

# Introduction: *Listening to ʔəms taʔaw*

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“**T**he history written as I remember it,” said Elsie, expressing her sense of this project. It was December 2011, and we were in North Vancouver at her granddaughter Harmony’s house, visiting and working on this book. We were playing around with potential titles, and earlier that day, Harmony and I had suggested “Chi-chia’s Teachings.” “Chi-chia,” which means “grandmother” in the Sliammon<sup>1</sup> language, had seemed a logical word to include in the title: many people call Elsie “Chi-chia,” not just her biological grandchildren; moreover, Elsie’s own Chi-chia has always been important to her. “Teachings” is the word Elsie uses to refer to the ʔaʔamun ways, beliefs, values, and practices that she recounts in this book. But to Elsie’s ears, “Chi-chia’s Teachings” sounded didactic and overemphasized her as an individual. The teachings, she reminded us, do not belong to any individual; they are “ʔəms taʔaw” or “*our* teachings.” ʔəms taʔaw are, as she later explained, “the very essence of our well-being.” The phrase “the history written as I remember it” was not Elsie’s suggestion for a title but was instead part of her extended explanation of the problems with our proposal. The phrase stayed with me, however, and I jotted it down. I felt slightly clever, as though I had salvaged a fragment of verbal ephemera. Several months later, in need of a working title to submit to the press, I shared my notes with Harmony, and we decided to use “The History Written As I Remember It.” Good thing I wrote that down, I thought, feeling slightly cleverer. A short time later, however, while reviewing

interview transcripts that I had read before, I was surprised to read Elsie's words to a journalist friend in 2006: "I've always wanted to write this – to document the history as I remember it." I realized then that what I had thought of as an off-the-cuff remark was, in fact, Elsie's carefully considered and precisely articulated conceptualization of this project.

I relate this incident here to illustrate two points that are relevant for readers. The first is the consistency, reliability, and authority of Elsie Paul's voice. People familiar with expert storytellers and the practice of oral narrative will not be surprised at this story, yet many people remain skeptical about the reliability of orally narrated memories. In 2006, Chi-chia had not yet begun work on this book, and since that time the project has passed through many hands and multiple iterations. My point is not that she necessarily remembered in 2011 the exact turn of phrase she used in 2006. It is rather that a five-year interruption did so little to alter her sense of what it meant to record *ʔəms təʔaw* in book form that she repeated herself nearly verbatim. This is typical of the precision that Chi-chia brings to speech, particularly to storytelling. As Harmony and I studied the transcripts, we discovered depths to her narrative abilities that we had previously not fully appreciated. No matter how often phone calls, visitors, or interlocutors interrupted, Chi-chia never strayed from her train of thought. Unfailingly patient and courteous in her response to the interruption, over and over she returned without missing a beat to where she had left off. When Harmony and I struggled to connect disparate pieces of transcript, our efforts ended, time and again, with the humbling realization that our laboriously reached solution had been there all along, inherent in the logic of Chi-chia's original tellings. Long before she learned to tell stories like this, she learned to listen to them. The care and attention with which Elders taught Elsie to listen as a young girl is an important part of her skill at speaking now that she is an Elder herself.<sup>2</sup> Chi-chia is a serious storyteller, and by this I do not mean there is any shortage of laughter or lightness in her words. She is a serious storyteller because she avoids conjecture, speaks with clear intention, and selects words with care. She does not tell stories to mislead or harm. She takes the power of words seriously, and so tells stories in order to impart helpful, potentially healing, knowledge.

My second point, related to the first, is about listening, particularly transformational listening. By this I mean listening in ways and to voices that have the power to unearth sociopolitical assumptions and

intellectual foundations. That afternoon in 2011, I listened carefully enough to catch something important about Chi-chia's meaning, while at the self-same moment I misconstrued my act of listening. Although I had read/heard Chi-chia utter those words before, I had neither taken in their significance initially nor remembered them later. I eventually came to understand that by describing the work as "the history written as I remember it" in response to our questions about whether "Chi-chia's Teachings" was an appropriate title, Elsie revealed her sense of connection between "the teachings" and "the history." The teachings as she learned them from her grandparents *are*  $\text{la?amun}$  history as she remembers it. For Elsie, the teachings and the history are inextricable; a book of teachings *is* a book of history. This realization took time to dawn on me: time to reread the transcripts, time to talk with Harmony and Chi-chia, time to think. Had I not returned to reflect on Chi-chia's words in the transcripts, I likely would have retained my self-satisfied sense that I had recorded a fleeting gem of a phrase and, in so doing, missed the opportunity to deepen my understanding of how Chi-chia positions past, present, culture, and knowledge in relation to one another. This story brings into focus the often hidden barriers to transformational listening. On the face of it, Chi-chia's accounts seem plain enough and not particularly cryptic. Yet much of what she has to say is rooted in a radically different paradigm from that which many readers, including myself, bring to this book. To get a sense of this paradigm, readers must bring to her words a continual openness to learning something new and unknown, rather than the certainty of having "got it" that overconfidence in one's intellectual ability, empathetic ear, or good intentions so easily produces.<sup>3</sup> Listening/reading in this way is very much like the way Chi-chia's Elders taught her to listen to stories as a child. As she describes in Chapter 3, Elders taught her to remain receptive to new meanings and lessons regardless of how many times she had heard a story before, and they frequently asked her to explain what she had learned from a particular telling. In this spirit, Elsie, Harmony, and I invite readers to take in not only the content of her words but the method and intention, as well. This task is not necessarily easy, particularly for those like me who have been steeped in print-based learning rather than in oral traditions.

Transformational listening entails particular difficulties for readers/listeners who want to "unsettle the settler within," to borrow the scholar Paulette Regan's phrase.<sup>4</sup> My own experiences and reflections as a non-Indigenous scholar lead me to believe that those of us working

to be, in Regan's terms, "settler allies" may be most susceptible to the dangers of certainty when we least expect it, when we already believe we have opened our eyes, ears, and minds, extended our empathy, and elicited stories from the dispossessed, disadvantaged, and marginalized.<sup>5</sup> This susceptibility matters a great deal because it has become nearly a platitude that listening to a multiplicity of voices – particularly in the form of first-person testimony – triggers the transformative effects of decolonization and reconciliation. In recent decades, settler states have institutionalized and thus sanctioned the important practice of listening to "other" voices in a number of contexts. The process of giving testimony and bearing witness are cornerstones of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's procedures in Canada, for example, as they were in South Africa.<sup>6</sup> The historian Bain Attwood dubs this the "age of testimony" and is among those who doubt that autobiographical forms usher in reconciliation.<sup>7</sup> While I agree that hearing autobiographical testimony does not inevitably set the settler-witness on a one-way street to reconciliation, I differ with Attwood's conclusion that testimonial or autobiographical narratives are problematic impediments to "true" understanding. Indigenous individuals who share their testimony – whether as formal evidence to a commission or court, or as personal narrative for a public audience – offer listeners an important gift.<sup>8</sup> Whether and how audiences are able to receive and appreciate that gift depends very much on the particular way that they listen.

Attwood's position relies upon the same assumption as the positions he critiques: that listening to testimony erases the distance – or difference – between subject and witness, creating an overidentification (what Attwood, following Freud, calls "transference") between the two. He sees this as a problem because he believes it impedes objective, dispassionate analysis. I suggest instead that first-person narratives do not necessarily eliminate distance at all. On the contrary, first-person accounts can preserve distance – that is, difference – *more* effectively than supposedly objective historical methodologies that shoehorn Indigenous narrators' words into Western paradigms. Elsie's narratives presented here are a case in point. At the same time, first-person narratives, including this one, can easily give the *illusion* of erasing distance or difference between the narrator and the witness. And herein lies the danger of certainty. The anthropologist Julie Cruikshank noted as much more than twenty years ago when she wrote, "one obstacle hampering the analysis of autobiography is

the very real human tendency to make implicit comparisons between the account heard or read and one's own life."<sup>9</sup> Having tuned its ears to diverse autobiographical keys, the challenge for settler society is to strain to continue listening for difference rather than to succumb to a comforting but disproportionate sense of commonality.<sup>10</sup> This effort means, in part, resisting the urge to overidentify with the sympathetic narrator and perhaps forcing oneself to identify with historical ancestors whom one might rather disavow.<sup>11</sup> But it does not mean listening with less emotion or sympathy. The emotions that testimonial accounts evoke are an undeniable part of their power; where the listener goes with the emotional response can be problematic, however. To assume, after hearing or reading a moving testimony of a residential school survivor, for example, that I now know what it was like to be in that narrator's shoes would prematurely close down my understanding, when in fact I ought to listen in the spirit of an ongoing relationship, an open investigation toward further insight. This sort of active, open-ended listening has the potential to bring enduring assumptions out of the taken-for-granted background, to bring into relief otherwise hidden suppositions that undergird twenty-first-century colonial attitudes and power imbalances.<sup>12</sup> Absent this, settler society's sympathetic listening is laden with unjustified certainty: certainty that it is listening for the right reason, at the right time; that it is on the right side; that listening *is* reconciliation. Such certainty precludes facing up to the need to transform not only attitudes but also relations of power. It precludes addressing the material, as opposed to the merely rhetorical, changes that must be part of any meaningful process of reconciliation or decolonization. Such certainty fosters listening that reinforces rather than challenges the status quo of settler colonialism. How and to whom we listen is thus inherently political. As one historian points out, "true citizenship ... involves not only getting to speak (i.e., having 'a say' or 'a voice'), but also being actively and attentively heard."<sup>13</sup> Learning to listen for unsettling differences, however subtle, is a difficult process with serious stakes that requires self-conscious and dialogical responsiveness to the words of people who are not the beneficiaries of settler colonialism.<sup>14</sup>

The degree to which listeners assign authority to particular voices very much affects how listeners hear those voices. Rather than suggesting, as Attwood does, the need to reauthorize professional historians as the only ones capable of upholding the necessary distance for critical thought, knowledge acquisition, and an understanding of

difference, Elsie, Harmony, and I suggest quite the opposite.<sup>15</sup> We invite all listeners to regard this text as a collaboratively authored historical analysis, a secondary source in its own right, and Chi-chia as a ʔamun historian in *her* own right.<sup>16</sup> Both the open-ended listening discussed above and the recognition of the expertise of Indigenous Elders and knowledge keepers are important elements of the Indigenous methodology we have followed in producing this book, and as authors we hope readers will be willing to invest in our approach. Audiences commonly treat first-person life histories as anecdotal, and researchers approach them as primary sources to be mined for evidence. Doing so relegates the narrator to the status of “informant,” however, and reserves interpretive authority for readers, particularly scholarly ones.<sup>17</sup> Attwood advocates this very approach because to do otherwise, he claims, imperils the very nature of historical understanding and inquiry by leading us into a morass of emotion and sentiment.<sup>18</sup> But rather than retreating to a safe “distance,” I suggest that readers take advantage of the close-up view that Chi-chia offers. The voice of this text is obviously different from that in Western secondary sources. But instead of this difference disqualifying the text as authoritative, we hope it helps readers tune in to multiple forms of authority and knowledge. If you listen – that is, read – carefully, you will hear that Chi-chia does more than offer anecdotes from days gone by. She takes what scholars might conceive of as “primary sources” – her own life experiences – and situates them within the interpretive context of the teachings. That is, she uses detailed evidence to present an argument in terms of her own world view. In so doing, she interprets ʔamun history and teachings for a broad audience, one that includes but is not limited to her family and community members. Her status as one of the last mother-tongue speakers of the Sliammon language adds dimension and poignancy to her interpretive act. In the chapters that follow, Chi-chia shares many of the details that are typically presented in an introduction such as this. Therefore I have not provided a mini-biography of where and when she was born, or provided a gloss on the history of colonialism and Indian policy in twentieth-century British Columbia. I hope that you, as readers, will be patient if such information does not appear in the order that you might expect. I provide suggestions for additional context on the many topics that Chi-chia discusses in the “Additional Readings” section at the end of the book.

Before undertaking this project, Chi-chia herself was an “informant” for numerous scholars and knowledge producers. Her involvement in

such work – the sharing of knowledge between peoples and across “distance” – is a family tradition. Her great-grandfather Captain Timothy worked and travelled extensively on a schooner providing navigational assistance to newcomers. He later guided the reserve commissioner Peter O’Reilly throughout the territory.<sup>19</sup> One of Captain Timothy’s sons, tama Timothy or “Chief Tom,” was the primary ʔaʔamin informant to Homer Barnett, the first ethnographer to enquire about ʔaʔamin culture. And Chi-chia’s grandmother translated Catholic sermons from Chinook into the Sliammon language when she was a girl. Chi-chia herself has patiently and generously shared the teachings, history, and language with linguists, filmmakers, archaeologists, historians, journalists, and university students who have asked her questions about everything from resource extraction to slavery to prepositions. Her experiences with researchers have usually been very positive, yet Chi-chia wishes, though she would not quite put it this way, that the knowledge she shared crossed disciplinary boundaries more easily. For example, before beginning this book, she collaborated for two decades with the linguist (and now good friend of many years) Honoré Watanabe in his meticulous documentation of the Sliammon language. This technical work, of great value for linguistic analysis and language preservation, by its very nature did not reach a wide audience. When related material was needed for another purpose – for treaty, court, or education, for example – Chi-chia noted, “A year later someone else is asking you the same questions again! So you don’t know where it’s going!” She hopes that this book will make the history and teachings available for all these purposes.

Relatedly and as importantly, she wants to present the teachings and history within her own narrative framework, a framework that treats knowledge holistically rather than a framework that parses it into separate disciplinary boxes. Chi-chia has, at times, been frustrated by the assumptions that frame the questions of even well-intentioned researchers, and she (always politely) resists attempts to shoehorn her answers into someone else’s paradigm.<sup>20</sup> She implicitly understands the need to alter not only the content of the historical record, but its epistemic structure. In this she shares the perspectives of Indigenous scholars who demonstrate that oral history cannot be treated “like any other documentary source” and who critique the intellectual foundations of the academy at large.<sup>21</sup> She also echoes the work of feminist scholars who have long challenged grand, often male-centred, narratives, particularly through their use of biography and autobiography.<sup>22</sup> With this collaboratively authored, told-to project, Chi-chia

recounts the history and teachings “written as she remembers them” rather than as someone else has represented them. Long regarded by many recognized “experts” as a knowledgeable and trustworthy “informant,” she presents her words here under her own authority. In this book, she is an author rather than an informant. Understanding Chi-chia as a historian within her own tradition is a step toward learning to really listen to – rather than merely incorporate or assimilate – multiple voices within the academy and public sphere.

A further step in this direction is bringing awareness to *how* and *when* and *why* we listen. I listen to Chi-chia as a settler-ally of Indigenous people living in a colonial nation-state. I believe it is important to align with agendas set by Indigenous people for decolonization and healing. When Indigenous individuals seek input from collaborators in order to share their knowledge and histories in written forms, I believe it is both intellectually justified and ethically imperative to employ scholarly platforms to amplify their voices. I also listen as a historian who has long been inspired by histories of individuals. From my earliest research projects as an undergraduate to my ongoing work today, I have felt drawn to explore broad historical patterns and meanings through the stories of individuals.<sup>23</sup> Undoubtedly, this interest also drew me to working with Chi-chia on this book. In her narratives, I see dozens of points of engagement with various scholarly conversations, a few of which I detail below. More personally, I listen to Chi-chia as a mother. I began working with her words at a time when I was particularly in need of hearing them. After the loss of my first child in 2006, I struggled to find motivation to do much of anything. Yet when Elsie invited me to help, I agreed without hesitation. I had known that she wanted to produce such a work for many years and I had always been enthusiastic about its potential significance. It was difficult but ultimately profound to spend so much time with her teachings around grief and her stories about the loss of two daughters. Each of the many hours I spent working with Chi-chia’s words was rewarding. Although I was present to hear her tell only a small portion of the stories reproduced here, I read and reread – usually and most enjoyably in Harmony’s company – the entirety of the transcripts again and again. I always looked forward to sitting down and immersing myself in Chi-chia’s knowledge, line by line, word by word. Every time I did so, I learned something new. Today, her words accompany me in my daily life. It is a gift to have participated in this book’s production.

