

## CHAPTER VII

## WÁNA 'IT CONCLUSION

*Íkwaal nash aw t mnáxn msh inmíki ash tun inách'a inmíma nch'ínch'ima pasápsikw'ana átaw shúkwaat. Ttuush íkuuk míyanash shnawáy ittáwaxsha chaw shíyin pasápsikw'asha p nmínk tiináwit ku ichishkínk s nwit. Átaw iwá Ichishkíin s nwit t 'aaxw shimín. Íkw'akmash awkú wa imínk wa 'íshkwit.*

I have shared this far about how my Elders taught me the important things they knew about.

There are children growing up today who do not have anyone to teach them Indian culture and Ichishkíin language. Language is important for everyone. That is part of your spirit of life.

*Íkuukna tímasha íchishkink s nwit anakú cháwk'a nímí plus p' x nxa wyát'ish anakú wáawk'a t 'áaxwnam tún m inákpalayksha. Ku paysh íxwi ch ma myánashma pawíwanikta íchi tímash ku kuts'k tun pashúkwaata ku pas nwita Ichishkíin. Kw nkínk pasápsikw'ata píimínk myánashma.*

Now (at these modern times) our brain cannot remember words because there are too many interruptions in the environment. Perhaps these children will read this writing some day and go to school to learn their language. Then they can teach their own children to learn the language.

*Nüiptipana íkuuk txánatpa íkuuk pimápaxaapsha íchi namák tীনma. Kuna chaw míshkin áwyawaawta kuunák. Kushkínk haay myánash p nch'axi iwáta kú xi sapáskuulyi ku kpaylk iwáta tmáakni pasht nmí. Íkuuk iwá íkw'ak kútkut shuyaputímtkisim, ku paysh myánashma paskíulita níiptík, Ichishkíin ku shuyaputímt. Kw nkínk pimanaknúwita.*

We, Indian people, are wedged in between two cultures and there is no way for us to avoid it.

Nowadays the Indian children must have equal education as the white people before they are

shown any respect. Now those skills are taught in English, and perhaps when the child learns both Ichishkíin and English, they will be able to survive (in the modern world).

## **7.1. Three Questions**

I have been asked many questions in my life. Three questions relevant to the dissertation stand out in my mind and I would like to address them here.

### **7.1.1. Cultural Heritage**

What does your language mean to you, in terms of cultural heritage and identity?

My language means that I, my relatives and tribal members, are Human. We speak and comprehend language and process it the same as any other human being around the world. The traditions and cultural heritage that is passed down by the Sahaptin People through generations identifies our country and the inherent right to occupy the geographical place. It means, we, the Native people from America did not migrate to the United States of America from any other country. We are the original inhabitants of this country.

My dissertation is written about my immersion into the Ichishkíin language, culture, traditions, history, and modern life of the Sahaptin People who reside in the Pacific Northwest of the United States of America. All of these elements are related to the importance of maintaining and preserving the foundation of Indian Life. One wise man said; “Without language there is no culture, without culture there is no language.” The young people are the future caretakers of this country. Now, the next generation American Indian youth must obtain an education in science to keep pace with the modern world; study linguistics to preserve their identity, and to protect their

ecological environment. Soon, the Sahaptin Elders will be gone and no longer available to consult about language and culture.

Life is an extension of individuality. Language is for survival. When people are aware of the gift, imagine the wonderful opportunities one can encounter.

### **7.1.2. Language Revitalization**

How do tribal communities maintain, preserve and revitalize a language?

In my personal experience, I was exposed to the Native language before I could talk. My family home was the first environment. My immediate family members laughing and talking and singing were probably the first sounds I heard. There was the comfort of love surrounding me.

The most important thing is speaking and singing a lullaby to children when they are young. In this way the language never leaves the child.

### **7.1.3. What a Researcher, Particularly a Non-Native Researcher, Needs to Know**

What does a researcher, particularly a non-Native researcher (but it could be some one from any other culture as well) need to know before beginning to work with a Native community?

This goes beyond the technical and intellectual knowledge someone must have, for example how to operate their recording equipment correctly and how to deal with areas where you may not have electricity. Here are several important factors.

#### **7.1.3.1. Knowledge of Culture and History**

How much do you know about the people you plan to work with? Some of the background information you should gather does not have to do with your particular field. Some of this information will be available to you at a public library, tribal library, or tribal museum. Some will only be available once you establish relationships with individuals in the tribe you plan to work with, since some of what you need to learn is typically unwritten. Be aware that you may find inaccurate information in published sources.

Before you proceed or early in your conversations with tribal people, gather information about:

- Current population of enrolled members.
- Languages and dialects of the community - even those you are not working with.
- Tribal history, mores and traditions.
- Was there a treaty? When was it signed? By whom? When? What were the circumstances of the Treaty, signing, and ratification? How many bands and tribes were included in the treaty? Read the treaty.
- What are the traditional foods and medicines?
- Geographical statistics about the reservation lands. What are the traditional lands, and how do these compare to the current reservation? Are there closed areas of the reservation?

