluga and Stern 1996) — for the intellectual and historical context of these writings, see especially Garver

(1996) on Wittgenstein and Dreyfus (1993) on Heidegger.

Bakhtin's criticism of Kantian ethics is based on his reading of the *Critique of Pure Reason* (see note #5 below). In addition, a statement on the metaphysic that accounts for Kant's critique, and the moral valuations defined by this critique, see his earlier *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysic of Morals* (1998). Discussed in the chapter, Bakhtin's criticism of Kant's was for his necessarily objectifying approach to moral action. Schneewind sums up the Kantian position in just such terms, albeit uncritically: "For Kant then the rightness of acts is prior to the goodness of states of affairs, because only outcomes of right acts can count as good states of affairs. We do not discover what is right by first finding out what is good. Indeed we cannot determine what states of affairs are good without first knowing what is right. In order to know what is right *all we need to know is what the perfectly good agent would do*. Then whenever there is an act that a perfectly good agent could not omit, it is an act anyone in those circumstances has to do" (1992: 317; *emphasis added*).

Husserl's idea of an everyday *lebenswelt*, what Smith (1995: 395) calls a "common sense world," has many of the same features that Bakhtin attributes to 'once-occurrent Being.' The critical difference is that the common sense world is essentially unchanging, while the interpretations of it are. This is especially apparent when Husserl compares this world to that proposed by the 'sciences' (Husserl 1970). For Bakhtin the lived in world was

ultimately historical, in the sense that it was 'once-occurrent' and thus could not be reversed. When Husserl tried to answer this sort of criticism (1970: 373; see Smith 1995: 397), he moved immediately to the notion of history as practiced by historians — away from the sort of common sense experience that was his subject, and toward the sorts of *explanations* made of this experience. It is no surprise then, that he finds here the same sort of objections that apply to science as a whole. For Bakhtin the separation between these two — experience and explanation — is paramount, and no sort of objectification is seen as privileged to 'being,' and so none should be confused with it.

Heidegger tended to view problems of experience as cross-cutting history, and essentially structured and categorical. And while this tendency is less important to his work on art or nihilism (see Dreyfus 1993), it remains true that the governing cultural paradigms that he speaks of in his later work are largely "received." The difference between Heidegger and Bakhtin in this way is especially obvious in Heidegger's *Hegel's Concept of Experience* (1983). Here Heidegger, discussing Hegel's original phenomenology notes:

Experience as we must here think of it is neither a mode of knowing nor a mode of willing as commonly conceived. Experience is the prevalence of the will of the Absolute to be with us, that is, to appear for us as what appears, the phenomena (1983: 129-30).

For Bakhtin, experience outside of the act of being was a non-sequitur, except in the most limited sense: the experience of some received interpretation, perhaps. But even this is likely experienced apart from any systematic

interpretative function it might later have, or have for others. Bakhtin is actually closer to James, for whom experience was tied to intention, such that “it is an active and selective achievement of consciousness rather than a merely passive or static directedness to objects already constituted in their specificity independent of the acts which grasp them as ‘objects’” (Edie 1987:25-6).

Other parallels between Bakhtin and the Pragmatist are possible. Here I think primarily of Peirce, but obviously, given statements in the preceding paragraph, James is very relevant as well. I first began to read Peirce in a seminar on Pragmatism led by Sidney Morgenbesser in 1993. Lost at the time, the issues raised there have stayed with me since. Much of my approach to the material since has been accomplished backwards, one might say, through Rorty (see, Rorty 1989), which inspired me to re-read Dewey and Peirce (James came later), and to read Wittgenstein and Heidegger as well. I have relied on the *Philosophical Writings of Peirce* (1955); James’ *The Principles of Psychology* (2 Vols) (1950) and *Essays in Radical Empiricism and a Pluralistic Universe* (1942), and in later sections (see notes to Chapter 9) on *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (1985); and Dewey’s *The Quest for Certainty* (1960). For links between James and the phenomenologists see Edie (1987).

Anthropological uses of Dewey, Peirce, and James have been growing in recent years, often in conjunction with an awareness of the parallels between these writers and the phenomenologists. Here Daniel (1996), Jackson

(1996b), and Keane (1997). See also the interesting work of Ashis Nandy (1995) — who is not an anthropologist but may as well be — for the continuing relevance of James' notion of multiple selves. Of course Pierre Bourdieu led the way on many aspects of this, beginning with his work on 'practice' and 'habitus' (1977; 1985); see also his critique of Kantian aesthetics — "Towards a 'Vulgar' Critique of 'Pure' Critiques" (in Bourdieu 1984). As above, most of these have focused on Peirce's use of signs (Peirce 1955: 98-119) and Dewey's notion of 'ideas at work,' (1929:108-139), though the latter less explicitly. Dewey's notion of experience as a form of experimentalism echoed Peirce's, unhinging experience from the individual passivity of Husserl and others — see Randall (1977) — and linking it to community (Dewey 1966; see Rorty 1989:44-69; for how this differs from Habermas' later conception, important for Chapter 8 of this monograph).

On the notion of habits, the concept is most familiar for anthropologists as it is presented by Bourdieu in the form of *habitus* (1977).

Bourdieu defines habitus as:

...an acquired system of generative schemes objectively adjusted to the particular conditions in which it is constituted, [which] engenders all the thoughts, all the perceptions, and all the actions consistent with those conditions, and no others. This paradoxical product is difficult to conceive, even inconceivable, only so long as one remains locked in the dilemma of determinism and freedom, conditioning and creativity....Because the habitus is an endless capacity to engender products — thoughts, perceptions, expressions, actions — whose limits are set by the historically and socially situated conditions of its production, the conditioned and conditional freedom it secures is as remote from a creation of unpredictable novelty as it is from a simple mechanical reproduction the initial conditionings (1977: 95).