BOOKS, LIKE INDIVIDUALS, have life histories. What follows in the rest of this introduction is the life history of this project written as I remember it. Since I have betrayed above that I do not always pay attention as well as I would like, readers can be reassured that I have benefited from the notes and assistance of other collaborators. I have also relied extensively on Chi-chia's own words in order to explain her motivation for writing this book. I recount this textual life history in acknowledgement of scholars' calls for attention to process in the production of told-to narratives. Recently, the literary scholar Sophie McCall identified collaborative texts, broadly defined, as models for other forms of collaboration in settler societies working out the meanings of reconciliation.<sup>24</sup> In order for told-to narratives to realize this potential, however, there are a number of prerequisites. One is the self-critical and open-ended listening by audiences discussed above. Prior to that, however, is the matter of ensuring that the collaborative process is conducted with integrity. No told-to narrative, regardless of how positive in intention, innovative in structure, or original in content, can meaningfully model or contribute to reconciliation if this condition is absent. Accordingly, historians, anthropologists, and literary critics alike have argued that the *process* of collaboration is as important as the final multi-authored result.<sup>25</sup>

In recent decades, scholars have raised important questions about power and ethics in collaborative writing processes. As McCall notes, "Historically, non-Aboriginal recorders and editors have maintained tight control over structuring, editing, introducing, interpreting, and publishing versions of Aboriginal oral expression under their own name."<sup>26</sup> As a result, told-to narratives have been critiqued as colonial appropriations of Indigenous voice.<sup>27</sup> Scholarly collaborators themselves have engaged in extensive self-reflection, revealing details of their methodologies, exploring non-conventional layouts, and incorporating multiple voices.<sup>28</sup> Yet many of these self-critical efforts toward developing ethical collaborative practices address concerns raised by scholars rather than the concerns of narrators or their communities. In part, this is because significant amounts of time and distance intervene between the so-called fieldwork of recording the narratives and their eventual publication. In the interim, the scholar often assumes control over the shape of the final product and, in a sense, comes to treat the transcribed words as primary sources distanced from the narrator.<sup>29</sup> Although this approach does not necessarily entail an intent to appropriate the narrator's words, it can easily result

in appropriation because it tends to obscure the fact that narrators bring their own ethical frameworks and agendas to told-to projects – frameworks and agendas that are distinct from those of their scholarly collaborators.<sup>30</sup> We still know surprisingly little about the wishes of many narrators with regard to the final published form of their words.<sup>31</sup> For example, after decades of wrestling with ethical qualms regarding representation and voice, the anthropologist Kathleen Mullen Sands settled on an experimental format for presenting the life of the Tohono O’odham man Theodore Rios. The published volume appeared only after Rios’ death, and so we cannot know whether her innovative format achieved his goals.<sup>32</sup> Even when the narrator is still alive, collaborators and critics often do not place her wishes at the centre of their work. In thousands of pages devoted to the controversy surrounding the life history of Rigoberta Menchú, for example, one is hard-pressed to find someone who prioritizes Menchú’s self-expressed view of the situation.<sup>33</sup> When scholars fail to explicitly address and incorporate the narrator’s views, they imply that the narrator’s perspectives are unsophisticated, underdeveloped, or simply not worth considering. They thus cast into doubt their own claims to ethical practice. We cannot engage in an ethical collaboration with someone if we do not respect their capacity and judgment. Scholars and readers who do not attend to the points of view of Indigenous narrators remain caged (however unwittingly) within a nineteenth-century, salvage mentality that once again freezes idealized Indigenous voices, albeit now in twenty-first-century postmodern poses.<sup>34</sup> This tendency to undermine narrators’ authority is inadvertently reproduced in the policies of some university behavioural ethics review boards in Canada that routinely ask researchers to acquire a band council resolution before conducting research on-reserve. This requirement implies that the individual in question is naive and unable to give informed consent. Although informed consent may occasionally be impossible,<sup>35</sup> such policies assume a generalized lack of capacity among Indigenous people and thus reproduce the Indian Act’s historical positioning of Indians as minors vis-à-vis the Canadian state. For Elsie, a grown woman and respected Elder, it is insulting to be treated as a ward of the band council who needs protection from her own judgment. In the wake of decades of scholarly, activist, and artistic criticism of colonial appropriations of Indigenous voices, would-be allies today must do better than self-correcting in whatever way they *assume* is in the best interests of Indigenous speakers. They must instead listen to what Indigenous voices say, and then take up ethical models that align with and respect

Indigenous epistemologies and ontologies. Admittedly, as I discussed above, this endeavour is trickier than it might seem on its face, because it requires engaging in active self-criticism of not only *what* is heard, but *how* to listen.

Harmony and I worked from our certainty that Chi-chia capably and reliably articulates her wishes and concerns. Accordingly, we took those wishes seriously. Consequently our methodology favoured a pragmatics of process rather than an abstract end – of narrative purity or dialogical representation, for example. Our central concern as co-authors has not been to produce something that critics might approve in postmodern jargon as a multivocal, culturally pluralist synecdoche for remediated colonial power imbalances. Instead, we sought above all to ensure that both our means and end aligned with Chi-chia's vision. This approach required us to revisit our plans frequently and to consult with Chi-chia regularly. That said, we played decisive roles in composing this text, and we do not shirk our responsibility as co-authors for what follows.

#### CONCEPTION: THE IDEA

We produced this book through a multi-authored, collaborative process. A number of people worked with Chi-chia at various points in time, and multiple draft manuscripts were produced in the process. Chi-chia's desire to make łaʔamun history and teachings accessible in written form has been a constant feature. Accessibility is a key goal for Chi-chia, and I return to it repeatedly in my discussion below. She was not motivated by a salvage mentality to document the history and teachings for the archives. She instead wanted to produce an account of łaʔamun ways that future generations could draw upon, learn from, and heal through.<sup>36</sup> In this desire, she is much like Elders before her, who taught that ʔəms taʔaw are not a set of abstract ideas but principles for living that should be practised and passed on. The teachings have provided her with a sophisticated context for living. They have been and remain a practical means for addressing all stages and aspects of life, including but in no way limited to the material and psychological impacts of settler colonialism. Chi-chia expressed these points eloquently in a conversation she had with a friend, the journalist Janet May, in 2006. Harmony, Chi-chia, and I originally discussed presenting the transcript of that conversation as Chi-chia's own introduction to this book, but Chi-chia felt that a stand-alone introduction

by her was unnecessary. Instead, I engage below in a kind of dialogue with that transcript in order to highlight the constellation of language, teachings, history, and colonialism that lies at the heart of this book.<sup>37</sup>

For Chi-chia, the multiple instances of silencing imposed upon Indigenous people by colonialism are a crucial context for the act of sharing ʔaʔamun history and teachings. Reflecting on the passing of her lifelong friend Sue Pielle, who devoted herself to teaching ʔaʔamun culture, legends, and language in the public schools, she said to Janet, “You know, she was from a generation that lived a part of that life and is able to bring it forward to the young people. ’Cause a lot of people, like, my age, her age, have gone on. And the older people that we have today are not able to bring that forward. They have a lot of memories, even a generation older than I have a lot of those memories. But they were brought up in a time when it was not appropriate for us as a people, or it was not expected, to share those kinds of things, to bring awareness of the way we are as a people, to talk about our history. Our history was being smothered. It was like, ‘Don’t talk about that!’ So a lot of the older people found it really difficult to share their memories, their history, to non-Native people. So that’s been a real hurdle for us as a people.”<sup>38</sup>

As Chi-chia continued, she equated language with history: the prohibition of the Sliammon language simultaneously silenced people from recounting ʔaʔamun history. “’Cause you’re told, ‘You forget about being Indian! You forget about your culture! Forget about the language!’ So we were forbidden. Our people were forbidden to speak the language. So a lot of the young people today don’t know the language at all. They’re struggling to learn it. It’s difficult. It’s a difficult language to learn. You have to have been speaking it from the time you were a child. That was your language. And when the families were separated, the children were all taken out of the homes and brought somewhere else for school. You didn’t see them for ten months out of a year. And they’re told when you’re there, ‘This is the language you’re now going to speak. You cannot use the language you’ve been growing up with.’ So they were restricted. So that generation grew up being taught that their language was not acceptable? You will only learn English. So we have a lot of people in that generation now who lost their language, who were *robbed* of the language. And the culture! Because we came from a rich culture. We *come* from a rich culture.”

In Chi-chia’s framing, history, language, and culture are so deeply intertwined as to be inseparable. Consequently, the ramifications of language loss are immense: “And it makes such a difference when

you're telling stories and legends, if it's told in the language. It's got more depth, it's got more meaning. And it's much more interesting to the listener if they understand the language. But if you tell the story in English, it's so different! 'Cause a lot of it, when told in the language, is gestures, the tone of your voice, just the whole presentation is so interesting – it was made so interesting. Because you understood the language! So it captured your interest. But when it's told in English, like when I tell a story in English, I struggle in the presentation. And to find the right word to use in telling the story. So it's quite a challenge! [*chuckles*]" Chi-chia's characteristic humility is apparent here; to my eyes and ears, the struggle she describes is imperceptible. Yet for her, the experience of narrating in English entails a palpable sense of loss and difficulty. As she explains it, narrating ʔaʔamun history in English, the language of the colonizers, is nearly a contradiction in terms. Yet she has chosen to do just that in an instance of what literary scholar Sophie McCall terms "impossible necessity."<sup>39</sup> Colonialism's assault on Indigenous language is at the heart of why "a lot of the older people found it really difficult to share their memories, their history, to non-Native people." It is why "that's been a real hurdle for us as a people." Yet Chi-chia undertook long ago to clear that hurdle. She began sharing ʔaʔamun history with audiences many years before she started this project. And she did so in English. She did not contemplate producing this book in Sliammon and for reasons of accessibility was initially reluctant even to include Sliammon-language sections.

Elsie's overriding concern with accessibility mirrors that of other Indigenous Elders, such as Harry Robinson, Angela Sidney, Annie Ned, and Kitty Smith – all fluent speakers of their Indigenous languages who chose to narrate told-to histories in English. Each of these Elders came to their decision in the wake of the near-annihilation of their mother tongue at the hands of residential schools and other colonial policies. They knew they would reach a much smaller audience if they presented their stories in a linguistic orthography with literal translations than if they were to, as Julie Cruikshank put it, "provide their own English translations."<sup>40</sup> It is a tragedy that any Elder willing to share valuable knowledge must choose between reaching an audience and communicating in her mother tongue. And it is important to respect whatever decision the Elder reaches as a result of this difficult, even painful, cost-benefit analysis. To second-guess their decision reproduces the long-standing pattern that I referred to above, in which settlers perennially discount Indigenous people's capacity to know

their own interests. Archaic standards of purity would not be far behind, with their implication that “real” oral narratives can be told only in languages hardly anyone can understand and even fewer can read, an implication that would ensure the marginal status of these narratives in perpetuity. Elsie and these other narrators are all gifted storytellers in English. Just as the anthropologist Bruce Miller points out that contemporary Coast Salish people “are not simply lesser versions of their ancestors,”<sup>41</sup> stories told in English are not simply lesser versions of those told by earlier generations.

Chi-chia makes the considerable effort required to share the history and teachings in English, because she believes doing so can help those working to heal some of colonialism’s damage.<sup>42</sup> As she explained later in her conversation with Janet, the institutions of school, church, and government inculcated ʔaʔamun and other Indigenous people with profoundly negative self-images that continue to reverberate: “And there’s been a stigma placed on Indian people. You know, the ‘natives,’ like we were wild, we were running around naked. We had to be civilized. And all those *negative* kinds of messages. On the children. After they’ve been transformed or taught something *totally* different. How the government had the power to do that is beyond me. You know, in a short period of time, to change people’s thinking of how we think about ourselves as a people, to become ashamed of who we were, of who we are. You know. And that’s exactly how it was! You were all of a sudden ashamed to be Indian. It’s not good to be Indian. If you’re Indian you’re dirty, you’re lazy, you don’t know nothing, you’re dumb! And that went into the school system. It went to the churches. That’s how the government enforced that. When I used to work, I’ve seen correspondence going way back, how the Department of Indian Affairs viewed us as a people: ‘Those lazy good-for-nothing Indians. Those bums. Blah blah blah.’ And that just used to make me so angry. It’s like somebody came with the ugly brush and painted us over. And we are *all* lazy. We’re *all* dependent on the system. Well, who made us dependent on the system? They did. You know? But that was not good enough. Now they’re gonna take us and reshape us and remould us. So it’s quite a challenge because once you’ve gone so far down this path, where from a child – maybe in my mother’s time – especially the older generation have been brainwashed. That it’s not good to be Indian: ‘Now you are going to be this way.’ And taking away *our* beliefs, our culture, our spirituality, our respect for the Creator. We’ve been told, ‘What are you honouring the tree for?’

You're stupid? What are you honouring the sun for? You're stupid? What are you honouring that salmon for? That's stupid!' You know? All of those things were, like, cut off. Those kinds of beliefs that my ancestors grew up with, to be respectful to *everything* around you. And all of a sudden you're told – your children are told – that's a no-no. That's ridiculous. So you're brainwashed not to be doing those things, not to think that way. Or that it's a sin. It's all these things, you know, 'This is the way now you're going to believe. You believe that this way, you're going to go to hell for sure!' They just totally rearranged our thinking, our lifestyle."

Chi-chia then drew a direct connection between recovering from the impact of these degrading messages and taking pride in one's history. Taking pains to point out that everyone has a right to know and treasure their own history, she said, "I know we can never go back and live our lifestyle we used to. But I think in order to take pride in our history as a people – which we all should! – I don't care if we're First Nations people, we're Chinese, we're Japanese, we're German, we're whoever we are, we all need to take pride in our own history. I'm not saying we're the only ones, as First Nations people, that we should be proud of our history. We *all* should have that. To be who we are. To be proud of our ancestors. Of where they came from, our history, our rich history. We each bring something to this world of ours. And one should not come along and say, 'No! You don't count. Your ancestors don't count.' Just like those trees in the forest. You know, you've got all kinds of different trees and growth in whatever have you up there. The cedar tree's no better than the other trees out there, or the alder tree is no better than any other tree. *Every one of those* serves a purpose. And you compare that to people. That's what we are. We're a mixed bag of people. But one should not overtake the other. There may be more bad weeds, I don't know! *[laughs]*"

Chi-chia's direct experience of these colonial attacks on her practice, belief, and history fed her desire to write a book. As she explained to Janet, she wanted to offer her grandchildren a counternarrative to these negative colonial stereotypes: "I've always wanted to write this – to document the history as I remember it. It's just that I've never really had the time, or, I guess, the know-how to write a book. You know, and I've said that to different family members of mine. They say, 'Yeah, we have to do that.' But they're so busy too with their jobs and other things. My grandson Davis is a really a smart young man. Him and my granddaughter Harmony. She's really smart. She's just

very educated, but yet she has so much respect for who she is. Both Davis and her are part – their dads are non-Native. So, but they have a lot of respect for their – for the Native culture. And I’m *really* proud over that fact. That they’re both from both worlds. One is just as important as the other. And they always want to learn more about. So we quite often sit and talk about, you know – they’re really wanting to understand. Because I think the things they learn through school and university are sometimes biased. And so they come back to me and they want to know *my* version, or how I remember. So we sit and talk about that and compare. And, ‘Yeah! We have to do a book! We really need to do this!’ And then we don’t. They get busy. Davis just went back to school. He’s done four years of university. He’s gone back to school again, just started back last week. So I’m really glad he’s doing that. He wants to go in the teaching area. And Harmony’s working and very busy. And my grandson Dillon – that’s Harmony’s brother – he’s good at the language. He remembers a lot of the words that he learned while going to school. And when he comes home, you know, we’ll exchange words. He remembers! He doesn’t forget. So there are some that will probably want to carry on and carry the language and use it. But it’s hard to use it when you got nobody to talk to. And then you start to lose it.”

Coming full circle here to the question of language, Chi-chia then explained to Janet her belief that for those now living with the reality of the loss of Sliammon as a mother tongue, the history and teachings narrated in English can be carried forward as a kind of proxy: “But even if our children don’t speak the language fluently as my grandparents did, I think as long as they know the history, as long as they know that there was a rich history, that we come from a rich history – this is the *true* history of our people, you know. It’s not what’s in a lot of books or whatever written document. This is the true history of who we are as a ʔaʔamin people. I think that’s what they need. It’s not to say we’re better than anyone else. It’s just that here is the true history. Because you know, there are books in the school about ʔaʔamin people or the coastal people. But it’s not really detailed. So how do you condense the history, to bring out the things that need to be reported? Yeah. I think that there *is* a history. That there is something good, how people lived and how they lived with what they had. How they survived. The tools they had. The things they worked with. It’s the same, I would say, with other cultures. Like even the farmers in Alberta or Saskatchewan – how did they survive? There’s books about that. They had a hard life too. When they first lived there.

How did they survive? You know? What kind of tools did they have? What kind of food did they have? Where did they go to school? All those things. That's their history. There are generations of them now, there. So *we* also have a history." The deceptively simple statement that łaʔamun people have a history constitutes Elsie's refusal to accept the stigma cast by generations of colonizers. She makes the powerful assertion that łaʔamun people's lives and stories are not worth less than those of settlers.

This claim to equal worth, of the right to a history, is what she means by "the true history." In making this claim, she challenges the priests, schoolteachers, and Indian Affairs employees whom she encountered throughout her life, men and women who, though they did not understand łaʔamun ways, pronounced upon them nonetheless. Furthermore, she challenges scholars who write histories based upon colonial sources without consideration of Indigenous perspectives. Chi-chia's own narration of łaʔamun history, in contrast, derives from her direct experience of events as she lived them and of teachings as she learned them. The result is what she refers to as the "true history." She does not, however, make a claim to an objective or universal truth, and she would not want to be misunderstood as doing so. Her comparisons with the history of other peoples (the Chinese, Japanese, Germans, Prairie farmers) and her metaphor of so many trees in a forest demonstrate her sensitivity toward this issue and clarify that her bid is for the equality, not superiority, of łaʔamun history. Moreover, she uttered these statements about "the true history" moments after specifying that she wanted to write a book that would document "the history as I remember it." Where some might see dissonance between her claims to relate the "true history" and "the history as I remember it," for Chi-chia, there is no contradiction. The history as she remembers it *is* true history because she experienced and learned it directly. By making a truth claim for the value and validity of her experience as a łaʔamun woman, Chi-chia refuses colonizers' claims to know more about Indians than Indians know about themselves. Moreover, she does not claim to know the truth for all łaʔamun people, who, in her view, have their own lived experiences and thus their own true histories to narrate. Elsie literally speaks back to colonial messengers of the last century with this true history as she remembers it. She does so because, as she puts it, family and community members "need" the possibility to know and live the teachings. Members of the non-Indigenous public need the opportunity to see that łaʔamun people have history and teachings that are of value and

that work for them. And all audiences need to overturn old colonial stereotypes and to heal their damage. These outcomes are not automatic, of course, but depend upon the successful practice of transformational listening by audience members.

Chi-chia's ideas as she recorded them in 2006 with Janet were the product of many years of thought about a project such as this. She had long discussed the idea with family, friends, and scholars. She and Harmony, in particular, spent a lot of time talking about it after Harmony came home to live with Chi-chia after graduating from Simon Fraser University with an English degree in 2004. Over the next year, Harmony's job with the Sliammon First Nation's culture and language program entailed working with Chi-chia on language recordings and cultural classes, work that fostered ongoing conversations about the possibility of a book. But in 2005, Harmony moved back to Vancouver, and collaborating on the book at such a distance seemed unmanageable.

