

skʷadi'lic, Board Feet, and the Cedar Tree¹

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Abstract: This case examines the way in which cultural frames of reference influence our perspective on what constitutes real and true knowledge of nature. The case provides a description of the aboriginal landscape of the Lummi Indians of Washington State that gave rise to and sustained their unique social imaginary and lifeway. The case then examines how the Lummi Indians have worked to protect the remaining old-forests that are integral to their cultural traditions. The case brings to light two main points: 1) how values and perceptions influence the interpretation of this information by land management agencies and 2) how values and perceptions are shaped—or marginalized—by culturally determined frames of references.

The Setting

The *xwalxw'eleqw* people were the people after the flood, and were at one time one tribe. The current day Lummis, as well as all the other Coast Salish, were all part of this tribe. If we go to a member of another tribe and ask them who they are and they say *xwalxw'eleqw*, then we know they are distant kinfolk. Derived from the word *xwalxw'eleqw* is the word *xwololemish* and, from it, the word *xwlemi*. This word, *xwlemi*, means, 'I am looking at you, and you are looking at me.' (U.S. Department of the Interior, 1985, ii)

Manuel Quimper Benitez del Piño, a Peruvian-born Spanish aristocrat and navigator, was among the first Europeans to record an encounter with the ancestors of the Lummi Indians. When Quimper made landfall in 1791 near Bellingham, Washington, the Lummis lived in permanent villages and utilized temporary camps throughout the San Juan Island archipelago, as well as on the mainland. Aboriginal life was a rhythmic repetition, a predictable and productive seasonal round of activity. Each spring the Lummi Indians would leave their winter villages to gather camas roots and shellfish, or troll for spring chinook salmon and halibut, and gather herring eggs. Summer was the busiest season, when they trolled for chinook salmon and fished in the bays along the mainland and in the San Juan Islands. In August they would conduct the First Salmon Ceremony and give thanks for their good fortune. In the fall they fished in streams and went fowling. In October and November they picked up the camas roots they had stored and fished for cod, chum salmon, pink salmon, coho salmon and steelhead. With the coming of winter they would return to their permanent villages to devote themselves to the cycle of the potlatch (a ceremonial feast that featured reciprocal gift-giving) and to the winter ceremonials.

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The lifeway of the Lummi Indians was illuminated by a world-view, including the belief in a before-time when a powerful Being, *Xales* (the Transformer), created the Second People (the Lummis) and taught them the right and proper way to live. They lived in a landscape animated by spirits and a belief in the supernatural agency of animals, plants, places, and Beings that could transform themselves at will. Misunderstood, feared and condemned by Christian missionaries, their beliefs were considered little more than a childish illusion.

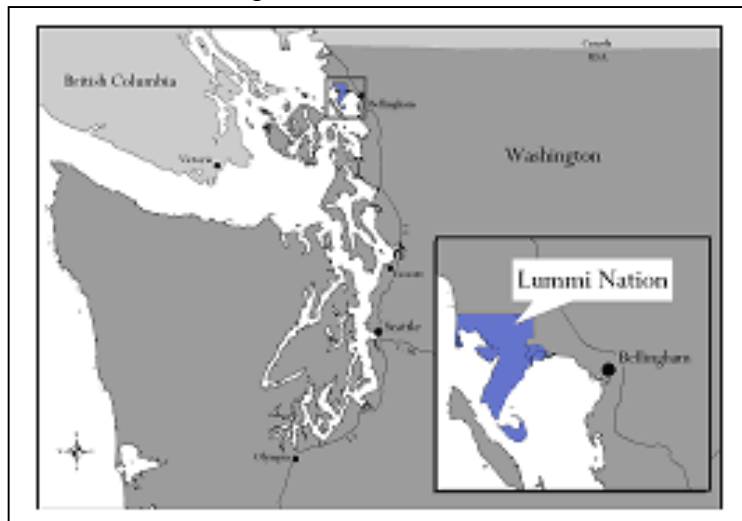
It is difficult to imagine, today, the natural setting at the time of the Quimper expedition and the landscape that gave rise to and sustained the social imaginary of the Lummi Indians. The forested lands in Oregon and Washington included over 23 million acres of trees greater than were at least 125 years old, including vast stands of Douglas fir, western hemlock, mountain hemlock, western red cedar, and sitka spruce. (Booth, 1994) The bioregion of western Oregon and western Washington was a montage of spruce, cedar, hemlock, and fir. This temperate rainforest supported one of the most densely populated nonagricultural populations of American Indians in the pre-contact world of North America. It remained the world's largest temperate rainforest through the dawn of the twentieth century.