This definition has several overlapping aspects with habit as used here, and both are intended to take the place of “structure” in at least one of the ways that it is commonly used by anthropology. Bourdieu’s notion of habitus also has much in common with the way culture is defined in Chapter 8, and culture as such might be habitus in the way that Bourdieu intended. Habits, then, are, at the same time, more concrete and more conscious in their dynamics, less creative in their particular application — indeed that is often the point of calling them habits, and perhaps why Bourdieu chose the term habitus and not plain old “habits” as Peirce does (see 1977:218 n.47).

On writing ethnography, I have been influenced by Clifford and Marcus’ edited volume (1986); and by Marcus and Fischer’s notion of ‘anthropological critique’ (1986). Clifford’s “Partial Truths” and Rabinow’s “Representations Are Social Facts,” both from the former volume, are particularly relevant. On the whole, however, my own response has been motivated more by a distrust of language learned from Rorty (1989); and from him from Wittgenstein (see Bloor 1996); and from Bakhtin.

Peirce’s notion of reality and representation — “Our idea of anything is our idea of its sensible effects....[When we] consider what effects that might conceivably have practical bearings, we conceive the object of our conception to have.... [t]hen our conception of these effects is the whole of our conception of the object” (see “How to Make Our Ideas Clear; in Peirce 1955:23-41) — is

critical in two ways. It is the center of the analysis of what may be accomplished in pentecostal practice, and what might be accomplished in writing ethnography. Both depend, I argue on a vision of the wider world (theology on the one hand, anthropology on the other); but neither is comprehensible simply as an aspect of such a larger order. Both religious practice/representation and ethnography must be understood in terms of what they might do. This is the two-fold debt to Peirce that runs throughout the following work.

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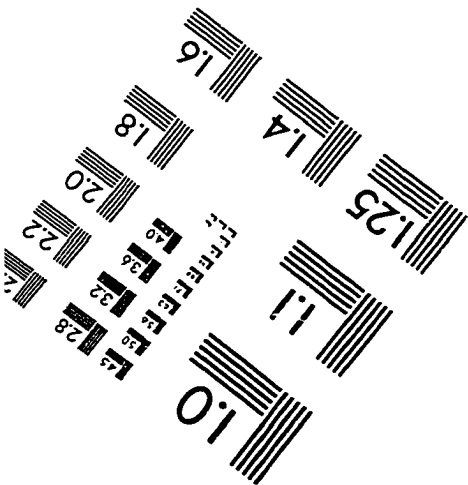
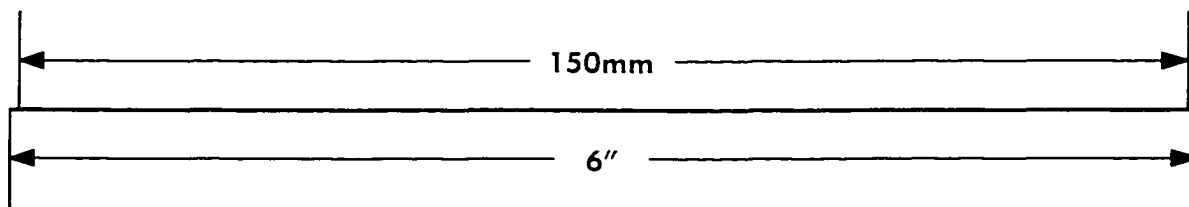
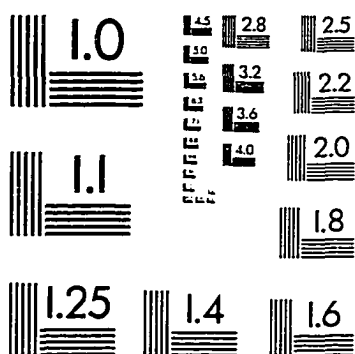
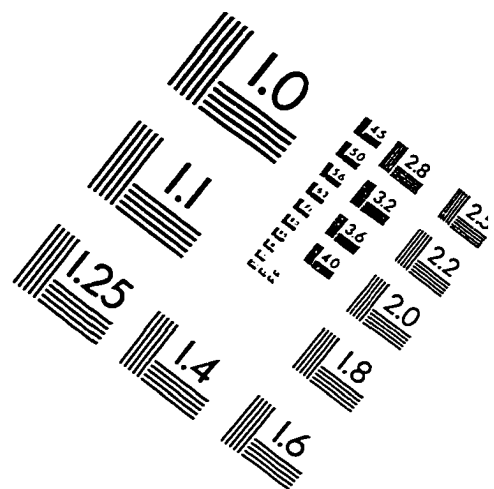
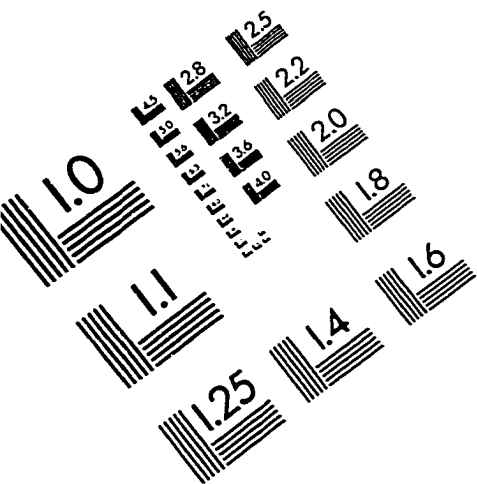
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