In 2007, Chi-chia took the first concrete steps to begin work on the book. While reminiscing at a wake with her friend Arlette Raaen, then principal of Malaspina University-College in Powell River (now Vancouver Island University), she reiterated her desire to write a book. Arlette's husband, Chris McNaughton, piped up and volunteered Arlette's assistance. She was thrilled when Elsie accepted. Elsie subsequently made plans with Arlette to begin recording and asked Harmony to collaborate too. Janet meanwhile offered the use of her digital audio recorder. The book project was born, and with it an extended journey of learning and friendship that would draw in not only these four women but also other members of Elsie's extended family and me.

#### INFANCY: RECORDING THE STORIES

Chi-chia, Arlette, and Janet began their work together in June 2007 and continued over the next year and a half. They made audio recordings when Janet was available to bring her equipment. Arlette remembers a sense of urgency to the work because Elsie was experiencing some health difficulties. Consequently, when Janet – and by extension, her recording equipment – were unavailable, Arlette and Elsie continued, with Arlette taking detailed notes on her laptop while Elsie narrated. Arlette subsequently created a typescript of each session, based on either her notes or the audio recordings. The resulting texts

were close approximations of Elsie's words but not verbatim transcripts. Arlette and Harmony discussed possible ways to organize the material into chapters, and the subsequent draft manuscript was shared with some of Elsie's children and grandchildren. In reviewing the manuscript, the family shared an overall observation that it didn't "sound" like Chi-chia. Reading her spoken words written on the page, they realized they wanted themselves and future generations of readers to hear Chi-chia's voice, and to get a sense of her character, tone, and sense of humour from the book. Harmony suggested to Chi-chia and Arlette that they ask my opinion, and Chi-chia gave permission to send me a copy of the draft text.

Harmony and I had stayed in touch since she was an undergraduate in my history classes at Simon Fraser University, and I had met her grandmother a number of times – first at Harmony's graduation ceremony and later when I interviewed her about her experiences of seasonal migration and mobility. From my perspective, the draft manuscript was full of important and fascinating historical information. Although I was unaware of the discussions the extended family had been having about voice, I also noticed that the text did not sound like Elsie when I read it. I replied to Harmony by email with a set of questions about the goals of the book, how Elsie wanted her voice represented, and what audiences she wanted to reach.

Elsie and her family's interest in representing the orality of her words on the written page had emerged as the project progressed to the point of a first draft. After further discussion, the participants agreed to foreground Chi-chia's voice in the next draft. To that end, Harmony volunteered to become more actively involved, and soon afterwards, Elsie, Harmony, and Harmony's mother, Jeannie, visited me at home in Vancouver. Elsie asked whether I would work with Harmony to revise the existing manuscript and help get it published. I agreed, naively confident that we could complete the project in a few months. I then met with Elsie, Harmony, and Arlette to discuss Elsie's wishes for the book in greater detail. I brought a few autobiographical and told-to narratives so Elsie could consider some possible formats.<sup>43</sup> She reacted visually to the texts: she disliked the look of books with a lot of orthographic symbols; she liked the look of those with ample photographs. She also explained her frustration with the challenge of fully expressing the teachings in English, and we discussed including some stories in Sliammon. She was very clear about accessibility being a priority for her. She also set the tone for the collaborative process to come. She felt she had done the hard work

by telling the stories. Now, she wanted the rest of us to hurry up and get the book done. Although everyone wanted the project completed as quickly as possible, we agreed on the need to work from verbatim transcripts in order to ensure that the book sounded like Elsie. Representing oral speech on a written page requires someone with a talented ear who can interpret which punctuation best conveys the sound, spirit, and intent of the oral telling. Transcription is closer to the creative process of translation between languages than we usually recognize.<sup>44</sup> Indeed, oral speech and the written word can be conceived of as different languages. For this task of transcription, we hired the writer and poet Marguerite Pigeon, whose transcription of my earlier interview with Elsie, all of us agreed, captured the sound of her voice beautifully.

Having sent the existing audio recordings to Marguerite, Harmony and I planned a trip to Sliammon to work with Chi-chia and Arlette to make audio recordings of the previously told stories that had been documented solely with notes. I was eight months pregnant with my third child and had my two-year-old daughter in tow. I watched her play with friends on the beach from the shade of Chi-chia's enclosed front porch, where Chi-chia, Harmony, Arlette, and I worked. We began these recording sessions by asking Elsie to talk about one of the subjects she had previously narrated to Arlette. By this time, we had a provisional chapter structure in mind, and we organized our sessions along those lines. For example, Harmony prompted, "And we're recording for Chapter 9 on community work. So we probably, Chi-chia, wanted to start with, like, your earliest kind of work that you were doing for paid wages." Elsie launched easily from such prompts into lengthy accounts of the same stories she had previously narrated. After speaking for a while, she often concluded with a general statement: "Yeah, so all that is history." At such points, we sometimes asked her to elaborate upon something she had mentioned in passing, particularly if Arlette's notes indicated she had previously narrated it in greater detail. This technique worked well, and over the course of a few days, we recorded all the unrecorded subject matter that Chi-chia had previously shared. When these new audio recordings were complete, we sent them to Marguerite for transcription.

A number of times during the recording sessions, one of us asked Chi-chia about topics that she had not discussed in the original sessions with Janet and Arlette. Harmony was curious about certain stories she had heard growing up. I was interested in topics that spoke to gaps in the academic historiography. Chi-chia's responses to such

inquiries were rich but almost invariably off the record. The one exception was her response to a question posed by Harmony about what Chi-chia refers to as her grandfather's "predictions" – that material now comprises Chapter 5. In every other instance, Chi-chia deemed the information inappropriate as content for this book. At first I believed this was because the information was politically – or personally – charged, and sometimes this was true. But more fundamentally, I came to realize, these stories did not further the goal of sharing ʔəms taʔaw. When Elsie selected content, the principles of respect and self-care were paramount. Speaking in ways that might harm would be in accord with neither. Nor would telling stories that were not fully hers to tell. The tremendous care and intention with which Chi-chia had narrated the first round of stories for the book became even clearer to me at this point. Through subsequent recording sessions, she remained committed to communicating ʔəms taʔaw, declining to include material that was at cross-purposes with this goal. As she narrated, she was not only sharing the teachings; she was living them.

Storytelling always involves an audience. In theory, all of Chi-chia's audio recordings had the same audience: the imagined reader of an eventual book. In practice, however, she told these stories to various combinations of Arlette, Janet, Harmony, me, and occasionally other friends and family. Not surprisingly, then, she varied her storytelling style. In the early recordings Chi-chia used few Sliammon words, but in later sessions she frequently invoked Sliammon terms and phrases. Perhaps this was because of our interim conversations about a bilingual component of the book; perhaps it was because she felt more comfortable speaking Sliammon in front of Harmony; perhaps a bit of both. When Chi-chia did not provide an English translation for these Sliammon words and phrases herself, we have done so in the notes. Chi-chia also spoke at greater length in later recordings. Perhaps we asked fewer or different questions at that stage; perhaps she felt more fluent in front of Harmony; perhaps a bit of both. She also sometimes personalized the stories for Harmony, pointing out, for example, that such and such happened when "your grandfather," that is, Chi-chia's husband, was young. Chi-chia also tended to situate herself in time and place. All her references to "here" or "this place" or "over there" are in relation to her home on the Sliammon reserve. And comments to the effect of "like I was talkin' about before" refer to previous conversations – some recorded, others not – which do not necessarily appear in this book in the order in which they occurred. When she situated herself in time more specifically – e.g., "last week" – we

indicated the specific date in the notes. Harmony and I decided to retain these personal, geographical, and temporal references in order to remind readers (rather than ask you to forget) that these stories were recorded with a range of participants over a lengthy period.

Working on this project taught me several times over never to underestimate the barriers to transformational listening. Harmony's and my visit to Sliammon coincided with the hundredth anniversary of the founding of the Powell River townsite. Chi-chia had been invited to speak at a public event associated with the celebration. When we noticed that the local magazine, *Powell River Living*, had devoted its latest issue to the anniversary, we all thumbed through it, at first with interest and then with frustration. In the entire issue, there was no mention of the ɫaʔamun people upon whose territory the townsite was established in 1910. There was no mention of tiysk<sup>w</sup>at, the ɫaʔamun village that the Powell River townsite displaced. There was no mention of the ɫaʔamun inhabitants of tiysk<sup>w</sup>at or of the legal challenge to their alienation from the site that was still ongoing a century later. Instead, the anniversary issue evoked images of an empty place, a wilderness that lay dormant until ambitious and heroic pioneers arrived to develop it. We were dismayed and surprised at this erasure. This magazine frequently features sensitive and informative articles about ɫaʔamun people and history, and Chi-chia has even appeared on its cover! But when it came to Powell River's *history*, ɫaʔamun people and territory somehow vanished.<sup>45</sup> Never had Chi-chia's desire to convey the fact that "we also have a history" seemed more relevant.

Shortly after this, the difficulties of listening, being heard, and knowing we've been heard became apparent to me again from a new angle. Under Canadian law, Janet held the copyright to the original audio recordings because she had operated the recording device.<sup>46</sup> I suggested that Chi-chia get a written release in anticipation of future publication. I contacted Janet, and our brief conversation revealed that she and Chi-chia held different assumptions about how licensing for the recordings might work going forward. Both women were surprised and dismayed to learn of this gap in understanding. After dozens of hours of talking and listening, a sense of mutual trust had grown, yet each woman still took away distinct understandings of what that trust implied with respect to the use of the recordings. Each felt – for her own particular reasons – invested in the material, and both were hurt to learn that their assumptions and goals were not shared. Beyond hurt feelings, this situation jeopardized the book project; without clear copyright, Elsie could not use the material she had recorded with

Janet in a book. Fortunately, in terms of Elsie's ability to use the recordings, this story of mishearing has a happy outcome. After a number of conversations variously involving Elsie, Harmony, Arlette, and Janet, Janet released copyright to Elsie without retaining a licence or rights to use the recordings for her own purposes as she had hoped to do. The priority that Janet placed on her relationship with Chi-chia is, I think, the reason the situation was resolved as it was. In this instance, the project collaborators were able to arrive at a mutual agreement through respectful dialogue. Such an outcome should not be taken for granted. There is, unfortunately, a long history of researchers in many parts of the world holding steadfastly to the belief that they should retain control over "data" collected from Indigenous "informants" in the name of a greater good. Many researchers consciously or unconsciously refuse the opportunities for transformational listening that their work provides. Consequently, they conclude their time in the field with their underlying assumptions – about power, responsibility, and capacity – intact. Preventing such situations is admittedly the intention of the university ethics review policies discussed above that require a band council resolution (BCR). However, a BCR would not necessarily have prevented the misunderstanding between Janet and Elsie. Moreover, Chi-chia's response to the miscommunication with Janet was not to wish that somebody or something had protected her. She saw the situation as an interpersonal one that she had the right and ability to attempt to resolve herself. She still finds insulting any suggestion that she needs a BCR to protect her. The ethical question here turns not on the need for policies or institutions to "protect" Indigenous people – something the Indian Act was, after all, also designed to do – but on the need for researchers to respect Indigenous people's rights to make decisions for themselves. Engaging in a respectful relationship is a precondition for – yet is no guarantee of – communication across difference. The disappointment and frustration that grew from this episode reminds me more than ever of the elusiveness of transformational listening.

#### THE TODDLER YEARS: COMPOSING A NARRATIVE

Elsie's words had already undergone one translation: from oral to written form. Roughly thirty-six hours of audio now existed as 350 single-spaced typescript pages, or over 273,000 words. (In fact, this was the second translation, if we recall the self-translation entailed

in her English narration.) Now Harmony and I began the next translation: turning the transcripts into a format accessible for readers. Extending the life history metaphor to refer to the “toddler years” here might seem a conceit. And I do not want to be misunderstood: I am not suggesting that the interventions Harmony and I made with the transcripts bestowed “maturity” on Chi-chia’s words or helped earlier phases of the work “grow up.” My metaphor refers to how the nature of the work changed as the project reached its next life stage. Just as, after the first draft, a new priority had emerged with respect to voice, now the priority of readability required attention. Just as toddlers change as they learn to interact with a wider circle of people beyond their immediate families, at this point we worked to facilitate the circulation of Chi-chia’s stories beyond her family and friends – to an interested reading public, students, and scholars.

Harmony and I continued to seek Chi-chia’s input and guidance at this stage. Chi-chia stressed that the transcripts needed to be “organized,” as she put it, so as to be accessible to readers in a way that verbatim transcripts are not. Those who knew Chi-chia could “hear” her voice clearly in the verbatim transcripts, but we all realized that readers who did not know her personally would feel differently. Students to whom I assigned a selection of minimally edited transcripts complained that the literalness of speech on the page was frustrating to decipher. Chi-chia emphasized that she wanted a readable final product in which her voice came through clearly. Specifically, she directed us to remove verbal distractions such as “uh” and “um” and to ensure she did not appear to repeat herself. But she refrained from becoming involved in the composition of chapters. She made it clear that this was the work she expected of Harmony and me, and she nudged us to hurry up. Claims by collaborators that the narrator asked them to make decisions have been dubbed a “drama of ritual abdication” by one critic, and they are frequent enough features of introductions to told-to narratives that they attract charges of disingenuousness.<sup>47</sup> But Chi-chia’s preferred division of labour did not at all imply that she was “unconcerned with the textuality of the published work”<sup>48</sup> – she simply wanted us to do our share.<sup>49</sup> She would review and provide feedback once we had something more polished to show her.

Writing about the textualization of oral narratives, scholars sometimes lament each adjustment to the spoken word as an incremental loss, a distancing from and an act of violence against the purity of the original utterance.<sup>50</sup> And, in a certain sense, they are correct: the written page cannot replicate an oral performance. At the same time, the

translation from oral to written might be more usefully seen as a trade-off rather than an absolute loss. Gains can also be achieved in the process of turning oral speech into text. These might include sharing knowledge with a wider audience, and the oft-cited and debated benefit of “preservation.” Of course these gains exist as such only if the narrator judges them so. Elders themselves are aware of the potential trade-offs, and they weigh the pros and cons of written formats just as they do when deciding whether to narrate in English. For example, although the renowned Lushootseed Elder Vi Hilbert called printed oral histories “shallow versions” of the originals, she pursued a vigorous agenda to publish them.<sup>51</sup> In Chi-chia’s case, her desire to share the teachings was paramount.

Because we respect Chi-chia’s oral style and voice a great deal, Harmony and I found it daunting to work with her words to compose a written narrative organized into chapters. Risking the extension of the toddler metaphor a bit further, we were wobbly on our feet as we started to look for the appropriate path – one that preserved the orality and style of the original narration while achieving readability. The work we did with the transcripts at this stage is often termed “editorial,” a term I avoid because I find it misleading. Our work was more compositional than editorial, much closer than I had first anticipated to the process of crafting a historical argument. Essentially, we set to work to use the collected transcripts to elaborate an argument. Historians do this work all the time using an array of sources including documents, images, material objects, and oral interviews. The difference here was that Harmony and I were not attempting to answer a research question that either of us had set individually. Instead, we worked to craft a narrative that bent to the arc of Chi-chia’s desire to share *ʔəms təʔaw*. Working in this way required us first to understand the teachings and then to convey them through the composition of the manuscript. This necessarily dialogical process required Harmony and me to remain in conversation not only with each other, with Chi-chia, and with the transcripts, but also with our own underlying assumptions. This method was not so dissimilar from how I would study the underlying and implicit meanings in any historical source, except for the crucial collaborative dimension that required me to focus on a shared rather than an individual goal. I was still very much doing my accustomed work as a historian, but following what scholars have termed an “Indigenous methodology,” that is, a methodology that proceeded from and remained rooted in tribally specific knowledge.<sup>52</sup> For example, as a historian, I was at first drawn

to what seemed to me the obvious historical relevance of the events of Elsie's life: attending residential school, working as a migrant labourer, socializing in racially segregated pubs and theatres. But over time, I came to understand that these life history events were inseparable from, and indeed subordinate to, the teachings. Chi-chia returned again and again – in the transcripts and in our ongoing conversations – to self-care, respect, healing, and spirituality. These were not topics about which I would have ever envisioned writing a book on my own. In retrospect, it took me much longer than I care to admit to understand what this book is *really* about.

The challenges of first reaching a common understanding among ourselves, and then finding an effective means to communicate that understanding to readers, meant that sometimes Harmony and I assessed certain material as extraneous only later to realize its relevance. Sometimes, a “good” idea suddenly became a “bad” one, as when I realized that a chapter structure I had proposed cast the historical events and the teachings as distinct categories and thus undermined the argument of the book as a whole. On other occasions, apparent contradictions in the transcript resolved themselves when, after speaking with Chi-chia, Harmony and I realized that the “contradictions” were the result of *our* misperception rather than Chi-chia's inconsistency. Over the lengthy process that ensued we went through the transcripts line by line and experimented with many chapter structures and textual arrangements. We tried our best to forestall potential misreadings as we carefully considered the implications of numerous approaches to structure, content, and editing. I discuss each of these areas in turn below, although in reality they intersected in complex ways and our decision-making process was more spiral than linear.