When the American settlers arrived in the region in the 1840s, the Douglas-fir forest occupied a broad belt extending from southern British Columbia to below Cape Mendocino in northern California. (Bonnicksen, 2000) Few of the early Northwest settlers tried to establish homesteads in the coastal forests of Washington State, which were described as “impregnable [as the] great Chinese wall.” (Bunting, 1997, p. 75) In his journal from 1811, Alexander Ross characterized this landscape as “so thick” with forest and so close were the trees together, that “in its fall [the tree] would often rest its ponderous top on some other friendly tree.” (Ross, 1986, p. 90) They were so massive that it sometimes required two days or more to fell one tree.

Despite the arrival of increasing numbers of settlers and the rapid growth of the timber industry, at the dawn of the twentieth century only a relatively small portion of the forested lands west of the Cascades in Washington State had been cut or settled for agriculture. In 1852 the first timber mill was established on Puget Sound. Within ten years, the mill was shipping 9 million board feet annually to foreign and domestic markets. In 1855, Lummi Indians were among the signatories to the Treaty of Point Elliott, and the present-day reservation was established in 1857. Fifteen years later, in 1872, a German arbitrator (Kaiser Wilhelm) awarded the remainder of the aboriginal territory in the San Juan Islands to the United States. By that time the Pacific Northwest land rush was in full bloom. As recently as 1936, when the Pacific Northwest was the Nation's leading lumber-producing region, old-growth forests of all types still made up 73% of all commercial forests in eastern Oregon and Washington. (Committee on Environmental Issues in Pacific Northwest Forest Management, 2000)

By 1980, 838 billion board feet of timber had been removed from the forests of western Oregon and Washington, by which time old-growth forests accounted for 13 percent of forest land cover on public and private forest land in this bioregion. (Booth, 1994) By the year 2000 only 6 percent of western Oregon and western Washington's old-growth forests remained, primarily in fragmented islands of habitat on public lands. (Booth, 1994) The rapid and radical transformation of this bioregion has severely disrupted the ecology for 1,500 species of invertebrates associated with old-growth forests and 118 vertebrate species whose primary

habitat is in mature and old-growth forest systems. (Booth, 1994) It also had a direct and deleterious impact on the traditional practices of the Lummi Indians.



The Situation: *skʷadi'lic*, Board Feet, and the Cedar Tree

In 1978 the Lummi Indian tribe initiated a series of projects in an effort to preserve the remaining old-growth forests on National Forest lands in Whatcom County. In concert with twelve other tribes in western Washington, from Seattle to the Canadian border, they organized and secured funding for the *Inventory of Native American Religious Use, Practices, Localities and Resources: Study Area on the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest*. This 1.2 million-acre National Forest contained many of the remaining old-growth cedar forest stands in Washington State, forests that are integral to the cultural practices of the tribes participating in the *Inventory*. After initial resistance by the Superintendent of the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, the project was eventually funded by the United States Department of Agriculture and completed over a two-year period (1980-1982). The project team included tribal community leaders, elders, tribal correspondents, and a team of prominent anthropologists, all under the direction of Dr. Astrida Onat.

The report succeeded in its goal of describing for the first time the nature, extent, uses, locations, and meanings of a range of Native American cultural practices that occur in the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest. The tribes identified 410,000 acres in the National Forest that were used for traditional cultural practices, including spirit-dream and questing sites, historic villages, encampments, and trails, legendary sites, and locations where individuals go for ritual purity or to collect medicinal plants. The report went into great detail on the traditional belief and practices associated with these sites, areas, and resources, as well as the importance of preserving old-growth forest stands and other undisturbed areas. Comments from several of the tribal elders participating in the project give a sense of the information contained in the report:

We believe there are sacred places where we can meet up with the Spirit and communicate with the Spirit. And people believe that in the wildest places, in the deepest part of the lakes, different parts of the river, there's a dwelling place for Spirits that we know. (U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1982, p. 152)

[W]hen you get close to the mountains you can feel your Song...The power up in the mountains is so great that when you go up there and swim and let the power hear your voice, it makes you more powerful. After [ceremonial] bathing, you have a peaceful feeling. (U.S. Department of Agriculture, p. 372)

The [Spirit Song] just comes in the winter time—you can't sing in the summer. It don't like it here and goes back to his home. He [the power] stays with you all the time, but in the summer time the Song goes away; it goes back to where he stays all the time as if he were a person. (U.S. Department of Agriculture, p. 379)

Among the beliefs and practices discussed by the tribal members were the powers associated with *sk^wadi'lic*. *sk^wadi'lic* powers bequested to an Indian Doctor with supernatural gifts used in divination, diagnosis, healing, and other spiritual expressions. (U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1982) It is associated with the generative power of nature, particularly—but not exclusively—with old-growth cedar forests. One Tulalip Indian doctor discussing his *sk^wadi'lic* power recalled that:

sk^wadi'lic must have come to me when I was quite small....It was around seven or eight years after I started [Spirit] Dancing that I had a dream that told me to make the [*sk^wadi'lic*] boards. The *sk^wadi'lic* power is in the spirit land....Part of the power enters the boards, but it can also leave. (U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1982, p. 369)