### **7.1.3.2. Tribal Relations**

Find yourself a member of that community who wants to work with you. This person should be well known and respected, able to take you to social ceremonies and introduce you to

people. Then talk to that person, and ask him or her to go with you to discuss it with the people on the tribal level that he or she recommends you speak to first. On the Yakama Nation, we have a culture committee. Go to the culture committee and state your purpose. You will have to tell them how your work is going to benefit them as well as yourself. If they agree, you have permission to go on the reservation and do your study. They are not going to tell you how to do your research but want to know that the person who you have selected as your helper will be with you at all times, to pave the way for you. In certain homes especially, where you may need to get information, you will need to be accompanied. The work must benefit the tribe.

The Tribal and/or Culture committees will want to know what you plan to do with your work. What is the value of doing the work? Is the value for you, the tribe, your field? How will the tribe benefit from it?

Specifically for language materials, will these be translated? By whom? Will they be written down? Using what writing system? Will tribal members be able to read it in the system you plan to use?

Finally, the tribal council will have questions about access. In the past, some ethnographers put barricades around the research material they collected on Indian reservations, making it unavailable to the tribal members who provided the material and their families. Who will have access to your recordings? Who decides this? Who will be responsible for the stored material after you complete your work? Will the research be safely kept? Will the recordings be on the internet? (In my experience, many tribes will say "No!") Come to some consensus regarding copyright, as this is a difficult issue.

There are places on people's reservations where outsiders are not allowed and you will need special permission to go there. For example we have closed areas, and there are guards and gates up there. The only one that can give permission to enter to you is the council. If anybody approaches you, they will see your paper signed by the tribal council or culture committee and let you through.

The resource person you are working with will know other tribal members who can help you. You need to consider how much you can pay per interview. Your budget needs to be adequate for your project. Some individuals will only accept goods, not money, and this can be expensive. A Pendleton blanket can be \$200-\$300, and a beaded bag three times this. Others will be glad for the opportunity to work for money. Some people will refuse compensation, depending on their individual values and possible the topic you are asking about. Your resource person can help you to know what is appropriate.

### **7.1.3.3. Ethics and Respect**

Culture is an essential part of language. One without the other cannot function. The researcher must respect the language and culture of the people he or she works with. Tribal communities are liable to welcome a person who is comfortable around tribal people. However, there is a limit. Native people may have rules about, for example, femal and male contact. Maintain an awareness of protocol and ask your resource person to keep you informed and educated about how to behave.

You must know how to conduct yourself properly at ceremonials and social activities. The Longhouse ceremonials are strict about how to enter the Longhouse. Male and female do not

sit together; they must separate at the entrance. The man will go to the right side and the woman to the left side of the room. Children must be kept still, and may not play on the floor of the Longhouse. If your children cannot behave this way, leave them home. You too should be aware of when you can converse, because conversation may interrupt an important occasion. One time faculty members from a university were invited to the Longhouse. They stood around in groups holding discussions when they were supposed to be sitting down quietly in their proper places. In the meantime, the leader of the Longhouse was waiting for them to quiet down.

Getting involved in social activities and ceremonials paves the way for acceptance. When I was a student at Central Washington University I taught high school teachers American Indian culture. This was part of their retaining Washington State teaching certification. An opportunity came up for the whole class to attend a Memorial Service for someone who had passed. The teachers arrived before I did, and were at first mistaken for distant family members of the deceased person. To be on the safe side, sincerely state your intention to help and your purpose in being at a memorial to the family. When I got there I found my male students working diligently putting the building into order and setting up tables and chairs. The female students were in the kitchen helping to prepare traditional foods, and one was actually making fried bread. Several teachers made lifelong friends at that ceremony. Now I will shift my narrative to talk about the responsibility of researching and archiving documented material and ownership.

#### **7.1.3.4. Margaret (Kit) Kendall**

My early experience with Margaret (Kit) Kendall, whose instructor, Melville Jacobs, sent her to the Yakama people's land to study culture, taught me about the importance of archiving

documented materials. Kit asked for permission to make movies and record the fishermen out on the rapids. In order to reach the fishermen, we had to ride across on a tiny box, used for sending sacks of fish to shore on wire cables. We rode over the rapids in that little box over the tumbling water. It was frightening as we precariously dangled, swinging back and forth over the river. There were several little islands separated by gorges and we cross to each island separately. It was worth the effort. The documentation included: Fishermen, fishing at Celilo Falls talking about their heritage as fishermen; the Chief of Celilo Falls, discussing fish conservation; telling legends; women, cutting and drying salmon; baking filet fish in open fire; pictures of the rapids and salmon jumping out of the water; and pictures of social dances in the Longhouse.