### *Chapter Structure*

Structurally, we sought to highlight four narrative threads in this book. We attempted to embed their multiple interconnections in the book's architecture by interspersing them throughout. Chronologically organized chapters form one thread. In these chapters, Chi-chia narrates events from her life history. A second (though not secondary) thread consists of ʔəms təʔaw around particular topics: education, prenatal and neonatal care, grief, and spirituality. Although they are nominally divided into separate chapters, there is no clear line between the life history and the teachings, as I've noted above. Chi-chia narrates many life history events as examples of the teachings, and for her,

the teachings and the history are inextricable.<sup>53</sup> A third narrative thread comprises a specific form of teachings that Chi-chia refers to as legends. These are not archaic myths or children's fables;<sup>54</sup> as Chi-chia puts it, "They are what guided my life." We placed the legends where they overlap thematically in some way with the preceding chapter. That said, because multiple potential meanings can be taken from the legends, other textual arrangements were equally feasible and would have highlighted different connections. The fourth thread is made up of stories told by Chi-chia in the Sliammon language. These are selections from longer recordings made during her many years of collaboration with the linguist Honoré Watanabe.<sup>55</sup> We situated the Sliammon-language narratives in proximity to related stories told in English and presented them in a bilingual format, which is explained in the user-friendly "A Note on the Sliammon Language," which appears in the preliminaries of this book. Please take the time to consult it. The Sliammon-language narratives are not intended for the benefit of linguists alone. Chi-chia, Harmony, Honoré, and I hope that readers will not skip over them but instead will consider them carefully. The English translations provide a glimpse of the differences between English and Sliammon syntax and style. We hope that the presence of the Sliammon language on these pages reminds readers that the conversations with grandparents and Elders that Elsie recounts occurred not in English but in her mother tongue, that Elsie grew up immersed in a Sliammon-speaking world that conveyed ʔaʔamun ways of being and knowing that can only be approximated in English. Thus, we also hope these Sliammon-language narratives give readers a small sense of the tremendous act of translation that Chi-chia undertook in order to narrate these stories in English.

For similar reasons, we have, after a tremendous amount of consideration, decided to represent the Sliammon words that appear throughout this book in a linguistic writing system, or orthography. Until the penultimate stages of the project, we intended to limit the orthography to the Sliammon-language sections, and to use the Roman alphabet to create phonetic approximations for Sliammon words in the other chapters. Although such a practice would have been less scholarly, we believed it would be more accessible to general readers. However, our attempts to avoid orthography proved unsatisfying. Sliammon words have no standard spelling in the Roman alphabet, and family members themselves had varying ideas on how to write Sliammon words and names. Moreover, the lesson that the historian

Susan Roy learned from the Musqueam Elder Fran Guerin seemed increasingly relevant: “The phonetic representations of the language gave the speaker a false sense that they were pronouncing words properly. It was better to represent Aboriginal languages in all their complexity.”<sup>56</sup> Recall that understanding difference, rather than erasing it, is an essential part of transformational listening. Accordingly, we have used the linguistic orthography for all Sliammon-language words and names. The one exception to this is “Chi-chia,” a term that family members commonly use and write this way. Please refer to the pronunciation guide in the “Note on the Sliammon Language” for assistance with sounding out these words.

### *Chapter Content*

In terms of the content of the chapters, our ideal was to leave the flow of Chi-chia’s oral presentation uninterrupted. However, alternative versions of the same story contained different and often complementary details. Chi-chia was clear that she did not want to appear to be repeating herself, so including multiple versions of stories was not an option. At the same time, omitting significant points of illustration or information did not seem desirable either. This problem resolved itself as we studied Chi-chia’s narrative style. We saw that whenever she told a particular story, she used not only very similar phrasing, but similar structure as well. In several stories about baskets, for example, she first noted what beautiful baskets her grandmother and other women of her generation had made, then talked about the technical challenges of root digging, and then connected that work to ʔəms taʔaw. We felt we could retain Chi-chia’s narrative structure while combining multiple tellings of the same story in a version that was either clearer or more complete than any single recorded version. We did this as sparingly as we could and found it more necessary in some chapters than others. Ultimately, we did not follow abstract principles so much as we adjusted to the pragmatics of using diverse material recorded at different times with different people. The result is that some chapters consist of two or three long selections of narrative while others are pieced together from many different tellings. Within given chapters, we organized material thematically rather than chronologically for the most part, because this fit better with how Chi-chia tells the stories.

Some audio recordings contained a great deal more dialogue than others, but even when this was the case, we have not included that

dialogue here. Scholars from Bakhtin onwards have stressed that a dialogical form is itself constitutive of and cannot be separated from content. Thinking through this principle, Harmony and I considered including at least some of the questions in the text. We did not do so first and foremost because a question-and-answer format did not fit Chi-chia's vision of how the book should look on the printed page. Second, Harmony and I noted that time and again, after responding to a question or engaging in a side conversation, Chi-chia returned to precisely where she had left off. The shape and selection of her stories was not influenced by the questions and comments that arose during recording sessions. Chi-chia narrated her life history and teachings with a firm, clear, and consistent intention, an intention from which interruptions did not sway her. In short, she did not speak without first thinking, and once she began to speak, she did not lose her train of thought. Ultimately, we feel that rather than feigning fluent oration where none existed, removing the questions will help readers detect her narrative flow more easily than if they were to read the verbatim transcripts.

#### *Line Editing*

The next stage was the line editing. With the content blocked into chapters, we focused on the details of Chi-chia's oral speech. In order to maintain some of the orality of the original tellings without creating too much distraction, we kept many of her most characteristic oral markers, particularly phrases such as "you know" and her tendency to complete stories or thoughts with "yeah." We have also preserved her tendency to use a rising intonation at the end of important statements to seek agreement from the listener. In written form, these moments are punctuated with question marks, although they are not true questions. They do not indicate uncertainty on Chi-chia's part. Rather, they represent moments when she wants to stress the importance of what she is saying and, so, checks in with the listener, as if to say, "Am I making myself clear?" or "Do you know what I mean?" We retained incomplete phrases or thoughts in places where she was clearly working through her ideas out loud. We occasionally inserted non-verbal markers in square brackets, such as "[laughs]," to clarify the emotional tenor. Italics indicate heavy emphasis on a particular word or phrase. Ellipses have been used to indicate a pause in speech and not as indicators of where material has been removed. On rare occasions we clarified the subject of a sentence by checking with

Chi-chia on her preferred wording and replacing “he” or “she” with a more specific descriptor such as “my husband.” At her request, we removed incidental expressions such as “uh” and false starts. The reactions of family members have been our touchstone for evaluating the voice embodied in this written text, and we have been gratified that those who know Chi-chia well say they hear her on the pages that follow.<sup>57</sup> We authors hope you will feel likewise after reading the book, even though you may have never met Chi-chia in person.

With a full version of the manuscript assembled, Harmony and I travelled to Powell River in the summer of 2012 so Chi-chia could evaluate what we had done. The three of us discussed this introduction, possible Sliammon narratives to include, and, once again, the title of the book. It was at this point that Chi-chia expressed to us the importance of *ʔəms taʔaw* being part of the book’s title. She read through the entire manuscript, marking it up with sticky notes to indicate her changes, all of which we subsequently made. These changes varied from clarifications of meaning to adjustments of word choice to removal of content. Arlette and other family members also reread the manuscript at this stage and provided feedback.

#### ADOLESCENCE AND ADULTHOOD: SHARING THE STORIES WITH READERS

Adolescence and adulthood are life stages when an individual enters the world independently. In the case of a book, this occurs after publication when it begins to circulate within popular and scholarly circles. As with our children, we as authors cannot know for certain what journey this book will take or how it will be received in various circles. But again as with children, we can orient it toward destinations where it may live its (we hope, extended) textual life. In my listening, Chi-chia speaks particularly to readers interested in the Coast Salish, in understandings of tradition and history, in women’s history, and in reconciliation, healing, and Indigenous resurgence. I discuss these topics in turn below.

#### *Living Coast Salish, Living ʔaʔamin*

All of us involved in writing this book hope it moves widely among readers interested in Coast Salish peoples and places. Chi-chia’s detailed experiential and geographically situated knowledge of ʔaʔamin

practices and teachings has much to offer Coast Salish studies, a field that has flourished in recent decades.<sup>58</sup> As a ʔaʔamun Elder and as a woman, she speaks into multiple spaces within this literature.

The historical trajectory of scholarly attention to ʔaʔamun people is in many ways a microcosm of the trajectory of Coast Salish scholarship more broadly. Recent scholars have paid less attention to ʔaʔamun people and their neighbours than they have to central and southern Coast Salish peoples, much as earlier generations of scholars paid less attention to Coast Salish-speaking peoples than to other, particularly Wakashan-speaking, Northwest Coast peoples. In 2007, the publication of an edited collection, *Be of Good Mind: Essays on the Coast Salish*, simultaneously honoured both the influence of Suttles's 1987 watershed publication *Coast Salish Essays* and the intervening twenty years of rich scholarship on the Coast Salish that Suttles's work helped inspire. Scholarly interest in the Coast Salish over these decades focused on southern and central Coast Salish peoples, particularly the Stó:lō.<sup>59</sup>

Scholarly interest in the ʔaʔamun has been longer in coming. While their language has been amply documented and analyzed, Sliammon, Klahoose, and Homalco peoples have remained nearly absent from scholarly literature. Like so many Northwest Coast anthropology stories, this one has something to do with Franz Boas, or in this case, his absence. Boas conducted considerably less work with Coast Salish communities than with the "Kwakiutl," as he famously termed them.<sup>60</sup> Within his body of Coast Salish work, the closest he came to an investigation of Sliammon was his documentation of legends and vocabulary among the Island Comox, who spoke a dialect of the same language as the ʔaʔamun.<sup>61</sup> The historical accident of which communities Boas studied and which he did not has had a lasting influence on Northwest Coast anthropology and ethnohistory. Simply put, where Boas went, others often followed. It is not, after all, just historians who follow the archive.<sup>62</sup> Linguists have followed up the early work by Boas and Edward Sapir to generate a significant literature on the both the Island Comox and Mainland dialects.<sup>63</sup> Yet the ethnohistorical literature on the ʔaʔamun, Klahoose, and Homalco peoples has remained slight, despite the expanding number of studies on many other Coast Salish peoples.<sup>64</sup> Two studies constitute very nearly the entirety of the ethnohistorical corpus on ʔaʔamun people in the twentieth century. In 1936, Homer Barnett, a doctoral student in anthropology at the University of California Berkeley, conducted fieldwork at Sliammon for his dissertation, "The Coast Salish of British Columbia,"

which was published as a monograph in 1955.<sup>65</sup> The next anthropologists to work with ʔamun individuals were Dorothy Kennedy and Randy Bouchard in the 1970s as part of the British Columbia Indian Language Project. Kennedy and Bouchard published an ethnography of the Island Comox, Klahoose, Homalco, and ʔamun peoples – all of whom share a common language – titled *Sliammon Life, Sliammon Lands* in 1983.<sup>66</sup> Theirs is the only published, book-length scholarly study of any of these peoples. Relatively compact and accessible to a general audience, it is richly illustrated with photographs and includes a detailed list of place names. No further ethnohistorical work on the ʔamun people was published before the turn of the twenty-first century.<sup>67</sup> Since then, a master's thesis and a number of scholarly articles have appeared.<sup>68</sup> More recently, an archaeological literature has emerged, and in 2012 and 2013, graduate students in an ethnohistory field school at Sliammon conducted research toward the goal of publishing a ʔamun historical atlas.<sup>69</sup> Chi-chia's words thus move out toward readers at a moment of burgeoning scholarly interest in Coast Salish peoples in general, and in the ʔamun people in particular.

Her contribution of a woman's knowledge and life experience is particularly valuable. Although Coast Salish women have been involved in extensive publishing projects of legends and oral narratives, they have not generally recorded their own life histories.<sup>70</sup> Most of the relatively few life histories of Coast Salish people are by or about men (none of whom are ʔamun).<sup>71</sup> More broadly, scholars have recognized the need for more Indigenous women's narratives and oral histories.<sup>72</sup> Small as it is, the scholarly literature specifically on the ʔamun still bears traces of the tendency to cast male experience as normative. Homer Barnett worked exclusively with male informants, and his resulting publication, *The Coast Salish of British Columbia*, extrapolated from men's knowledge and experience to make generalized claims about Coast Salish culture. Symptomatic of this, for example, is Barnett's general and rather cursory treatment of food and basketry, topics to which Chi-chia devotes extensive time, providing detailed, geographically specific accounts of how to preserve salmon, catch and dry herring, and harvest and prepare cedar roots. On the other hand, Chi-chia says little about hunting or salmon fishing, topics that preoccupied Barnett and that his informants discussed in detail.<sup>73</sup> Although Barnett seemed to sense that – with the interesting exception of Elsie's great-uncle Chief Tom – his informants lacked detailed ethnobotanical expertise, he did not connect this to his all-male sample.<sup>74</sup> Barnett was of his time, and his gendered emphasis on what

Wayne Suttles referred to as men's "food-getting methods" over women's equally important "food-storing methods" endured as a bias in the literature at least into the late 1960s, when Suttles commented on it.<sup>75</sup> Scholarly inquiry into łaʔamun women's knowledge in particular did not come until the 1970s with the work of Kennedy and Bouchard, work that has not been built upon until now.

As a life history, this book's format also makes a contribution to our understanding of Coast Salish peoples. Life narratives are particularly important to studies of the Coast Salish because individuals and families are the building blocks of Coast Salish societies. Coast Salish societies cohere over time through interconnected, gendered geographies of individual and family relationships. The Stó:lō oral historian Sonny McHalsie situates "family as a basis of nation."<sup>76</sup> Similarly, the networks of marriage, resource use, and labour that Chi-chia details are more than her personal life experiences; they are constitutive components of the łaʔamun people's territory and sovereignty. Her explanations of territory are stories about specific places where individual family members lived, and her explanations of the historical functioning of łaʔamun self-government are stories about discipline within the family unit. Thus, stories that might initially seem to be micro histories of families and individuals living in and throughout the territory in fact exemplify the macro category "Coast Salish." The accretion of such highly localized yet interconnected family histories is what renders the very category "Coast Salish" meaningful.

At the same time as Chi-chia expands and enriches our understanding of Coast Salish peoples, she also reminds us of some potential pitfalls of overrelying on categories such as "Coast Salish" as organizing principles. Such pitfalls date from the nineteenth century, when anthropologists first conceived of using culture and language areas as heuristic devices for studying Indigenous peoples. Influenced by the Boasian model of diffusion, early-twentieth-century Northwest Coast scholars cast Coast Salish peoples as inhabitants of a "receiver area" who had adopted their culture from the peoples of the more northerly, supposedly "core" areas. This logic misinterpreted unique aspects of Coast Salish life as absences or lacks; rather than possessing distinct forms of social organization, for example, Coast Salish people "lacked" the matrilineal clans documented among "core" peoples.<sup>77</sup> Moreover, as the historian Susan Roy notes, the historical recontextualization of "collected objects" – and, arguably by extension, of collected knowledge – "in anthropological exhibits and texts emphasized the category 'Coast Salish' and de-emphasized local identities,

histories, and cultural meanings.”<sup>78</sup> Roy’s concern is with the work that early anthropological categorization performed upon specific Indigenous communities, in this case, the Musqueam. For people like the ʔaʔamun who were not studied by that first generation of anthropologists on the Northwest Coast, the implications of her point are no less acute. Indeed, Chi-chia has felt them in her own life. Throughout this book, she stresses the distinctiveness of ʔaʔamun ways when she explains leadership, governance, territory, spirituality, and power, topics discussed in the existing literature on the Coast Salish with almost exclusive reference to the central and southern peoples.<sup>79</sup>

Chi-chia’s insistence on the distinctiveness of ʔaʔamun ways mirrors that of her grandfather’s brother, tama Timothy or “Chief Tom,” Homer Barnett’s main informant at Sliammon in 1936. In his monograph, Barnett commented on Chief Tom’s wealth of knowledge, describing him as one of the four most knowledgeable informants with whom he had worked in a dozen Coast Salish communities across southwestern British Columbia.

Three men were worked with at the Slaiäman or Powell River reserve. Two ... were finally abandoned in favor of Chief Tom to whom, along with Tommy Paul, Westly, and Mitchell, I am especially grateful for what little understanding I have of Salish culture. He was probably eighty years old. He still held to the traditional patterns, not desperately but for the honest good he found in them. A descendant of one of the most illustrious families in this region, he was conscious of his position as the leading representative of his people. Despite his years, he ... was ready to demonstrate enthusiastically the things of which he spoke.<sup>80</sup>

This characterization reveals the admiration Barnett came to feel for Chief Tom over time. Barnett’s field notes, however, reveal that the working relationship between the two men was often characterized by frustration born of Chief Tom’s refusal to accommodate Barnett’s expectations for a normative Coast Salish culture. Well trained at Berkeley in the cultural diffusion approach of the day, Barnett approached his Coast Salish fieldwork expecting to find particular cultural practices in particular places, and he expected the people at Sliammon to dance, sing, wear masks, and potlatch in quite specific ways. Just as broader scholarly trends of the day positioned the Coast Salish as lacking “core” (i.e., monumental) elements of “Northwest

Coast culture,” Barnett in turn viewed the ʔaʔamun through a lens that suggested they lacked “core” elements of “Coast Salish culture.” This did not jibe with Chief Tom’s world view. Reading Barnett’s field notes today, it is apparent that although Barnett was listening to Chief Tom, Chief Tom knew he was not being heard, while Barnett was not hearing what he wanted.

Barnett’s candid field notes contain emphatic, and sometimes amusing, expressions of the confusion and disappointment he felt when he could not find the Coast Salish practices that he believed should have been at Sliammon. For example, early on in his fieldwork there, Barnett recorded his interpretation of Chief Tom’s explanation of practices for honouring salmon by writing “*No first salmon rite.*”<sup>81</sup> Barnett had the southern and central Coast Salish practice for welcoming sockeye in mind here. Chi-chia makes it clear that ʔaʔamun people welcomed salmon and other fish whenever they arrived.<sup>82</sup> Yet for Barnett, absent the description of a first salmon ceremony as he had heard related in other Coast Salish communities, the ʔaʔamun *lacked* a first salmon ceremony.