While succeeding in its immediate objective, the project failed its ultimate aim: to secure the protection of the few remaining old-growth cedar forests. Instead, the tribes were told that the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest would consult about these sites and balance their use and value with the multitude of other competing resource values (i.e., timber harvesting and recreation). The Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest Superintendent, Doug McWilliams, informed the tribes that these cultural use sites would be protected only if they happened to overlap with other protection needs such as research natural areas, endangered species habitat, riparian or roadless areas, or scenic set asides. As Mr. McWilliams put it, "They are protected if there is another use of the area that requires protection." (Madrone, 1992, p.4)

The difficulty lay not only in conflicting interests and resource values but, at a deeper level, contrasting world-views. In a 1992 follow-up study of the *Inventory*, Dr. Onat was asked to comment on the value and consequences of the project. Reflecting on how the information was interpreted by the National Forest, she concluded that, "The determination of whether sites will be set aside for protection is made by non-Indians. These decisions are made by people who do not understand the Indian significance of a site." (Madrone, 1992, p. 4) With that in mind the Lummi tribe turned next to a follow-up project that would identify the nature and extent of values-based differences between public forestland managers and the tribal community. The project, which began in 1984 and would continue for sixteen years, was known as the Values Project Northwest: *xwlemi*.

The Values Project Northwest: *xwlemi*

While understanding doesn't guarantee cooperation, cooperation is impossible without it. And, where there is not understanding, there is misunderstanding, which is one source of enmity. (Russo, 1985, p. 1)

• Origins

It is very hard to value what you do not understand. For example, board feet is a unit of production that foresters use to measure the volume of harvestable timber. In the case of old-growth trees, as the trees age they add less volume and, therefore, less value. At a certain point, they are considered non-productive (or 'decadent' in the terminology of forestry). *sk^wadi'lic* signifies a spiritual power of the cedar tree. As the tree ages, and the growth rings grow closer together, the spiritual power it possesses increases. This is not to say that the Lummi Indians are not loggers or that foresters are not religious people, but that in certain situations these values can, and do, collide.

After completing an evaluation of the results of the *Inventory* the Lummi tribe soon initiated consultations with the Graduate School of Public Affairs at the University of Washington. The goal was to identify a research methodology that could provide a profile of values-based differences between diverse cultural communities and could be used to improve cross-cultural communication. After a six-month scoping project, the tribe selected the Value Orientation Method (VOM) developed by Dr. Florence R. Kluckhohn. Dr. Kluckhohn, a prominent anthropologist residing in Seattle, agreed to participate in the project and to help develop new methods of instrumentation for the VOM. The project team, for which I served as Principle Investigator, consisted of a Lummi tribal member and academics from a range of disciplines.³

In 1983 the tribe secured funding from the U.S. Department of the Interior (Office of Trust Responsibilities) to undertake a research project to determine the differences in core values among five participating groups: the Lummi tribe, the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, Weyerhaeuser Timber Company, Rainier National Bank, and Puget Sound Gas and Electric Company. In each case the number of respondents and the random selection process was sufficient to assure a valid statistical sampling of the participating group. The results of these interviews were published in the report, "Values Project Northwest: *xwlemi*." (Russo, 1985)

Over the next twelve years the project came to include the participation of other groups and organizations whose activities posed a threat to Lummi cultural resource use-areas, including the

³ The project team included Dr George E. Taylor (Jackson School of International Studies, University of Washington), Jewell Praying Wolf James (Lummi tribe), Dr. Lyman Legters (Taylor Institute, University of Washington), Dr. Phil Bereano (Social Management of Technology, University of Washington), Joseph Dupris (Lummi Community College), Dr. Fremont Lyden (Graduate School of Public Affairs, University of Washington), Dr. Leslie Rabkin (Seattle Psychological Assessment and Referral Center and the Department of Psychology, University of Washington), Dr. James Watson (Department of Anthropology, University of Washington), and Dr. Michael Hills (Cross-Cultural Studies Department, Western Washington University).

Washington State Department of Ecology, Pacific International Terminals, and the Washington State Department of Natural Resources.

- **The Research Method: The Value Orientation Method (VOM)**

The research tool used for the Values Project was designed by Dr. Florence Kluckhohn. A constant source of interest to her was how different cultural groups could live side-by-side for generations yet continue to ‘speak past each other.’ With this problem before them, she and her colleagues developed and designed a method and a model for measuring variations in value orientations, as described in the book *Variations in Value Orientations*. (Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck, 1961) The ultimate purpose of its use in the Values Project was to achieve true communication between two different cultural groups seeking common ground on an issue of mutual concern.