Kit was reliant on people who contributed their cultural knowledge performing the following tasks: skinning a deer; processing the hide into tanned buckskin; arts and craft: beadwork, cornhusk weaving, and basket making; telling stories and legends about geographical sites wished by Coyote. With help from Yakama people, we collected specimens of medicinal and food plants in the mountains, and we preserved plant specimens in wooden panels, labeled where they were obtained, and detailed the type of soil where the plant was taken. Kit filmed an entire Indian Wedding Ceremony and a Wedding Trade between the Yakima and Umatilla Tribe. The bride was a Umatilla from the Shoeship family, and the groom was Yakima from the Alexander Saluskin family.

When Kit Kendall died, the data stored in her house was lost. There is no written information available as to where the collection was sent. The Jacob's Foundation in Seattle, at the University of Washington, has no record, nor was it mentioned in her will. Unfortunately, I was somewhere else when she died; otherwise I would have made an inquiry about the collection. Kit is collection should have been archived, and made available to the Yakima Indian Nation, who

gave her the authority to do her research on the Indian Reservation. This is one reason why tribes are reluctant to give research permits when they are approached by linguists and anthropologists, unless the tribes hire them as witness in a Court case. The loss of this material also presented a personal problem for me because I was appointed by the Yakima Tribal Council to contact the Yakama people who recorded their knowledge. This made my involvement precarious, in case of future involvement with research done on the Yakima reservation. In this way, Kit's research also fell on my shoulders.

Researchers must be prepared to answer the following questions when approaching the tribe: What will happen to the data after it is documented by the researcher; will the tribe have access to it; and who owns it? Who owns the copyright, the funding agency, the University, or the researcher? Who is responsible for the misuse of research collected by the student? Who has the authority to decide these issues?

*Aw nash tl'iks t mnánaḡta naḡsh ayatmíki. Iwaníkshana Margaret Kendall, kútya itk'íḡshana iwáta waníki "Kit". Iskúulishana Sityátl' npa. P nmínk Sapsikw'a áyin páshapwinana Yakmu mamíyaw tiichámyaw pashapátwakst mishana tiináwit kwnamánk tiichámpama. Kúshḡi anakwmák pasínwíḡa kwíksim ku ipapáyk nḡa.*

Now I will tell a story about one woman. Her name was Margaret Kendall, but she wanted to be called "Kit." She was attending school at Seattle. Her instructor (Melville Jacobs) sent her to the Yakama people's land she was sent to study culture about the land. To those people who spoke one language.

*Uyt iwinanúuna Pak'u ámaman ku i'at 'áwya tímashyaw wiyaníntay kútkuttay tímanipa tiichámpa. Áshixnanya pat náwtmiyush, ku pat aníya tímash. Kuuk nash ích'a áwapiitashana Joe Meninaknan wiyatímat Nch'i pák'upa.*

First, she went to the Tribal Council people to ask for a permission to work on the Indian Reservation. They liked her presentation and they gave her written permit. That was when I was helping Joe Menineck record the minutes for the General Council meeting.

*Kuush pak'u áma paníya kútkut twíntwint Kitnan, ku tamáshwikt anakú íkw'imataxnay tীনmaman. Aw nádash wiyanína áwat 'awya awínshmaman t mnanáxyaw, kúshxi áyatmaman.*

*Aw pat palaláay tীনma áshixnanya kútkut ku pat aw luxnúuna. Ishapáwach'akaanya sínwit hawláak sínwitpamáyaw, kúshxi iwipíkchashya kkanáywityaw.*

The Tribal Councilmen assigned me to accompany Kit, and to translate when she talked to the Indian people. We went around the Reservation asking the men and women for an interview. Many Indians liked her work and they were willing to record their voices, and she also took pictures.

- *Awínshma patknísha paliitpamá.*

The men making dipnets.

- *Pa'anísha pipshmi xapi mí.*

Some were making bone knife.

- *Miimawít twapwiinaynaktpamá k'aláx.*

Old fashioned log corrals for horses.

- *Pa'anísha kayáasu, ku tanínsh.*

They were making bows and arrows.

*Aw nádash awatl'away áyatmamank'a isíkw'atyaw, tun áwa áwaw shapáwach'aktay.*

*Náxshn mtash áyatn m isíkw'ana shúwat yáamashnan, ku ilámxshkt l m'ísl m snan. Napú áyatin pashapátutya ts'xwúili, ku patká'ilkwa asht ílkw'shpaspa.*

We asked the women to show whatever was important to them for recording. One woman showed us how to skin a deer, and process it into (leather) buckskin. Two women put up a teepee and built a fire inside.