The mutual frustration between Barnett and Chief Tom escalated in their conversations about spiritual practices. Barnett was confused and disappointed at what he saw as a lack of “sacred” expression among the ʔaʔamun. He pressed Chief Tom repeatedly for information about practices that anthropologists had documented among other Coast Salish peoples, as well as among the Kwakwaka’wakw: masked winter dances and competitive gift exchanges. He asked Chief Tom leading questions and showed him photographs from elsewhere as illustrations of what he was looking for. Chief Tom’s answers confirmed his familiarity with the ways of other peoples and his insistence on the distinctiveness of ʔaʔamun ways. On the question of whether the ʔaʔamun distributed blankets by throwing them from a platform in a “scramble,” Barnett wrote: “Showed him the pictures of Cowichan potlatch from platform – *not here, Cowichan, Nanaimo.*”<sup>83</sup> And on the question of whether the ʔaʔamun practised a version of the hamatsa for which the Kwakwaka’wakw were better known, “Asked about the hamats he gave this ... *summertime, not winter* as he recognizes the Cape Mudges do.”<sup>84</sup> Continuing to emphasize his surprise, Barnett wrote: “*No winter names* seems to know it as Cape Mudge – at least says he understands what I mean.”<sup>85</sup> Chief Tom was well positioned to understand the distinctions between the “Cape Mudges” (the southernmost Kwakwaka’wakw) and the ʔaʔamun because his mother,

qaʔaχstales, was from Cape Mudge and his father, Captain Timothy, was from Sliammon, as Barnett knew. After more than a dozen handwritten pages documenting Chief Tom's "lack" of expected response to his questions, Barnett concluded, "Either Tom is off his base or winter had little of the sacred to these people."<sup>86</sup> Barnett soon realized, however, if he had not already, that Tom was most certainly not "off his base." Barnett returned for further sessions with Chief Tom, remarking in his field notes that Chief Tom volunteered a great deal of detailed information without any prompting. Throughout these sessions, Barnett remained ever hopeful that the right information would emerge if he asked the right question in the right way. Chief Tom meanwhile, remained steadfast in his refusal to accommodate Barnett's expectations. The resulting climax of Barnett's frustration was something akin to ethnographic comedy: "Tom is all screwed up on winter dances or I am – *he says no winter spirit* singing. I can't get him to admit that a person ever sang his dreamed song or danced it. Says that's Cowichan. He is set upon the secrecy attaching to one's dreaming – but what the hell good is a song if you can't sing it?"<sup>87</sup>

By this point, Barnett admitted the possibility that his own lack of understanding clouded the situation. Nevertheless, he could not escape his own paradigm, which continued to cast the data that Chief Tom provided in terms of what it *lacked*. Barnett judged ʔaʔamun practices inadequate because they were unaccompanied by the expected complement of cultural expressions – "what the hell good is a song if you can't sing it?" – and ultimately characterized the winter ceremonial initiation rite of the Klahoose and ʔaʔamun as "but a partial imitation of the one to the south."<sup>88</sup> Subsequently, it was a short leap from Barnett's construction of this lack to the assumption by others that it represented a loss. If certain traits were normative for the Coast Salish, then their absence among the ʔaʔamun indicated that the ʔaʔamun had lost them – presumably because of the influence of the Church or other colonial forces.<sup>89</sup> Here again, the trajectory of scholarly assumptions about the ʔaʔamun duplicates those toward Coast Salish peoples more broadly; many long believed they were too assimilated to be of scholarly interest.<sup>90</sup> For Barnett in particular, what stands out today is how strongly his disciplinary paradigm determined what he was able to hear. Although he wanted very much to listen to Chief Tom, whom he held in high regard, Barnett remained unable to grasp much of Chief Tom's meaning. His best efforts still did not enable him to hear in ways that contradicted his own intellectual framework.

Although unaware of Chief Tom's work with Barnett until this manuscript neared completion, Chi-chia has long been familiar with the contours and implications of Barnett's perspective on the Coast Salish. Reading his field notes aloud with Harmony and Chi-chia at Sliammon in June 2012 produced peals of laughter because they identified with the frustration that their ancestor clearly felt. Each woman has found herself in situations where she had to explain that a particular Coast Salish way is not the ʔaʔamun way, situations where she faced knowing looks or words from those who presumed to know better and assumed that the ʔaʔamun had lost their ways. Harmony and Chi-chia do not view ʔaʔamun ways as better than those of other Coast Salish peoples, but they are weary of the view that certain practices are normative for Coast Salish peoples. In the following chapters, for example, Chi-chia discusses winter dances and sweat lodges in this context. Wind-drying salmon and paying quarters to witnesses are other practices that she and Harmony have seen some people incorrectly generalize as universally Coast Salish. Having always insisted upon the specificity of ʔaʔamun ways, and having emphasized this point in her audio recordings, Chi-chia was gratified to see this same insistence on ʔaʔamun ways in the words of her ancestor.

Chi-chia speaks to what we could call the “separate but equal” nature of ʔaʔamun ways in more than one sense. She does so implicitly through the care and precision she brings to each account of ʔəms taʔaw as passed down to her by her grandparents and Elders. She does so explicitly when she distinguishes between the ʔaʔamun and other First Nations peoples. This distinction matters greatly to her because cultural sovereignty is linked to political sovereignty. For example, when Harmony and I asked her to speak about her understanding of territory, she launched into a remarkable narrative during which she spoke uninterrupted for nearly half an hour. (Those words open Chapter 1.) At one point, she moved from talking about territory to talking about cultural distinctiveness, and I mistakenly thought at first that she had moved on to a new topic: “Yeah, so when we talk about territories, I think it's really important to remember that, for me anyway, that I'm from the coast – I'm a Coast Salish person. But all Coast Salish people are not all the same. We're different. We all have our unique language, our dialect from other Coast Salish people, like the West Coast people or the people from Saanich or the people from North Island or way up north, Kingcome Inlet and all of these other groupings of people. They all have their own dialect. Along the coast

here, like, Campbell River people have a different language from us. So we're not all Coast Salish in how some people see us to be. I'm Coast Salish. But I'm a *ł̓aʔamun* person. And it's unique that we are three groupings of people, Klahoose and Homalco, that speak the same dialect."

She continued by specifying her audience, addressing those unfamiliar with the human and geographical landscape of the British Columbia coast. Conscious that the ways of some other Coast Salish peoples are better known than those of the *ł̓aʔamun* and are thus sometimes taken as normative, she cautioned against undue conflation: "And I think that's really important to know – 'cause I think to a person that doesn't know, or is a non-Native person, or is a visitor from elsewhere – that we do not all speak the same dialect 'cause we're brown! You know, 'Oh yeah, that's an Indian person. They must be like this or like that, or they must speak this language.' And we're not. We have different traditional practices, styles of practices. We use different tools in how we practise our traditional ways. Our spiritual kinds of ceremonies is different in how we do it where I come from, through the teachings of my ancestors, my grandparents especially. That we practise differently than other tribes or bands of people. Theirs is different, different style, but unique to them. And it's important to remember to respect all of the other practices and how they do it, the tools they use."

To illustrate her point, she drew on the example of spiritual practices associated with the longhouse – often referred to as "winter dancing" or "spirit dancing" in scholarly literature. In so doing, she unknowingly echoed Chief Tom's insistence that this was never the *ł̓aʔamun* way: "The longhouse. We don't have that in Sliammon. We never have. We never did. Ours was more the cleansing, the self-care, the taking care of yourself and getting your power, your spirit, by going off and living on your own off the land for as long as it takes." Then, tying her example explicitly back to the theme of territory, she clarified what she meant by "ours": "The same for Homalco and Klahoose people – we were the different grouping of people in the way we practise. Yeah." The *ł̓aʔamun*, Klahoose, and Homalco were, in her words, "one people" before the bureaucratic colonial interventions of reserves and band lists. She distinguishes them from other Coast Salish peoples and, in so doing, demonstrates how language, territory, and practice converge to create community.

Chi-chia thus offers a nuanced and historicized commentary on categories of identity that are all too easily taken for granted. She

reminds the reader that certain historical processes – the creation of Indian bands and band lists, for example – severed important connections, while at the same time she points out that other historical processes – the creation of “Coast Salish” as a category, for example – masked important distinctions. Over time, the bureaucratic interventions of the colonial state both divided and conflated, multiply misrepresenting ʔaʔamun people and ways. She reminds us that Indigenous people draw their physical and social boundaries in ways that will surprise us if we have come to rely too heavily on lines drawn by colonial bureaucrats (be they surveyors, Indian agents, or academics). Her account of colonialism’s contradictory ramifications offers a case study of circumstances that have affected Indigenous peoples in multiple settler societies. Closer to home, she enriches and diversifies understandings of Coast Salish peoples by contributing her knowledge of ʔaʔamun ways. If we can listen carefully enough, more carefully than Barnett could, we will understand these ʔaʔamun ways as distinct unto themselves, as ʔəms təʔaw.

*Living Teachings, Living History*

In her accounts of ʔəms təʔaw, Chi-chia delineates change and continuity in similarly nuanced ways and in so doing speaks to debates about tradition, modernity, and culture. We should not mistake Chi-chia’s insistence on “our” teachings – ʔəms təʔaw – for chauvinism or xenophobia. She has no objection to the adoption or adaptation of new practices. She is, in fact, deeply interested in other people’s teachings and in attempts to adapt and apply them, particularly toward the goal of healing. But she promotes an understanding of new practices as the innovations that they are, rather than as resurrections of an imagined ʔaʔamun past. Her insistence on “the longhouse” as a foreign practice is a case in point. She is aware of the high stakes attached by many people to identifying fixed traits as characteristic of a given culture. And although Chi-chia is an expert on what we might call ʔaʔamun “culture,” she rarely uses the term. She refers instead to “the teachings” or “our teachings,” ʔəms təʔaw. In her careful detailing of specific ʔaʔamun practices – from basket weaving to salmon preservation to spiritual cleansing – she consistently foregrounds the actor’s *intention*. When she describes the appropriate steps to take after a funeral, she stresses that whether one plunges into the river or goes home to have a shower, the most important thing is to think about washing away the grief and sadness. Similarly, when she talks about basketry, she emphasizes the need to express gratitude for the

materials to the tree and to the Creator. Once that is done, it is less important whether the weaver uses maple leaves or rusty nails to dye the roots and bark. In these accounts of ʔəms təʔaw, internal intentions endure across time while outward practices evolve. In this view, the marrying of intention to appropriate action enables self-care and healing. The teachings – the ideas, values, and intentions – are what is crucial. Although the practices themselves are not insignificant, Chi-chia locates their importance historically: they matter because they are part of the history, part of how the Elders lived the teachings in their day, not because they need to be retained as they were. Practices can and will change over time; the teachings are constant. Chi-chia thus suggests that what is enduring about tradition or culture is not necessarily located in the physical practices where many may expect to find it, or in the texts and artifacts long collected by salvage anthropologists.

Thinking about the location of culture in this way is useful – even necessary – for situating Chi-chia’s life in historical context. Nominally, a survey of early colonial history for the ʔaʔamun might read as a series of first encounters: with European ships and diseases in the eighteenth century, with the Hudson’s Bay Company in the 1830s, with Roman Catholic priests and nuns in the 1860s, with settlers and provincial and federal Indian Affairs officials (but notably not with treaty commissioners) in the 1870s, with ethnographers in the 1930s, with modern-day treaty negotiators in the 1990s, and so on.<sup>91</sup> Such an account, however, tends easily toward a declensionist narrative of successive losses from a supposedly pure point of origin. Readers steeped in the popular notion that “tradition” and “modernity” are polar opposites might be drawn to interpret Chi-chia’s childhood as traditional and her adulthood as modern; her childhood as ʔaʔamun and her adulthood as colonial.<sup>92</sup> Many told-to narratives inadvertently appear to replicate this dichotomy. Whether through the interventions of scholarly collaborators and editors, the choices of narrators themselves, or, most likely, some combination thereof, autobiographies of Indigenous women tend to emphasize women’s roles as wives, mothers, and preservers of cultural practice (as basket weavers, language teachers, and button-blanket makers, for example).<sup>93</sup> To be sure, Chi-chia too talks a lot about these topics; readers will readily recognize caring for babies, drying salmon, and weaving baskets as ʔaʔamun women’s work. But in focusing so heavily on a narrow conception of the ethnographic value of the narrator’s life, many autobiographies and told-to accounts minimize the narrator’s work in the paid labour force, and

implicitly position her on a precarious fulcrum between tradition and modernity, as “the last of her kind.”<sup>94</sup>

Such a gloss on Chi-chia’s life, however, misses something enormously important in her telling. For Chi-chia, the entire book is about ʔamun ways of living. ʔams taʔaw are consistent features of her life, and thus hers is a ʔamun life through and through. At the same time, because of the historical period, her life history is *also* about colonialism. This is true not only in the obvious places, where she discusses residential school, the segregation of bars and movie theatres, and discrimination at the hands of the RCMP. It is also true where she discusses her childhood on the land, travelling through the territory with her grandparents. In so doing, she portrays distinctly mid-twentieth-century ʔamun geographies, formed, as ʔamun geographies have always been, out of specific historical processes.<sup>95</sup> Taking the *very* long view, for example, her tremendous, site-specific knowledge of chum salmon is a form of historically specific expertise, a historical transformation from earlier generations’ reliance on herring as a keystone species for thousands of years.<sup>96</sup> In Chi-chia’s own lifetime she experienced a seasonal round that was the result of multiple, intersecting historical processes: generations of familial alliances through marriage, colonial displacements from ʔamun sites such as Emmonds Beach and tiyskʷat (the location of the original mill town of Powell River), and the manufacture of “postage stamp” Indian reserves. Her paid work history, meanwhile, offers a picture of the challenges and changes facing Indigenous women in the mid-twentieth century: she was the first woman elected to council in her community,<sup>97</sup> earned a social work certificate from the University of British Columbia, co-operated with early RCMP initiatives on-reserve, and participated in addiction recovery programs for over twenty years. Earlier generations of scholars would hardly have seen these jobs as ʔamun work. Barnett, for example, saw wage labour as evidence that the “old culture” was “practically dead.”<sup>98</sup> But Chi-chia approached each of these jobs as an opportunity to practise and share the self-care that, in her words, is the “common thread” of ʔams taʔaw. These jobs were as much a part of her life as a ʔamun woman as raising children and preserving fish. To borrow the anthropologist Mario Blaser’s conceptualization, we can see her simultaneous and mutually reinforcing commitments to live according to ʔams taʔaw and to engage settler society as constituting her “life project.”<sup>99</sup> Understanding Chi-chia’s life as simultaneously ʔamun *and* colonial demonstrates the interwoven nature of these influences on the production of ʔamun

ways and lives over time. And it underscores just how fallacious it is to attempt to segregate practices by labelling them “traditional” or “modern.”

This perspective on tradition underscores an important point about historical change more broadly. Colonialism has been one particularly violent mechanism of change in recent ʔamun history. But for the ʔamun, change certainly did not originate with colonization. Without minimizing the trauma of colonialism, Indigenous scholars have challenged the pathologization of Indigenous peoples that results from overemphasis on “problems” and “loss.”<sup>100</sup> Returning for a moment to Chi-chia’s discussion of winter dances, for example, what would it mean if archaeological sources somehow proved this *was* previously a ʔamun practice? Would that make her historically entrenched life experience as a ʔamun woman any less “ʔamun”? To which point in time do Indigenous peoples have to “return” in order to claim a tradition that colonial society recognizes as legitimately “Indian”? A hundred years ago? Longer? This is no abstract thought experiment, as anyone familiar with Canadian law and politics knows. Contemporary Aboriginal title cases hinge upon the ability of a First Nation to demonstrate cultural distinctiveness and exclusive control over territory at the moment that Britain asserted sovereignty. By effectively freezing culture and territory at that arbitrary moment in time, this standard denies Indigenous peoples the reality of historical change that characterizes all human societies. Reading or listening to Chi-chia’s life as *history* means understanding it as a story of change over time, and accepting such change as a historical given, rather than a marker of decline from an idealized and static past. Doing so reorients us to questions about historical mechanisms of change – questions of agency and power, volition and coercion, intention and meaning, cause and effect. It is with such questions in mind that all three authors hope readers will attend to Chi-chia’s words.

#### *Living Indigenous Womanhood*

Such questions are immediately and intimately relevant to conversations in the field of women’s history, conversations that we three authors also hope this book will join. The gendered dimensions of colonialism’s assault on Indigenous nations are multiple and complex. Since the early days of their arrival in North America, diverse European newcomers consistently identified Indigenous women as essential to the success of a wide range of colonial endeavours. From early missions through the fur trade to residential schools, the roles of

Indigenous girls and women – as daughters, mothers, providers, sexual partners, educators, and leaders – have endured multiple transformations.<sup>101</sup> As Cree-Métis scholar Kim Anderson writes, “One of the biggest targets of colonialism was the Indigenous family,” and this inevitably and disproportionately affected women. Crucially, as Anderson points out, the attack on domestic roles and structures was a political assault on Indigenous societies, because – as for the Coast Salish – kinship and family were often crucial structures of governance.<sup>102</sup> Among the Nishnaabeg, for example, in the wonderful formulation of the Nishnaabeg writer, scholar, and activist Leanne Simpson, “Breastfeeding is the very first treaty.”<sup>103</sup>

Yet, despite centuries of targeting Indigenous women and families in invasive and destructive ways – and despite declensionist tendencies in early scholarship – colonialism failed to have a totalizing impact on Indigenous women.<sup>104</sup> The chapters that follow demonstrate this many times over. Chi-chia’s grandmother was a woman who remained the “boss” throughout her long marriage. She defied colonial attempts to eliminate her role as a transmitter of knowledge to her descendants. She hid Elsie from Indian agents, keeping her close so she could protect her and pass on ʔəms təʔaw. Chi-chia and her grandmother were each important breadwinners in their families – whether trading baskets door-to-door or in the wage labour force.<sup>105</sup> Moreover, the baskets Chi-chia discusses in detail are emblematic of the ongoing importance of women’s material cultural production.<sup>106</sup> Chi-chia has herself followed a path akin to other Indigenous women leaders in her career choice of culturally grounded service work.<sup>107</sup> And not least, she has carried the knowledge and language passed on by her Elders and shared it in and beyond her community. This book is one example.