Value orientations are the foundations, the underpinnings upon which we base our judgments about the world around us. They are not the equivalent of values in the customary sense, nor are they mere attitudes or opinions. Instead, they are the enduring predispositions we have—the pre-judgments we make—that both filter our perceptions and form our response as to what is most “real,” or most “true.” Like any research method, the value orientation method is grounded in a number of critical assumptions: 1) there are a limited number of common human problems for which all peoples must find a solution, 2) the variability in solutions is neither limitless nor random, 3) all solutions are present in all societies, but differentially preferred, and 4) there is a rank-ordering of preference among the different solutions.

Value Dimensions		Range of Value Orientations	
Time: What is the temporal focus of the group?	Past: It is best to rely on, and leave unchanged, traditions and teachings from the past.	Present: It is best to adapt to and accommodate ourselves to change.	Future: It is best to actively seek change from the way things are, or were in the past.
Person-Nature: What is the relation of people to nature and supernature?	Harmony With: It is best to work with the forces of nature (partial control).	Subject To: It is best to accommodate ourselves to what nature brings us (little or no control).	Mastery Over: It is best to seek control over nature (total control).
Human Relations: What is the organizing principle of the group?	Lineality: It is best to let those with the greatest age or experience decide for the group.	Collaterality: It is best to rely on consensus when making decisions for the group.	Individualistic: It is best to rely on majority rule when making decisions for the group.
Activity: What is the nature of a person’s mode of self-expression?	Doing (Do): Emphasis on concrete, tangible outcomes valued by others (outward orientation).	Being (Be): Emphasis the spontaneous expression and intrinsic reward (inward orientation).	[There is not a third orientation for the Activity dimension.]

Information is gathered in one-on-one oral interviews using the VOM survey. The interviews consisted of a series of twenty-three general life situations, with several alternate solutions to each situation, that can be meaningful to any cultural group. The survey situations are constructed to elicit responses concerning the primary, but not exclusive, value dimensions of Time, Human Activity, Human Relations, and Person-Nature Relations. Each dimension is, in turn, divided into two or three sub-categories indicating different orientations (e.g., in the Person-Nature Relations, people may see themselves as being in harmony with nature, mastering nature, or being subject to it). The sum of responses in each of the four value dimensions provide a general, as well as situational, description or profile of how people perceive themselves as well as others in their own group, and, in the case of the Values Project, their perceptions of the cultural 'other.' Finally, the value dimensions are all interrelated. The results in each dimension must be analyzed keeping in mind the results in each of the other dimensions. Changes in the orientations in one dimension can result in changes in one or more of the dimensions.

Values Project interviews were completed by a two-member team, and required 1 ½ to 2 hours to complete. One of the team members read aloud the survey situations to the respondent. The other team member would take notes on the comments of the respondent as they answered the survey questions. The comments of the respondent were used to help interpret the results of the survey and, in the case of the Values Project, to design the workshop sessions.

- **Project Design: The Lummi Indian Tribe and the Washington State Department of Natural Resources**

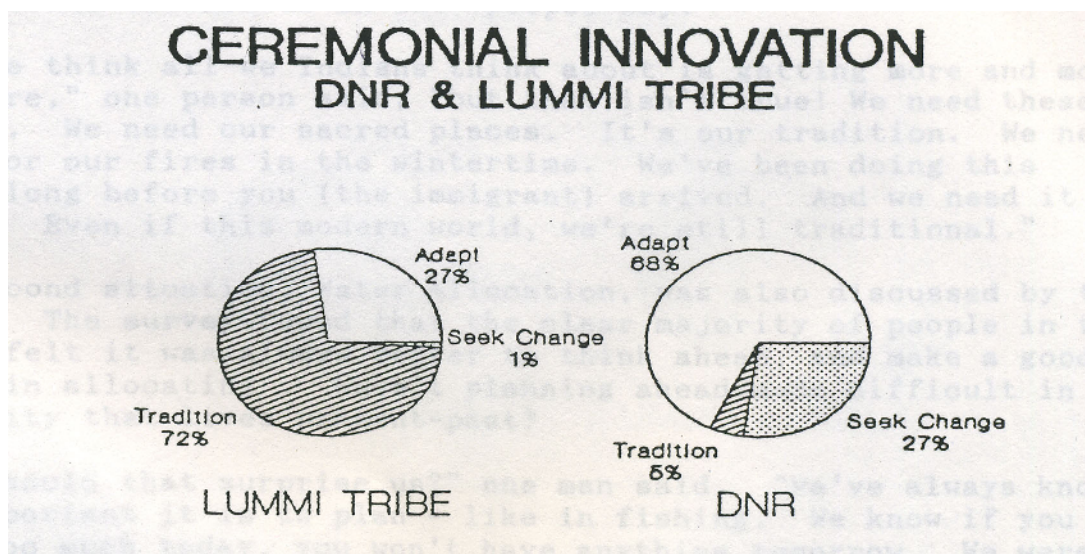
The Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest declined (without providing their reasons) an invitation to participate in a series of cultural resource management workshops with the Lummi tribe that would have utilized the results of the VOM research. Fortunately, the Values Project attracted the interest of Bill Wallace, Regional Director of the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The DNR was in the very early stages of working on the issue of tribal cultural use of state forestlands used by tribes in Washington State, including the Lummi tribe, for cultural purposes and practices. As a result, in 1988 the DNR agreed to participate, and made available for VOM interviews individuals from top-level managers to District field personnel. Working with the project's Academic Advisory Board, the project team selected from among the interviewees twenty individuals to take part in the workshop sessions. At the same time, the project team worked with the tribe to identify twenty Lummi tribal members who would take part in the workshop sessions. Before starting the workshops, additional (open-ended) interviews were conducted with the participants in both groups to better understand organizational dynamics and issues. This information, along with the results of the surveys, were used to design the workshop series.