*Áwaw aníya Movie papshxwít Nixyawí áma ku Yakmú ama, pawachá píwnashma.*

She recorded an Indian wedding from beginning to the end of.

*Tl'aaxw awkú tun pawínakpayshka, páwaykt, wáp'at, chchípnat, ts'apxmi wápaas ánit.*

They shared all kinds of crafts, beadwork, yarn weaving, tule mat making, and cedar basket making.

*Íkush nádash awkú kutkútna. Ttúushma watít pashapáwach'aka s nwitpamáyaw, ttuush aw walímt mnanaxt. Íkw'ak áwacha áwaw píimiláyk'ay myanashmamíyay. Anakú íkuuk píimínk miyánashma amts'íxwataxnay. P'ít'xanukpaatash wiyanína ápikchashya patúun kákyamaman, ku píniipt w xánimaman.*

That is how we worked. There were some legends told on the wire recorder, and some personal stories. They thought that would be important for their children. Their children could have had access to it now. We went to the mountains to take pictures of wildlife, animals and birds.

*Xnúnantash áxniya ku itamaníka pinmipáyink nisháyktpa. Áwxi awkú áttawaxna.*

We took some wild root plants and transplanted them. Some of it grew, others did not.

*Kkúushnantash átmaaniya ts'ák'a Pátuyaw. Áwila<sub>x</sub>yawyaatash, ku chaw átashix  
íla<sub>x</sub>yawya.*

We picked filbert nuts near Mt. Adams. We dried it but it did not dry very well.

*Huuy tash áwakitna kw'ínchnan. Náxshn mtash áyatn m isapsikw'áyat'ashana támakt  
kw' nch.*

We could not find black moss food. One woman recorded a lesson on how to bake black moss.

*Kúshxítash chaw shín m isápsikw'ana támakt wák'amunan. Anakú míimi ilátamawshana.*

Nobody was able to show us how to process *wa 'amu* because the season had passed. But it was recorded on tape.

*Sawít<sub>x</sub>i míimi ílkwaasishana. Chaw túyay tkwátatay.*

The Indian carrot plant had already disappeared, or it was unfit to eat. They showed us some dried.

*Íkw tash kkanáyna Yákimupa tiichámpa, kutash wíyit'ana Nch'i Wánakan. Kwnak tash  
Shix<sub>x</sub>paxítwayna tীনma, ashkú inák tীনma pashúkshana shin nash wa.*

This is how much time we spent recording on the Yakima Reservation, and we moved on to the Columbia River, at Celilo, Oregon. The Indians there were very hospitable, because they all knew me. (They liked Kit too, after they became acquainted).

*Átway Lawátnimnash inamúnxana. Ku pániya ts'wáywit kw'ímat np'íwi ámaman máawipa anakwnák panp'íwishana awínshma.*

Old man (deceased) Tommy Thompson, called me his granddaughter (just a term used by Elders). He gave Kit the right of way to the fishing site on the islands and permission to interview the fisherman.

## 7.2. In Closing

*T 'áaxwna aw tun wyátunxisha kpaylk íchi, uu palaláay anakúsh tiin cháwtiya aw íchi tiin n-mniwít áwtiya t 'aaxw pásht nma túman, anátúman aw pawá tiin anakúsh íchi txánat. Ku papxwípxwishaxi awkú pmách'a pa 'inkúshaxi aw t 'áaxwna aw tun wyátunxisha pawápnamanxana anakúshxi namákna aw wápnamansha, pxwípxwisha túkinna anakúsh íshixitaxnay ánach'axi, íshixitaxnay kuts'k wapútat tun niimí.*

And now everybody is changing lately, everybody including the Native people and the white people, anyone who is human, and they are worrying, because they see the changes that are going on, we are changing. Others too are groping for solutions just as we are groping, we are wondering how can we make things better again, how can our help make it a little better?

*Láakna myánashmaman átiiskawkta ích nki ku pmách'a awkú tun anakúsh wapútat pa'aníta íxwi, laak pápawapiitata awkú t 'ápxi pawáta tunxtúnx.*

Maybe if we call attention to the young generation they might also help make things better, maybe they will all help each other even though they are of different races.

*Ku átaw iwá Ichishkíin s-nwit. Aw ttuush tiinmamí Ichishkíin s-nwit álaamna míimi, awk áw m-laamna anakúsh panápayuuna piimínk Ichishkíin s-nwit, ku panaknúwya piimipáynk*

*nisháyktpa, piimipáynk t mnápa, kunkínk waat anakúsh papíkshana tiináwit. Kunkínk nash ích'a kanáywisha íkushkink kútkutki.*

And our Indian language is important. Some people's Indian language disappeared a long time ago, and only a few are still defending their Indian Language, and they kept it in their home and in their heart, that is how they held onto their heritage. For that reason, I pursue this work.