Through this practice of sharing, Chi-chia speaks to Indigenous women who have been working for and thinking through Indigenous resurgence. In her discussions of historical trauma, community service, healing, material culture, and language, Chi-chia addresses topics of central concern for many Indigenous women scholars and activists.<sup>108</sup> Moreover, she has much to offer women who are engaged in the process of “reconstructing Native womanhood,” to use Kim Anderson’s framing. In *Recognition of Being*, Anderson describes “a four-part process of Indigenous female identity development that includes resisting oppression, reclaiming Indigenous tradition and culture, incorporating traditional Indigenous ways into our modern lives, and acting on responsibilities inherent in our new-found identities.”<sup>109</sup> Chi-chia speaks to each of these aspects in ways that are thoughtful,

and often moving. Her words can serve both as a practical resource and as an inspiration.

*Living and Listening for a Change*

Of course, Indigenous resurgence is not a project exclusively for women, nor exclusively for Indigenous individuals.<sup>110</sup> An additional journey that we three authors hope this book takes in its lifetime is into the hands of all readers broadly interested in movements for resurgence, reconciliation, decolonization, antiracism, or social justice. Chi-chia offers the teachings here in published form at a moment when they can join an emergent literature on Indigenous epistemology, ontology, and story that is increasingly accessible not only to scholars but also to activists and community members. The particulars of ʔəms taʔaw are specific to the łaʔamun, as Chi-chia emphasizes, yet the principles of respect, gratitude, and holism are common to the teachings of many Indigenous peoples. Chi-chia respects differences among Indigenous peoples while recognizing these shared world views. The growing literature on tribally specific teachings can assist individuals, nations, and communities in laying the groundwork for their own paths toward what Leanne Simpson calls “re-creation, resurgence, and a new emergence.”<sup>111</sup> ʔəms taʔaw are helpful in this regard because, as Chi-chia explains, they are “the very essence of our well-being.”

Chi-chia offers a profound example of the possibilities for living a life that is powerfully and dynamically inspired by ʔəms taʔaw. Chi-chia spent two years of her youth in a residential school. Such institutions were among the most destructive instruments of colonialism in Canada through their genocidal practice of breaking up families and destroying language.<sup>112</sup> Yet I have never heard Chi-chia use the widespread term “survivor” to describe herself. As she makes clear in Chapters 4 and 10, she certainly does *not* feel residential school was benign: her experiences there were terrible. But those terrible experiences did not shape her lifelong sense of self. This is, in part, additional evidence of colonialism’s inability to effect the totalizing change it sought. Equally, if not more importantly, Chi-chia’s resilience in the face of her residential school experiences is testament to the strength, versatility, relevance, and wisdom of the teachings. For Chi-chia, ʔəms taʔaw have always defined her self-identity, providing what she refers to as the common threads of respect, gratitude, and self-care that have sustained and guided her through the joys and traumas of her life.

She conveys these common threads here because she believes they can help others too. She knows from personal experience the power the teachings have to offer with respect to practices of self-care, grieving, and healing.

Grief in particular is a theme that runs through Chi-chia's narratives. From epidemic diseases to derogatory racist messages about "dirty Indians" to the loss of children – whether to residential school or through death (and often the two were connected) – the perspective she offers implies a need for a more substantive recognition of grief throughout the history of Indigenous engagements with colonialism. In this, she is hardly alone.<sup>113</sup> For meaningful healing, resurgence, reconciliation, or decolonization to occur, the intergenerational suffering of Indigenous peoples under colonialism must be more fully accounted for. Yet historical writing has only recently begun to incorporate grief and suffering into its analysis.<sup>114</sup> Chi-chia highlights the significance of this collective grief and suggests how *łaʔamın* teachings can be applied in today's context as tools for healing.

Crucially, *ʔəms taʔaw* are relevant not only in circumstances of grief or colonial trauma. *ʔəms taʔaw* offer a framework for well-being and for living a good life that can be applied under any circumstances. Chi-chia's message here is for Indigenous and non-Indigenous readers alike – for anyone who seeks a path to something like resurgence, reconciliation, or decolonization. All readers can be inspired by her generosity of spirit, her refusal of bitterness, and her empathy for others. These traits and the teachings that undergird them have transformative potential. Whether you, as readers, enact this potential in your own lives will depend a great deal on how each of you listens to Chi-chia's words. Chi-chia, Harmony, and I invite you to avoid concluding that reading/listening to Chi-chia's words puts you in her shoes. Instead, as you read/listen, please resist the temptation to jump to conclusions, fill in the blanks, or be certain that you understand too quickly. We invite you to see points of apparent tension or contradiction in Chi-chia's words not as things to be resolved or subsumed, but as possible openings onto new understandings. We invite you to approach this book not as a singular and finite act of knowledge acquisition – a "Eureka!" moment – but as an ongoing process of engagement and self-inquiry. This process of learning through story can yield transformational listening. Despite contemporary rhetoric about certainty, any meaningful process of reconciliation will necessarily involve something much closer to certainty's opposite – the opening

up, rather than the closing down, of relationships, opportunities, and understandings – the uncertainty that inevitably accompanies a change in footing. This ongoing and open-ended approach to listening and learning is thus also an approach to relating to the world around us. This approach is very much in line with ʔəms taʔaw as told to Chi-chia by her Elders, and now told to all of us by Chi-chia: the history and teachings, written here as she remembers them.

#### NOTES

- 1 Linguistic orthography renders “Chi-chia” as “čičiyεʔ,” but because of Elsie’s preference, this word constitutes an exception to our practice in this book of using a linguistic orthography for Sliammon words. An explanation of terms is warranted here. As Elsie explains in Chapter 1, “Sliammon” is an anglicization of the word “ʔaʔamun” in her mother tongue. The word “Sliammon” therefore appears throughout the following chapters as a direct quotation of her English speech. Following Elsie’s stated preference, elsewhere in the book we have used the term “ʔaʔamun” wherever appropriate, and thus refer to “ʔaʔamun people,” “ʔaʔamun history,” and “ʔaʔamun practices.” We use the term “Sliammon” to refer to the place today known in English as the Sliammon village and to the legally recognized entity the Sliammon First Nation. We have also followed local, colloquial practice and used the term “Sliammon language” because “ʔaʔamun” is not a term that would be applied to the language. The language itself has been referred to using various terms over time. For more details see Honoré Watanabe’s “A Note on the Sliammon Language” at the beginning of this book.
- 2 On training to become a storyteller in another Coast Salish context, see Jo-ann Archibald, “Learning about Storywork from Stó:lō Elders,” chap. 3 in *Indigenous Storywork: Educating the Heart, Mind, Body and Spirit* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2008), 59-82.
- 3 For critical discussions of the deployment of the concept of “certainty” in relation to treaties and title in British Columbia, see Carole Blackburn, “Searching for Guarantees in the Midst of Uncertainty: Negotiating Aboriginal Rights and Title in British Columbia,” *American Anthropologist* 107, 4 (2008): 586-96, and Andrew Woolford, *Between Justice and Certainty: Treaty Making in British Columbia* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2005).
- 4 Paulette Regan, *Unsettling the Settler Within: Indian Residential Schools, Truth Telling, and Reconciliation in Canada* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010).
- 5 On settler allies, see *ibid.*, 236. On the pitfalls of believing that we “already know what the woman is saying” in an oral history interview, see Kathryn Anderson and Dana C. Jack, “Learning to Listen: Interview Techniques and Analyses,” in *The Oral History Reader*, 2nd ed., ed. Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson (New York: Routledge: 2006), 136.
- 6 See, for example, Marlene Brant Castellano, Linda Archibald, and Mike DeGagné, eds., *From Truth to Reconciliation: Transforming the Legacy of Residential Schools* (Ottawa: Aboriginal Healing Foundation, 2008); Gregory Younging, Jonathan Dewar, and Mike DeGagné, eds., *Response, Responsibility, and Renewal: Canada’s*

- Truth and Reconciliation Journey* (Ottawa: Aboriginal Healing Foundation, 2009); and Ashok Mathur, Jonathan Dewar, and Mike DeGagné, eds., *Cultivating Canada: Reconciliation through the Lens of Cultural Diversity* (Ottawa: Aboriginal Healing Foundation, 2011). See also "Statement Gathering," Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, accessed 25 April 2013, <http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/index.php?p=102>.
- 7 Bain Attwood, "In the Age of Testimony: The Stolen Generations Narrative, 'Distance,' and Public History," *Public Culture* 20, 1 (2008): 75-95.
  - 8 Regan, *Unsettling the Settler*, 16-17; Rauna Johanna Kuokkanen, *Reshaping the University: Responsibility, Indigenous Epistemes, and the Logic of the Gift* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2007), 3, 7.
  - 9 Julie Cruikshank, Angela Sidney, Kitty Smith, and Annie Ned, *Life Lived Like a Story: Life Stories of Three Yukon Native Elders* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990), 4.
  - 10 See Kuokkanen, *Reshaping the University*, 76.
  - 11 Attwood, "Age of Testimony," 92-95. For an extended exploration of this issue, see Victoria Freeman, *Distant Relations: How My Ancestors Colonized North America* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 2000).
  - 12 See Kuokkanen, *Reshaping the University*, 102, 103, 117.
  - 13 Sophia Rosenfeld, "On Being Heard: A Case for Paying Attention to the Historical Ear," *American Historical Review* 16, 2 (2011): 328. On the politics of listening, see also Susan Bickford, *The Dissonance of Democracy: Listening, Conflict, and Citizenship* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996).
  - 14 For extended critical analysis of listening in relation to reconciliation, see Kuokkanen, "Knowing the 'Other' and 'Learning to Learn,'" chap 4 in *Reshaping the University*, 97-127; Regan, *Unsettling the Settler*; and Sophie McCall, *First Person Plural: Aboriginal Storytelling and the Ethics of Collaborative Authorship* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2011).
  - 15 Attwood, "Age of Testimony," 84, 86, 88. For a critique of Attwood on this issue, see Rosanne Kennedy, "Stolen Generations Testimony: Trauma, Historiography, and the Question of 'Truth,'" *Aboriginal History* 25 (2001): 116-31.
  - 16 On the authority of Indigenous narrators, oral historians, and Elders, see Kennedy, "Stolen Generations Testimony," 507, 516; McCall, *First Person Plural*, 28, 32; Robin Jarvis Brownlie, "First Nations Perspectives and Historical Thinking in Canada," in *First Nations, First Thoughts: The Impact of Indigenous Thought in Canada*, ed. Annis May Timpson (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2009), 34; Annis May Timpson, "Introduction: Indigenous Thought in Canada," in Timpson, *First Nations, First Thoughts*, 1-3; and Bruce Miller, "Conclusions," chap. 6 in *Oral History on Trial: Recognizing Aboriginal Narratives in the Courts* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2011), 163-75.
  - 17 For an insightful critique of this tendency, see Kuokkanen, *Reshaping the University*, 82-85.
  - 18 Attwood, "Age of Testimony," 76, 89-92.
  - 19 Dorothy Kennedy and Randy Bouchard, *Sliammon Life, Sliammon Lands* (Vancouver: Talonbooks, 1983), 128.
  - 20 See Chapter 1 for a story about one such instance.
  - 21 Winona Wheeler, "Reflections on the Social Relations of Indigenous Oral Histories," in *Walking a Tightrope: Aboriginal People and Their Representations*,

- ed. Ute Lischke and David T. McNab (Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2005), 194-98; Kuokkanen, *Reshaping the University*, esp. 102, 103. See also Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).
- 22 Sarah Carter and Patricia A. McCormack, "Lifelines: Searching for Aboriginal Women of the Northwest and Borderlands," in *Recollecting: Lives of Aboriginal Women of the Canadian Northwest Borderlands*, ed. Sarah Carter and Patricia A. McCormack (Edmonton: Athabasca University Press, 2011), 13. See also Jean Barman, "Writing Women into the History of the North American Wests, One Woman at a Time," in *One Step over the Line: Toward a History of Women in the North American Wests*, ed. Elizabeth Jameson and Sheila McManus (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2008), 99-127. For an early example of feminist approaches in this regard, see Personal Narratives Group, ed., *Interpreting Women's Lives: Feminist Theory and Personal Narratives* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989).
- 23 Paige Raibmon, *Authentic Indians: Episodes of Encounter from the Late-Nineteenth-Century Northwest Coast* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005), esp. chaps. 7-9; Paige Raibmon, "Naturalizing Power: Land and Sexual Violence along William Byrd's Dividing Line," in *Seeing Nature through Gender*, ed. Virginia Scharff (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2003), 20-39; Paige Raibmon, "A New Understanding of Things Indian': George Raley's Negotiation of the Residential School Experience," *BC Studies* 110 (1996): 69-96; Paige Raibmon, "In loco parentis: G.H. Raley and a Residential School Philosophy," *Journal of the Canadian Church Historical Society* 38, 4 (1996): 29-52.
- 24 McCall, *First Person Plural*, 16, 101, 122, 135, 136, 208, 209.
- 25 Kim Anderson, *Life Stages and Native Women: Memory, Teachings, and Story Medicine* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2011), 15; Cruikshank et al., *Life Lived*, 12; McCall, *First Person Plural*, 13. On the development of life history as an anthropological genre, see Regna Darnell, "The Challenge of Life Histories," chap. 6 in *Invisible Genealogies: A History of Americanist Anthropology* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2001), 207-38.
- 26 McCall, *First Person Plural*, 205. See also McCall, "'Where Is the Voice Coming From?' Appropriations and Subversions of the 'Native' Voice," chap. 1 in *First Person Plural*, 17-42.
- 27 For analysis of these efforts, see *ibid.*, 78, 206; and Michael Jacklin, "Critical Injuries: Collaborative Indigenous Life Writing and the Ethics of Criticism," *Life Writing* 1, 2 (2004): 47-69.
- 28 For an early example of feminist self-reflection on the ethics of life history research, see Daphne Patai, "Ethical Problems of Personal Narratives," *International Journal of Oral History* 8, 1 (1987): 5-27. For a rich and concise overview of the critical life history literature, see Leslie A. Robertson, *Standing Up with Ga'axsta'las: Jane Constance Cook and the Politics of Memory, Church, and Custom* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2012), 479-80nn77-79. For examples of published life histories of Indigenous individuals, see the "Additional Readings" at the end of this book.
- 29 Carole Boyce Davies, "Collaboration and the Ordering Imperative in Life Story Production," in *De/colonizing the Subject: the Politics of Gender in Women's Autobiography*, ed. Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992), 12-13 ; McCall, *First Person Plural*, 30.

- 30 Cruikshank et al., *Life Lived*, 16; McCall, *First Person Plural*, 7-8.
- 31 For a critique of literary scholars' failure to consider the agendas of Indigenous narrators, see Jacklin, "Critical Injuries." See also McCall, *First Person Plural*, 8-9, 35.
- 32 Theodore Rios and Kathleen M. Sands, *Telling a Good One: The Process of a Native American Collaborative Biography* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000).
- 33 Rigoberta Menchú, *I, Rigoberta Menchú: An Indian Woman in Guatemala*, ed. Elisabeth Burgos Debray, trans. Ann Wright (London: Verso, 1984). For examples of the subsequent commentaries and critiques, see Arturo Arias, ed., *The Rigoberta Menchú Controversy* (Minneapolis: University of Michigan Press, 2001); John Beverley, "The Margin at the Center: On Testimonio (Testimonial Narratives)," in Smith and Watson, *De/colonizing the Subject*, 91-114; John Beverley, *Testimonio: On the Politics of Truth* (Minneapolis: University of Michigan Press, 2004); Paul Gelles, "Testimonio, Ethnography and Processes of Authorship," *Anthropology News* 39, 3 (1998): 16-17; Greg Grandin, *Who Is Rigoberta Menchú?* (London: Verso, 2011); Jan Rus, issue coordinator, "If Truth Be Told: A Forum on David Stoll's *Rigoberta Menchú and the Story of All Poor Guatemalans*," special issue of *Latin American Perspectives* 26, 6 (1999); Daphne Patai, Joan Bamberger, Brian Haley, David Levine, and Luis Roniger, "Truth, Fact and Fiction in the Human Rights Community: Essays in Response to David Stoll's *Rigoberta Menchú and the Story of All Poor Guatemalans*," *Human Rights Review* 1, 1 (1999): 78-112; David Stoll, *Rigoberta Menchú and the Story of All Poor Guatemalans*, expanded ed. (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2007; first published 1999); and Allen Webb and Stephen Benz, eds., *Teaching and Testimony: Rigoberta Menchú and the North American Classroom* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996).
- 34 Michele Grossman, "Out of the Salon and into the Streets: Contextualising Australian Indigenous Women's Writing," *Women's Writing* 5, 2 (1998): 182.
- 35 There are, of course, situations in which the narrator truly lacks the ability to speak for herself. See G. Thomas Couser, *Vulnerable Subjects: Ethics and Life Writing* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004).
- 36 On the Indigenous use of life histories and narratives for healing, see also Anderson, *Life Stages*, 161-62; Archibald, "The Power of Stories to Educate the Heart," chap. 4 in *Indigenous Storywork*, 83-100; Susan Dion, *Braiding Histories: Learning from Aboriginal Peoples' Experiences and Perspectives* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2008), 47-48; and Jo-Ann Episkenew, "Myth, Policy, and Health" and "Personal Stories," chaps. 1 and 3 in *Taking Back Our Spirits: Indigenous Literature, Public Policy, and Healing* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2009), 1-19, 69-108.
- 37 In what follows, I omit Janet's side of this conversation because of space constraints and because her interventions did not alter the direction of Chi-chia's train of thought. I also follow the practice of the anthropologist Leslie Robertson, who does not use block quotes for the words of her co-authors and collaborators. This typographical reflection of shared authority is related to the above discussion of informants versus authors. See Robertson, *Standing up with Ga'axsta'las*.
- 38 Sue Pielle is a daughter of Bill and Rose Mitchell, whom Elsie mentions several times, and who worked with anthropologists in the 1970s. Kennedy and Bouchard, *Sliammon Life*, 9-10. For another example of Elders' reluctance to talk about history, see Anderson, *Life Stages*, 20-21.

- 39 McCall, *First Person Plural*, 123. For related discussions of the difficulty of sharing Indigenous teachings in English, see Archibald, *Indigenous Storywork*, 75-76; and Margaret Elizabeth Kovach, *Indigenous Methodologies: Characteristics, Conversations, and Contexts* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 59-61.
- 40 Cruikshank et al., *Life Lived*, 17; Harry Robinson, *Write It on Your Heart: The Epic World of an Okanagan Storyteller*, ed. and comp. Wendy Wickwire (Vancouver: Talonbooks, 1989), 15.
- 41 Bruce Granville Miller, "Introduction," in *Be of Good Mind: Essays on the Coast Salish*, ed. Bruce Granville Miller (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2007), 25.
- 42 On using the colonizer's language for healing colonial trauma, see Episkenew, *Taking Back Our Spirits*, 12.
- 43 The books I brought included the following, several of which Harmony had previously read: Agnes Alfred, *Paddling to Where I Stand: Agnes Alfred, Q'iq'asu'tinuǰ Noblewoman*, ed. Martine J. Reid, trans. Daisy Sewid-Smith (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004); Margaret B. Blackman and Florence Edenshaw Davidson, *During My Time: Florence Edenshaw Davidson, A Haida Woman* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1982); Cruikshank et al., *Life Lived*; Earl Maquinna George, *Living on the Edge: Nuu-chah-nulth History from an Ahousht Chief's Perspective* (Winlaw, BC: Sono Nis Press, 2003); Robinson, *Write It on Your Heart*; and Jean E. Speare, ed., *The Days of Augusta* (Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 1973).
- 44 On turning oral words into written ones, see Michael Jacklin, "Making Paper Talk: Writing Indigenous Oral Life Narratives," *Ariel* 39, 1-2 (2008): 47-69; Nora Marks Dauenhauer and Richard Dauenhauer, "The Paradox of Talking on the Page: Some Aspects of the Tlingit and Haida Experience," in *Talking on the Page: Editing Aboriginal Oral Texts: Papers Given at the Thirty-second Annual Conference on Editorial Problems, University of Toronto, 14-16 November 1996*, ed. Laura J. Murray and Keren D. Rice (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 3-42.
- 45 *Powell River Living*, July 2010, accessed 13 January 2012, <http://www.prliving.ca/content/1007/index.html>; *Powell River Living*, May 2008, accessed 13 January 2012, <http://www.prliving.ca/content/issue0805.html>.
- 46 On the question of copyright when recording, preserving, and publishing oral histories, see Leslie McCartney, "Respecting First Nations Oral Histories: Copyright Complexities and Archiving Aboriginal Stories," in Timpson, *First Nations, First Thoughts*, 87-89.
- 47 Michele Grossman, "Bad Aboriginal Writing: Editing, Aboriginality, Textuality," *Meanjin* 3 (2001): 161-2; See also McCall, *First Person Plural*, 7, 30.
- 48 Grossman, "Bad Aboriginal Writing," 161.
- 49 Similarly, after making many hours of linguistic recordings in the Sliammon language, Chi-chia prefers not to do the time-consuming work necessary to transcribe and translate them.
- 50 Kathleen M. Sands, "Collaboration or Colonialism: Text and Process in Native American Women's Autobiographies," *Melus* 22, 4 (1997), 39-59; Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer, "Paradox of Talking"; Cruikshank et al., *Life Lived*, 16.
- 51 Miller, *Oral History on Trial*, 55.
- 52 For a sampling of the execution of tribally specific research methodologies, see Archibald, *Indigenous Storywork*; Kovach, *Indigenous Methodologies*; and Leanne

- Simpson, *Dancing on Our Turtle's Back* (Winnipeg: Arbeiter Ring Publishing, 2011). On Indigenous methodologies more broadly, see Bagele Chilisa, *Indigenous Research Methodologies* (SAGE Publications: Los Angeles, 2012); Norman K. Denzin, Yvonna S. Lincoln, and Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Handbook of Critical and Indigenous Methodologies* (SAGE Publications: Los Angeles, 2008); Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (London: Zed Books, 1999); and Shawn Wilson, *Research Is Ceremony: Indigenous Research Methods* (Black Point, NS: Fernwood Publishing, 2009).
- 53 On using life experience stories to share teachings, see Archibald, *Indigenous Storywork*, 112-14; Cruikshank et al., *Life Lived*, 165; and Kovach, *Indigenous Methodologies*, 95. For a wonderfully creative example, see John Borrows, *Drawing Out Law: A Spirit's Guide* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010).
- 54 Previously published legends have often appeared in children's versions for educational purposes: E. Tesla Adams, *Mink and Granny* (Powell River, BC: Sliammon Band/School District No. 47, n.d.); *Mink and Cloud: Sliammon Indian Band Story* (Powell River: n.p., 1985); *Mink and Grey Bird: Sliammon Indian Band Story*, 2nd ed. (Cloverdale, BC: D.W. Friesen and Sons, n.d.); Hugh MacKenzie, *Pah* (Powell River, BC: Sliammon Native Council and School District #47, n.d.); R.E. Walz, *Mink and Whale: A Sliammon Legend* (Powell River, BC: Sliammon Indian Band, 1994). For a departure from this format, see Mary George, "The Seal: A Traditional Sliammon-Comox Story," in *Salish Myths and Legends: One People's Stories*, ed. M. Terry Thompson, Steven M. Egesdal, and Honoré Watanabe (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2008), 121-29; and Kennedy and Bouchard, "May the Waters Be Calm," chap. 10 in *Sliammon Life*, 93-108.
- 55 These materials were narrated and recorded in March 1996 and September 1997. They were subsequently transcribed and translated by Watanabe with the assistance of both Elsie and Marion Harry. Mrs. Harry is a lifelong friend of Elsie's and is mentioned in Chapter 4.
- 56 Susan Roy, *These Mysterious People: Shaping History and Archaeology in a Northwest Coast Community* (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010), xiii.
- 57 On the ability of descendants to hear their Elders on the page, see also Julie Cruikshank, "The Social Life of Texts: Editing on the Page and in Performance," in Murray and Rice, *Talking on the Page*, 104.
- 58 The significant literature on the Coast Salish includes, for example, Pamela Amoss, *Coast Salish Spirit Dancing: The Survival of an Ancestral Religion* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1978); Archibald, *Indigenous Storywork*; Brad Asher, *Beyond the Reservation: Indians, Settlers, and the Law in Washington Territory, 1853-1889* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999); Jean Barman, *Stanley Park's Secrets: The Forgotten Families of Whoi Whoi, Kanaka Ranch and Brockton Point* (Madeira Point, BC: Harbour Publishing, 2005); Homer G. Barnett, *The Coast Salish of British Columbia* (Eugene: University of Oregon Press, 1955); Crisca Bierwert, ed., *Lushootseed Texts: An Introduction to Puget Salish Narrative Aesthetics* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996); Crisca Bierwert, *Brushed by Cedar, Living by the River: Coast Salish Figures of Power* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1999); Daniel L. Boxberger, *To Fish in Common: The Ethnohistory of Lummi Indian Salmon Fishing* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989);

Barbara Brotherton, ed., *S'abadeb, The Gifts: Pacific Coast Salish Art and Artists* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008); Keith Thor Carlson, ed., *You Are Asked to Witness: The Stó:lō in Canada's Pacific Coast History* (Chilliwack, BC: Stó:lō Heritage Trust, 1996); Keith Thor Carlson, ed., *A Stó:lō-Coast Salish Historical Atlas* (Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 2001); Keith Thor Carlson, *The Power of Place, The Problem of Time: Aboriginal Identity and Historical Consciousness in the Cauldron of Colonialism* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010); June Collins, *Valley of Spirits: The Upper Skagit Indians of Western Washington* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1974); Wilson Duff, *Upper Stalo Indians of the Fraser Valley* (Victoria: BC Provincial Museum, 1972); William W. Elmendorf, *Structure of Twana Culture* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1974); William W. Elmendorf, *Twana Narratives: Native Historical Accounts of a Coast Salish Culture* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1993); Alexandra Harmon, *Indians in the Making: Ethnic Relations and Indian Identities around Puget Sound* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998); Charles Hill-Tout, *The Salish People: The Local Contribution of Charles Hill-Tout*, vols. 1-4, ed. Ralph Maud (Vancouver: Talonbooks, 1978); Dorothy Kennedy, "Quantifying 'Two Sides of a Coin': A Statistical Examination of the Central Coast Salish Social Network," *BC Studies* 153 (2007): 3-34; Kennedy and Bouchard, *Sliammon Life*; J.E. Michael Kew, "Coast Salish Ceremonial Life: Status and Identity in a Modern Village" (PhD diss., University of Washington, 1970); J. Michael Kew and Bruce G. Miller, "Locating Aboriginal Governments in the Political Landscape," in *Seeking Sustainability in the Lower Fraser Basin*, ed. Michael Healey (Vancouver: Institute for Resources and the Environment, Westwater Research, 1999), 47-63; Claudia Lewis, *Indian Families of the Northwest Coast: The Impact of Change* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970); Michael Marker, "Indigenous Resistance and Racist Schooling on the Borders of Empires: Coast Salish Cultural Survival," *Paedagogica Historica* 45, 6 (2009): 757-72; Daniel P. Marshall, *Those Who Fell from the Sky: A History of the Cowichan Peoples* (Duncan, BC: Cultural and Education Centre, Cowichan Tribes, 1999); Bruce G. Miller, *The Problem of Justice: Tradition and Law in the Coast Salish World* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2001); Miller, *Be of Good Mind*; Bruce G. Miller and Daniel L. Boxberger, "Creating Chiefdoms: the Puget Sound Case," *Ethnohistory* 41, 22 (1994): 257-93; Jay Miller, *Lushootseed Culture and the Shamanic Odyssey: An Anchored Radiance* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999); Kathleen Mooney, "The Effects of Rank and Wealth on Exchange Among the Coast Salish," *Ethnology* 17, 4 (1978): 391-406; Kathleen Mooney, "Social Distance and Exchange," *Ethnology* 15, 4 (1976): 323-46; Jeff Oliver, *Landscapes and Social Transformations on the Northwest Coast: Colonial Encounters in the Fraser Valley* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2010); Roy, *These Mysterious People*; Susan Roy and Ruth Taylor, "We Were Real Skookum Women: The shíshálh Economy and the Logging Industry on the Pacific Northwest Coast," in *Indigenous Woman and Work: From Labor to Activism*, ed. Carol Williams (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2012), 104-19; Leona Marie Sparrow, "Work Histories of a Coast Salish Couple" (MA thesis, University of British Columbia, 1976); Wayne Prescott Suttles, *Coast Salish Essays* (Vancouver: Talonbooks, 1987); Brian Thom, "Disagreement-in-Principle: Negotiating the Right to Practice Coast Salish Culture in Treaty Talks on Vancouver Island, BC," *New Proposals: Journal of Marxism and Interdisciplinary*

- Inquiry* 2, 1 (2008): 23-30; Brian Thom, "The Paradox of Boundaries in Coast Salish Territories," *Cultural Geographies* 16, 2 (2009): 179-205; Brian Thom, "The Anathema of Aggregation: Towards 21st-Century Self-Government in the Coast Salish World," *Anthropologica* 52, 1 (2010): 33-48; Coll Thrush, *Native Seattle: Histories from the Crossing-Over Place* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2007); and Kenneth Tollefson, "The Snoqualmie: A Puget Sound Chiefdom," *Ethnology* 26, 2 (1987): 135-50.
- 59 Miller, "Introduction," 4, 12. This trend in Stó:lō scholarship has continued since 2007, much of it by graduate students under the supervision of Keith Carlson. See University of Saskatchewan, "Keith Carlson: Teaching and Supervision," accessed 26 July 2012, <http://artsandscience.usask.ca/profile/KCarlson/teaching/>.
- 60 For a historical review of literature on the Coast Salish, including a discussion of Boas's influence, see Daniel Boxberger, "The Not So Common," in Miller, *Be of Good Mind*, 65-68.
- 61 Some of the details of Boas's language documentation among the Island Comox suggest a possibility that he may have, in fact, worked with a ʔamun informant while on Vancouver Island. However, these details may simply be a result of inconsistencies in Boas's use of phonetic symbols. I am grateful to Paul Kroeber and Honoré Watanabe for sharing these fascinating and insightful interpretations of the archival record on this point. Franz Boas, "Catloltq-English Vocabulary," Manuscript 711-b, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution (hereafter cited as NAA); Franz Boas, "Caloltq Texts," Manuscript 719, NAA; Franz Boas, "Comox and Pentlatch Texts," Franz Boas Collection of Materials for American Linguistics (497.3 B63c, Section S2j.1), American Council of Learned Societies Committee on Native American Languages (hereafter cited as Committee), American Philosophical Society (hereafter cited as APS); Franz Boas, "Comox-Satloik materials," Franz Boas Collection of Materials for American Linguistics (497.3 B63c, Section S2j.2), Committee, APS; Franz Boas, "Comparative Vocabularies of Eight Salishan Languages," Franz Boas Collection of Materials for American Linguistics (497.3 B63c, Section S.1), Committee, APS; Franz Boas, "Comox Vocabulary," Manuscript 350-c, NAA; Franz Boas, "Field Notes 1886 #2," Franz Boas Field Notebooks and Anthropometric Data (Box 3), APS; Franz Boas, "Field Notes 1886 #4," Franz Boas Field Notebooks and Anthropometric Data (Box 3), APS; Franz Boas, "Myths and Legends of the Çatloltq of Vancouver Island," *American Antiquarian and Oriental Journal* 10, 4 (July 1888): 201-11; Franz Boas, "Myths and Legends of the Çatloltq II," *American Antiquarian and Oriental Journal* 10, 6 (November 1888): 366-73; Franz Boas, "Salishan Vocabulary September, 1892," Manuscript 713, NAA.
- 62 On archival shaping of knowledge, see, for example, Antoinette Burton, ed., *Archive Stories: Facts, Fictions, and the Writing of History* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005), especially pt. 2.
- 63 See "A Note on the Sliammon Language" for further explanation of terms. The linguistics literature on this language is extensive. See, for example, Susan Blake, "Two Aspects of Sliammon Phonology Glide/Obstruent Alternation and Vowel Length" (MA thesis, University of British Columbia, 1992); Susan Blake, "Another Look at Passives in Sliammon (Salish)," *International Conference on Salish and Neighboring Languages* 32 (1997): 86-143; Susan Blake, "On the Distribution and

- Representation of Schwa in Sliammon (Salish) Descriptive and Theoretical Perspectives” (PhD diss., University of British Columbia, 2000); John Davis, comp., “Sliammon,” Survey of California and Other Indian Languages Audio Archive of Linguistic Fieldwork, Church House, BC, Canada, 1969-73, Linguistics Department, Survey Archives, Survey ID: Davis.001, Berkeley Language Centre, University of California, Berkeley; John Davis, “Pronomial Paradigms in Sliammon,” *International Conference on Salish and Neighbouring Languages* 13 (1978): 208-36; John Davis, “The Passive in Sliammon,” *Proceedings of the Sixth Annual Meeting of the Berkeley Linguistics Society* (1980): 278-86; Claude Hagège, *Le Comox Lhaamen de Colombie Britannique: Présentation d’une Langue Amérindienne* (Paris: Amerindia, 1981); Herbert R. Harris, “A Grammatical Sketch of Comox” (PhD diss., University of Kansas, 1981); Paul Kroeber, “Inceptive Reduplication in Comox and Interior Salishan,” *International Journal of American Linguistics* 54, 2 (1988): 141-67; Edward Sapir, *Noun Reduplication in Comox, a Salish Language of Vancouver Island* (Ottawa: Government Printing Bureau, 1915); Jan Timmers, *Comox Stem List* (Leiden: n.p., 1978); Honoré Watanabe, “A Report on Sliammon (Mainland Comox) Phonology and Reduplication,” in *Languages of the North Pacific Rim*, vol. 5, ed. Osahito Miyaoka (Sapporo: Hokkaido University Publications in Linguistics, 1994), 217-62; Honoré Watanabe, “A Report on Sliammon (Mainland Comox) Phonology and Reduplication” (MA thesis, Hokkaido University, 1994); Honoré Watanabe, “Sliammon (Mainland Comox) Transitive Constructions with -ʔəm, -ni, and -mi,” *International Conference on Salish and Neighbouring Languages* 31 (1996): 327-38; Honoré Watanabe, “A Morphological Description of Sliammon, Mainland Comox Salish” (PhD diss., Kyoto University, 2000); Honoré Watanabe, *A Morphological Description of Sliammon, Mainland Comox Salish: With a Sketch of Syntax*, Endangered Languages of the Pacific Rim Publication Series A2-040 (Osaka: Osaka Gakuin University, Faculty of Informatics, 2003); Honoré Watanabe, “Clitics in the Sliammon Salish: Criteria for Their Formal Identification,” *Asian and African Languages and Linguistics* 2 (2007): 115-30; and Honoré Watanabe, “A Look at ‘Noun’ and ‘Verb’ in Sliammon,” in *A Festschrift for Thomas M. Hess on the Occasion of His Seventieth Birthday*, ed. David Beck (Bellingham, WA: Whatcom Museum Publications, 2010), 179-96.
- 64 Acculturation studies, a popular approach in mid-twentieth-century anthropology, cast “urban Indians” as ideal subjects of study. Accordingly, much Coast Salish research from that period deals with peoples near urban centres. This may have been a further factor that kept the ʔaʔamun beyond the view of scholars. On acculturation studies, see Boxberger, “The Not So Common,” 69. One study using this acculturation paradigm does reference the ʔaʔamun: Edwin Lemert, “The Life and Death of an Indian State,” *Human Organization* 13, 3 (1954): 23-27.
- 65 Barnett received his PhD from the University of California in 1938. Homer Barnett, “The Coast Salish of Canada,” *American Anthropologist* 40, 1(1938): 118-41; Barnett, *Coast Salish*; University of British Columbia, Rare Books and Special Collections, H.G. Barnett Fonds, Box 1, Folder 6, Field notes: “Mainland Comox (Slaiäman, Klahuse, Homalco), 1936” (hereafter cited as Barnett field notes, folder 1-6). Suttles mentions the northern Coast Salish infrequently, and when he does, appears to rely on Barnett. Suttles, *Coast Salish Essays*, 172, 176, 177, 239.

- 66 Kennedy and Bouchard, *Sliammon Life*; see also Dorothy I.D. Kennedy and Randall T. Bouchard, "Northern Coast Salish," in *Handbook of North American Indians*, vol. 7, *Northwest Coast*, ed. Wayne Suttles (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1990), 441-52. Kennedy and Bouchard use the term "Sliammon" to refer collectively to the Sliammon, Klahoose, and Homalco peoples. Kennedy and Bouchard, *Sliammon Life*, 9.
- 67 The notes to the chapters that follow indicate where Elsie's subject matter intersects with the research of Barnett and Kennedy and Bouchard. Other relevant sources are listed in the "Additional Readings" at the end of this book.
- 68 Lyana Marie Patrick, "Storytelling in the Fourth World: Explorations in Meaning of Place and Tla'amin Resistance to Dispossession" (MA thesis, University of Victoria, 2004); Siemthlut Michelle Washington, "Bringing Traditional Teachings to Leadership," *American Indian Quarterly* 28, 3 and 4 (2004): 583-603; Jonathan Clapperton, "Desolate Viewscapes: Sliammon First Nation, Desolation Sound Marine Park and Environmental Narratives," *Environment and History* 18, 4 (2012): 529-59. Researchers interested in health, natural resources, education, and fisheries have also recently done work that relates to the łaʔamin. Jessica Ball and Pauline Janyst, "Enacting Research Ethics in Partnerships with Indigenous Communities in Canada: 'Do It in a Good Way,'" *Journal of Empirical Research on Human Research Ethics* 3, 2 (2008): 33-51; R. Collin and T. Hobby, "It's All about Relationships: First Nations and Non-Timber Resource Management in British Columbia," *BC Journal of Ecosystems and Management* 11, 1 and 2 (2010): 1-8; Christine Joanne Pearson, "First Nations Parent Involvement in the Public School System: The Personal Journey of a School Principal" (PhD diss., University of British Columbia, 2007); Clare Wiseman and Frank Gobas, "Balancing Risks in the Management of Contaminated First Nations Fisheries," *International Journal of Environmental Health Research* 12, 4 (2002): 331-42.
- 69 On the archaeological work at Sliammon, see Megan E. Caldwell, Dana Lepofsky, Georgia Combes, Michelle Washington, John R. Welch, and John R. Harper, "A Bird's Eye View of Northern Coast Salish Intertidal Resource Management Features, Southern British Columbia, Canada," *Journal of Island and Coastal Archaeology* 7, 2 (2012): 219-33; J.D. Jackley, D. Lepofsky, J.R. Welch, M. Caldwell, C. Springer, M. Ritchie, C. Rust, and M. Washington, "Tla'amin-SFU Archaeology Heritage Program 2009," *Midden* 41, 4 (2009): 5-7; Julia Jackley, "Weaving the Histories of Klehkwahnohm: A Tla'amin Community in Southwest British Columbia" (MA thesis, Simon Fraser University, 2011); Sarah Johnson, "Combining Traditional Knowledge With Archaeological Investigation in Grace Harbour, Desolation Sound, B.C." (MA thesis, Simon Fraser University, 2010); Dana Lepofsky, "Everybody Loves Archaeology: Bridging Communities through Archaeological Research," *SAA Archaeological Record* 11, 5 (2011): 17-20; C. Springer, M. Caldwell, and N. Chalmer, "Houses, Settlements and the Intertidal: Simon Fraser University 2010 Field School in Tla'amin First Nation Territory," *Midden* 42, 4 (2010): 7-9; J.R. Welch, D. Lepofsky, G. Combes, M. Caldwell, and C. Rust, "Treasure Bearers: Personal Foundations For Effective Leadership In Northern Coast Salish Heritage Stewardship," *Heritage and Society* 4, 1 (2011): 83-114; and J.R. Welch, Dana Lepofsky, and Michelle Washington, "Assessing Collaboration with the Sliammon First Nation in a Community-Based Heritage Research and Stewardship Program," *Archaeological Review from Cambridge* 26,

- 2 (2011): 171-91. See also the website for the “Tla’amin and Simon Fraser University Heritage and Archaeology Project,” Sliammon First Nation, accessed 25 April 2012, <http://www.sliammonfirstnation.com/archaeology/>.
- 70 The works of the Lushootseed elder Vi Hilbert and the Snuneymuxw Elder Ellen White are particularly noteworthy in this respect. See Ellen White, *Kwulasulwut: Stories from the Coast Salish* (Nanaimo, BC: Theytus Books, 1981); Ellen White, *Kwulasulwut II: More Salish Creation Stories* (Penticton, BC: Theytus Books, 1997); Ellen White, *Legends and Teachings of Xeel’s, the Creator* (Vancouver: Pacific Educational Press, 2006); Vi Hilbert, *Haboo: Lushootseed Literature in English* (n.p.: Lushootseed Press, 1980); Vi Hilbert, *Ways of the Lushootseed People: Ceremonies and Traditions of the Northern Puget Sound Indians* (Seattle: United Indians of All Tribes Foundation, 1980); Vi Hilbert, ed. and trans., *Haboo: Native American Stories from Puget Sound* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1985); and Vi Hilbert, comp., *Lady Louse Lived There: ʔəstətil kʷsi bəscad*, ed. Janet Yoder (n.p.: Lushootseed Press, 1996). See also Bierwert, *Lushootseed Texts*. I know of only three first-person life narratives of Coast Salish women. Two of these, also produced through the efforts of Vi Hilbert, are bilingual editions that include legends alongside life narratives: Susie Sampson Peter, *Aunt Susie Sampson Peter: The Wisdom of a Skagit Elder*, transcr. Vi Hilbert, trans. Vi Hilbert and Jay Miller, rec. Leon Metcalf (Seattle: Lushootseed Press, 1995); and Gram Ruth Sehome Shelton, *The Wisdom of a Tulalip Elder*, transcr. Vi Hilbert, trans. Vi Hilbert and Jay Miller, rec. Leon Metcalf (Seattle: Lushootseed Press, 1995). The third is Lee Maracle, *Bobbi Lee: Indian Rebel*, new ed., (Toronto: Women’s Press, 1990; first published 1975).
- 71 Simon Baker and Verna J. Kirkness, *Khot-La-Cha: The Autobiography of Chief Simon Baker* (Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 1994); Crisca Bierwert “I Can Lift Her Up...”: Fred Ewen’s Narrative Complexity,” in Miller, *Be of Good Mind*, 182-211; June M. Collins, “John Fornsby: The Personal Document of a Coast Salish Indian,” in *Indians of the Urban Northwest*, ed. Marian Smith (New York: Columbia University Press, 1949), 287-341; Clayton Mack, *Grizzly Bears and White Guys: The Stories of Clayton Mack*, ed. Harvey Thommasen (Madeira Park, BC: Harbour Publishing, 1993); Clayton Mack, *Bella Coola Man: More Stories of Clayton Mack*, comp. and ed. Harvey Thommasen (Madeira Park, BC: Harbour Publishing, 1994); Henry Pennier, *Call Me Hank: A Stó:lō Man’s Reflections on Logging, Living, and Growing Old*, 2nd ed., ed. Keith Carlson and Kristina Fagan (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006; first published 1972). An important unpublished life narrative of a Coast Salish man is Paul Fetzer, “George Swanaset: Narrative of a Personal Document,” Melville Jacobs Collection, University of Washington Manuscripts, accession 1693-71-13, box 112. Third-person biographies of Coast Salish men and women also exist: Robert H. Brown and John A. Ruby, *Esther Ross: Stillaguamish Champion* (Norman: Oklahoma University Press, 2001); Lawrence David Rygg, “The Continuation of Upper Class Snohomish Coast Salish Attitudes and Deportment as Seen through the Life History of a Snohomish Coast Salish Woman” (MA thesis, Western Washington State College, 1977); Trova Heffernan, *Where the Salmon Run: The Life and Legacy of Billy Frank Jr.* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2012).
- 72 Carter and McCormack, “Lifelines,” 12.

- 73 Barnett, *Coast Salish*, 4-10, 59-70, 78-107, 122-24.
- 74 *Ibid.*, 67.
- 75 Suttles, *Coast Salish Essays*, 51-56.
- 76 Carlson, *Stó:lō–Coast Salish Atlas*, plate 10. See also Naxaxalhts'i, Albert (Sonny) McHalsie, "We Have to Take Care of Everything That Belongs to Us," in Miller, *Be of Good Mind*, 82-130.
- 77 Miller, "Introduction," 2-3. On the diffusion model of culture change, see Darnell, *Invisible Genealogies*, 47-51.
- 78 Roy, *These Mysterious People*, 55.
- 79 See note 58 above.
- 80 Barnett, *Coast Salish*, 9. Tommy Paul was from Saanich, Albert Westly was from Snuneymuxw, and George Mitchell was from Comox. *Ibid.*, 5, 6, 7.
- 81 Emphasis in original. Barnett field notes, folder 1-6, 19. See also Barnett, *Coast Salish*, 89.
- 82 See, for example, Chapter 2. Kennedy and Bouchard describe a practice for welcoming the first spring (chinook) salmon. *Sliammon Life*, 26.
- 83 Emphasis in original. Barnett field notes, folder 1-6, 63.
- 84 Emphasis in original. *Ibid.*, 68.
- 85 Emphasis in original. *Ibid.*, 69.
- 86 *Ibid.* See also *ibid.*, 67.
- 87 Emphasis in original. *Ibid.*, 238-39.
- 88 Barnett, *Coast Salish*, 302.
- 89 Lemert, "Life and Death," 23.
- 90 Miller, "Introduction," 24-25.
- 91 For a historical timeline of ʔaʔamun history from the eighteenth century to the present, see Sliammon Treaty Society, "Timeline of Events of Sliammon Treaty Society," accessed 28 May 2013, <http://sliammontreaty.com/who/historical-timeline>.
- 92 This is essentially an inversion of an old-fashioned, Whiggish approach to history writing that simply reverses the positive and negative charges with respect to Indigenous history. That is, rather than change signalling progress, it signals decline.
- 93 For example, Alfred, *Paddling*; Blackman and Davidson, *During My Time*; Mourning Dove, *Mourning Dove: A Salishan Autobiography*, ed. Jay Miller (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990); and Speare, *Days of Augusta*. For a critique of the tendency to position women as the "keepers of tradition," see Kim Anderson, "Affirmations of an Indigenous Feminist," in *Indigenous Women and Feminism: Politics, Activism, Culture*, ed. Cheryl Suzack, Shari M. Huhndorf, Jeanne Perreault, and Jean Barman (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010), 87-88.
- 94 For an exception to this tendency, see Bridget Moran, *Stony Creek Woman: The Story of Mary John* (Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 1988). Autobiographies of Indigenous men seem more likely to include discussions of wage labour. For example, Harry Assu and Joy Inglis, *Assu of Cape Mudge: Recollections of a Coastal Indian Chief* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1989); Baker and Kirkness, *Khot-La-Cha*; George, *Living on the Edge*; Charles James Nowell and Clellan S. Ford, *Smoke from Their Fires: The Life of a Kwakiutl Chief* (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1968; first published 1941); Pennier, *Call Me Hank*; Rios and Sands, *Telling a Good*

- One; and James Sewid, *Guests Never Leave Hungry: The Autobiography of James Sewid, a Kwakiutl Indian*, ed. James P. Spradley (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1969). For a biography that focuses explicitly on work, see Sparrow, "Work Histories." On Indigenous wage labour in British Columbia and beyond, see Rolf Knight, *Indians at Work: An Informal History of Native Labour in British Columbia, 1848-1930*, 2nd ed. (Vancouver: New Star Books, 1996; first published 1978); John Lutz, *Makuik: A New History of Aboriginal-White Relations* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2008); Raibmon, *Authentic Indians*; Brian Hosmer and Colleen O'Neill, eds., *Native Pathways: American Indian Culture and Economic Development in the Twentieth Century* (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2004); and Williams, *Indigenous Women and Work*.
- 95 For extended consideration of historical change among another Coast Salish people, see Carlson, *Power of Place*.
- 96 My thanks to Dana Lepofsky for this perspective on herring.
- 97 Women could not serve on band councils until after the 1951 amendments to the Indian Act. Cora Voyageur, *Firekeepers of the Twenty-first Century: First Nations Women Chiefs* (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2008), 4-5.
- 98 Barnett, *Coast Salish*, 2.
- 99 Mario Blaser, "Life Projects: Indigenous Peoples' Agency and Development," in *In the Way of Development: Indigenous Peoples, Life Projects, and Globalization*, ed. Mario Blaser, Harvey A. Feit, and Glenn McRae (London: Zed Books, 2004), 26, 29, 31. See also the other contributions to that volume.
- 100 Gail Guthrie Valaskakis, Madeleine Dion Stout, and Eric Guimond, "Introduction," in *Restoring the Balance: First Nations Women, Community, and Culture*, ed. Gail Guthrie Valaskakis, Madeleine Dion Stout, and Eric Guimond (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2009), 2; Anderson, *Life Stages*, 161-62.
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- 102 Anderson, "Affirmations," 83, 86.
- 103 Simpson, *Dancing*, 106.
- 104 For a useful and concise summary of the trajectory of the historiography on Indigenous women, see Carter and McCormack, "Lifelines," 8-13.
- 105 On the economy of Coast Salish women in an earlier period, see Carol Williams, "Between Doorstep Barter Economy and Industrial Wages: Mobility and Adaptability of Coast Salish Female Laborers in Coastal British Columbia, 1858-1890," in *Native Being, Being Native: Identity and Difference: Proceedings of the Fifth Native American Symposium*, ed. Mark Spencer and Lucretia Scoufos (Durant: Southeastern Oklahoma State University, 2005), 16-27.
- 106 On Indigenous women and material culture, see Carter and McCormack, "Lifelines," 17-18.
- 107 On Indigenous women and leadership, see Rebecca Tsosie, "Native Women and Leadership: An Ethics of Culture and Relationship," in Suzack et al., *Indigenous Women and Feminism*, 29-42.
- 108 Valaskakis et al., "Introduction," 3-9.
- 109 Anderson, "Affirmations," 85. See also Kim Anderson, *A Recognition of Being: Reconstructing Native Womanhood* (Toronto: Sumach Press, 2000).
- 110 For thoughtful reflection and analysis of alliances between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, see Lynne Davis, ed., *Alliances: Re/Envisioning Indigenous-non-Indigenous Relationships* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010).
- 111 Simpson, *Dancing*. See also Tsosie, "Native Women." Particularly noteworthy is the recent flourishing of scholarship that draws on Anishinabek/Anishinaabek/Anishinaabeg/Nishnaabeg teachings, of which Simpson's work is one example. See also Kathleen E. Absolon, *Kaandossiwin: How We Come to Know* (Black Point, NS: Fernwood Publishing, 2011); Edward Benton-Banai, *The Mishomis Book: The Voice of the Ojibway* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010); Borrows, *Drawing Out Law*; Jill Doerfler, Heidi Kiiwetinewinewin Star, Niigaanwewidam James Sinclair, eds., *Centering Anishinaabeg Studies: Understanding the World through Stories* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2013); Niigonwedom James Sinclair, "Nindoodemag Bagijiganan: A History of Anishinaabeg Narrative" (PhD diss., University of British Columbia, 2013).
- 112 The United Nations describes forced removal of children from a group as genocide. See *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide*, art. 2e, accessed 27 April 2013, <http://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/UNTS/Volume%2078/volume-78-I-1021-English.pdf>.
- 113 See, for example, Cynthia C. Wesley-Esquimaux, "Trauma to Resilience: Notes on Decolonization," in Valaskakis et al., *Restoring the Balance*, 23-25; and Cynthia C. Wesley-Esquimaux and Magdalena Smolewski, *Historic Trauma and Aboriginal Healing* (Ottawa: Aboriginal Healing Foundation, 2004), accessed 25 April 2013, <http://www.ahf.ca/downloads/historic-trauma.pdf>.

- 114 For two works that move in this direction, see Ned Blackhawk, *Violence over the Land: Indians and Empires in the Early American West* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006); and Michael McNally, *Ojibwe Singers: Hymns, Grief, and a Native Culture in Motion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).