The project began with 'independent' workshops when the groups met separately and were presented with some of the results of the VOM surveys and the open-ended, issue-oriented interviews. Each group evaluated their own value orientation profiles then identified what they felt to be the main barriers to meaningful and effective communication with the cultural 'other.' This was followed by a 'joint' workshop bringing the DNR and the tribe together to discuss what each group thought the other should understand about it in order to work on cultural resource

issues on state forestlands. The process was then repeated, only this time the separate session aimed at the other group's orientations, and the final joint workshop included an in-depth discussion of how to address the issue of cultural variation and its meaning for managing and preserving cultural resources. After the last joint workshop, a sub-group of five people from both the DNR and the Lummi tribe met to develop a document to institutionalize the communication process that took place in the workshops. This 'Group of Ten' developed an "Accord in Cultural Use of Forest lands" for review and approval by the tribe and the DNR.

• Project Findings

The results, drawn from each of the four value dimensions, reveal significant variations in how the two groups are oriented in situations involving change, control, the meaning of work, and how best to make decisions for the group as a whole. These results illustrate variations as well as similarities in value orientations between the DNR and the Lummi tribe, and also touch on the important issue of perceptual diversity. In addition to the survey results, the comments of tribal and DNR participants to these findings in the independent and joint workshops are also provided. The survey situations to be discussed include Ceremonial Innovation (Time dimension), Belief in Control (Person-Nature dimension), Choice of a Delegate (Human Relations dimension), and Care of Fields (Activity dimension). (Russo and Zubalik, 1989)

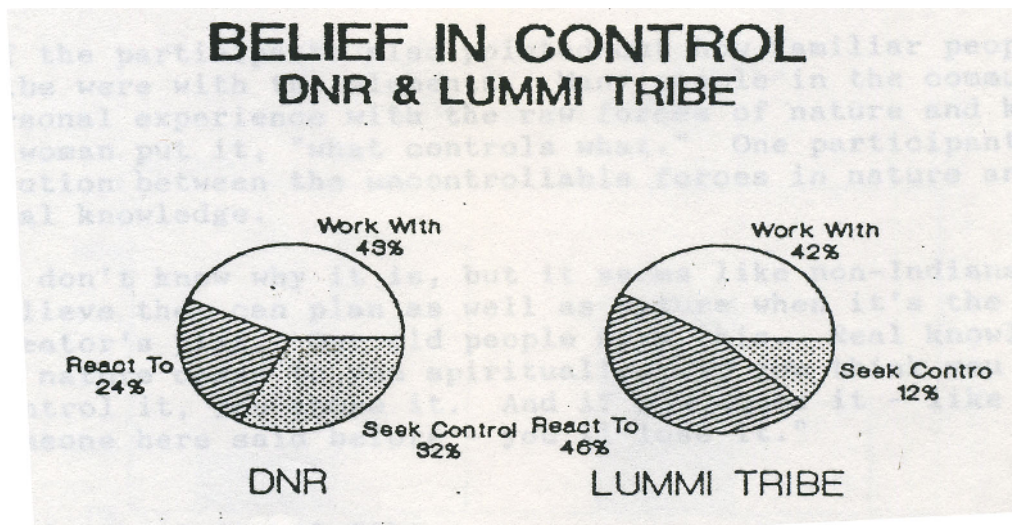


In the image above are two alternative solutions illustrating a significant variations in how change is evaluated and valued in the context of religious traditions and practices. The results in the situation Ceremonial Innovation—one of a series of five general life situations in the Time dimension—reflect a strong variation between the two groups found throughout the Time dimension. In this situation the problem is: Should religious ceremonies be subject to gradual or even radical change, or should they be kept exactly, in every way, as they were in the past? Seventy-two percent of the Lummi Indians interviewed believed that such ceremonies should be preserved in every way, compared to just five percent of the respondents in the DNR. The belief that we should seek to change in these ceremonies was rejected by ninety-nine percent of the tribal respondents, but favored by twenty-seven percent of DNR participants. The relationship

between cultural identity, change in ceremonial life, and forestland management was on the mind of one of the Lummi workshop participants when discussing these results:

They [the DNR] have to remember, those are not just trees out there. If they take away all the old trees, they don't leave us our tradition. And we maintain our identity through our tradition. (Russo and Zubalik, 1989, p. 28)

Throughout the Time dimension the Lummi Indians were significantly more Past-oriented and noticeably less Future-oriented than the DNR participants. The DNR participants were generally aware that the past is more present to tribal members than it is to most people in the DNR. Interestingly, most Lummi interviewees perceived the DNR as more Future-oriented than was actually the case. More problematic was how the individual and collective predisposition of belief in the DNR—the marginalization of the Past—and the perception of DNR as change-agents can and does influence what is believed to be a reasonable solution to the problem of managing cultural heritage sites.



Another important variation between the two groups was found in the Person-Nature dimension. The situation Belief in Control, one of five situations in this dimension, takes up the question of how much control people can or should have over large-scale forces around them. The plurality of the tribal participants (46%) felt that it was neither reasonable nor wise to try to control these forces, and only 12% felt such control was even possible. This compared with 32% in the DNR who believe such control is both desirable and achievable, with one in four completely rejecting the notion of control (24%). In the area of perceptual diversity (not shown in the above illustration) only 16% of the respondents in the DNR predicted the tribe would favor the Subject To (“react to”) orientation in this situation. In addition (also not shown in the illustration), most of the Lummi participants characterized the DNR as more Mastery-oriented than was actually true of the organization as a whole.

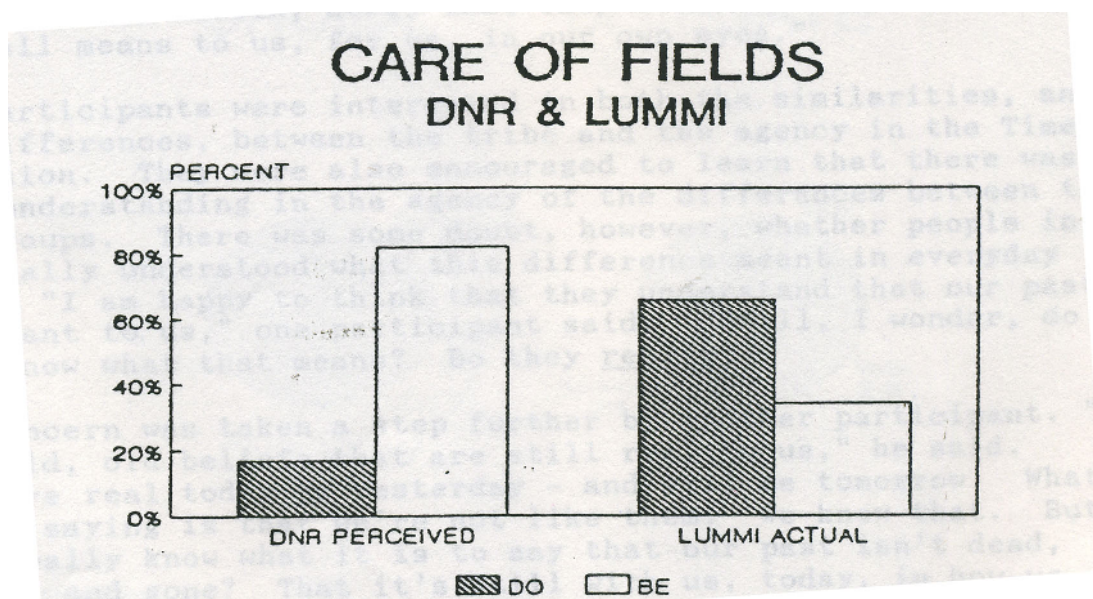
This variation between the two groups on the subject of control of “forces” within and around us was evident in the majority of the Person-Nature situations. During the workshop sessions the participants were asked what these variations in value orientations might mean for forestland

management issues, in general, and the management of cultural heritage sites, in particular. One of the tribal members echoed the sentiments of many other Lummi participants in answering this question:

I don't know why it is, but it seems like non-Indians believe they can plan as well as nature when it's the Creator's plan. Our old people knew this: real knowledge of nature comes to you spiritually, humbly. We know, you can set the [fishing] net, but you can never control the tides. If you think you control nature, you abuse it. And if you abuse it—like someone here said before—you lose it. (Russo and Zubalik, 1989, p. 21)

Another tribal member made clear a distinction between science and the drive to control nature, and the tribal perspective on the forest and what power lay beyond, or behind, instrumental knowledge and the illusion of technique:

Scientific knowledge is Man-made so it's imperfect. It's imperfect because it comes from Man. I don't care how long you try, you'll never be able to replace the old-growth tree. And, I don't care how much you study and learn, you'll never get spiritual knowledge out of a book. It isn't something you can control. You have to earn it, spiritually. (Russo and Zubalik, 1989, p. 21)

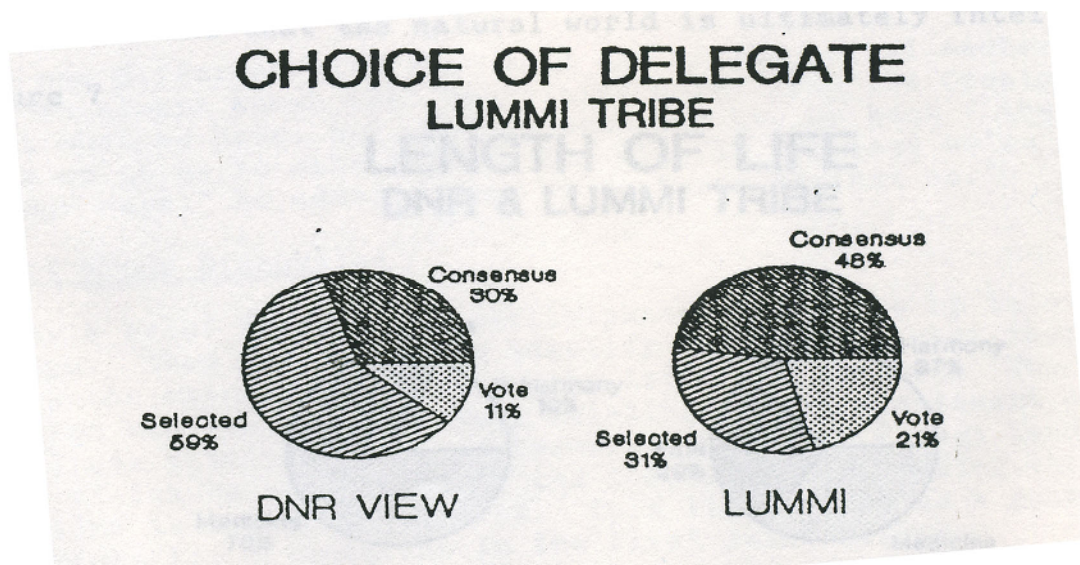


"Everywhere you go you find the same thing," one tribal participant observed during a workshop session, "people think we're lazy and that we have a 'don't give a damn' attitude." (Russo and Zubalik, 1989, 36) While it would be presumptuous to assume the DNR perceived the Lummis as lazy, the situation Care of Fields, above, does illustrate an enduring stereotype of the Lummi Indians in the DNR as well as in other public and private sector groups interviewed with the VOM. In the situation Care of Fields, one of six general life situations in the Activity dimension, the vast majority of the DNR respondents (82%) assumed that most Lummi Indians would rather not put in any extra time at work. It was verbalized by one DNR participant who said that

he noted “that the concept of time [in the tribe] is different. If it doesn’t get done today, that’s fine.” (Russo and Zubalik, 1989, p. 31) In fact, three quarters of the Lummi Indians interviewed described themselves as people who felt it was best to put in extra time whenever the job demanded it—and sometimes when it didn’t. They not only felt that was the best way to live, but reported that it was also how they actually behaved. Also in the arena of perceptual diversity, most of the Lummi interviewees perceived the DNR to be a Doing-oriented organization when, in fact, the DNR was equally divided between the two orientations.

As someone who has worked among the Lummi Indians for three decades, it has been clear to me that they are a hardworking, industrious people faced with innumerable hardships. For most tribal members the work is simply never done. What may be misunderstood, and what stands out about the tribe, is the cultural meaning and context of ‘the work’ that implies far more than what occurs in the workplace. It also involves human relations in a community of interrelated families that have lived side-by-side for generations and that places a high priority on maintaining strong extended family ties. ‘The work,’ in other words, is ensuring cultural continuity through whatever means. The tribal workshop participants were puzzled, if not surprised, by the DNR perception of the tribe. As one tribal participant put it:

Maybe they just don’t understand how it is we do things here—or why. Maybe they need to learn that we have to do things slow to get them done well. Or do they think that our world isn’t as real as theirs? I think this is very, very important. (Russo and Zubalik, 1989, p. 23)



The results from the VOM survey suggest that the DNR did not understand how “things get done” in the tribe. An example of this is seen in the situation, above, that is one of five general life situations in the Human Relations dimension. In this case, as in each of the other survey situations in this dimension, consensus was favored by most of the tribal interviewees. In this situation, as in most of the other Human Relations situations, the DNR participants underestimated the importance of collaterality (“consensus”) in the tribe. For the tribe’s part, there was a tendency among the tribal interviewees to perceive most people in the DNR as highly

individualistic (not shown in the illustration). In fact, the DNR, like the tribe, had a clear preference for the consensus-based Collateral orientation.

Interestingly, in this situation, 59% of the DNR respondents assumed that most tribal members would prefer the Lineal orientation (“Selected”), leaving decisions up to the “older, important leaders.” Reflecting on this false stereotype one of the Lummi workshop participants quoted the United States Constitution:

‘We, the people.’ Isn’t that what it says in the Constitution? No person is above the people. Our elders *are* important to us. We all feel that way. But no person is above the people. We’ve always known that. We taught the non-Indians that. There is no person without the people, or above them. (Russo and Zubalik, 1989, p. 25)

Another tribal participant made the connection between this stereotype and the one demonstrated in the situation Care of Fields, then linked his remarks to the importance of tradition:

If they think this about us then how can they ever understand the way we do things here? We don’t just do what we’re told. It isn’t that way. We work as a people and that takes time. People have to know what they say counts, or they won’t say. That’s tradition, and you know, Kurt, we’re still a traditional people. (Russo and Zubalik, 1989, p. 25)

The final joint session concluded with a talking circle in which each of the participants was asked to reflect on what they thought and felt about what they had heard and learned during the workshop sessions. Anyone who has taken part in a Native American talking circle knows this process can take on a life of its own: you come to expect the unexpected. The poignant reflections of one of the DNR managers is especially noteworthy in this regard:

My experience in the workshops has left me uncomfortable and unsettled. You see, there is in ignorance a fine foundation for certainty, and ignorance is a solid foundation for moral rectitude. Ignorance makes a fine foundation for suspicion. I’ve known those with respect to the Lummi cultural issues as they affect our state timber sale program...But I’ve seen enough in these sessions to recognize your sincerity. I realize you are not coming from a basis of what I had originally perceived as bad faith. Those are behind me. The certainty and the moral rectitude are shaken. The suspicion is largely dispelled. And I don’t know, in my own mind, where I’m headed from here. That leaves me unsettled and uncomfortable. (Russo and Zubalik, 1989, p. 58)

The project went on to frame the “Accord on Cultural Use of Forest Lands” between the Lummi tribe and the DNR. The Accord Committee included five individuals from each group and was given the task of institutionalizing the understandings gained during the course of the project. The Accord opens with the following Statement of Understandings:

Working relationships between the Lummi tribe and the DNR may be further improved in a number of ways. At the outset, though, the needs of both groups must be mutually understood. To develop that understanding, DNR staff and members of the Lummi tribe participated in interviews and a series of workshops aimed at exploring the culturally-based differences in values and perceptions. This Accord is a product of this newly developed dialogue and is intended to be a first step toward future, more inclusive agreements involving programs administered by the DNR. (Russo and Zubalik, 1989, p. 63)

The Accord was an effort to formalize and institutionalize the values-based understandings gained during the workshops with regard to both the management of cultural use sites and the structure of the consultation process. The Accord paid respect to the tribe's concern for confidentiality and the private nature of cultural knowledge that, as expressed in the Accord, is "profoundly personal, between the individual and the Creator." (Russo and Zubalik, 1989, p. 63) Among other recommendations, the Accord called for adjusting the DNR's review process to "accommodate the tribe's consensual decision process." (Russo and Zubalik, 1989, p. 64) More broadly, it called for both groups to work together to incorporate tribal value orientations into the DNR's management of cultural use sites, areas, and resources.

The impact of the project was both broadly institutional, influencing subsequent attitude and behavior of DNR managers and, just as importantly, profoundly personal. Twelve years after the completion of the project, Mr. Wallace, who was still the Regional Manager for the DNR, described his experience in the workshops as a "turning point for me in learning about tribal values and improving my working relationship with the tribes." (Russo, 2000, p. 179) Mr. Wallace went on to talk about his experience in the workshops and the effect it had on his understanding of tribal culture, and of himself:

When I participated in the workshops and sat down with tribal members, I heard them pour out their values. The 'I feel' started coming out. I wasn't sharing what my religion meant to me, what my deep core values were, but they were. They shared some of their innermost feelings...Tears were in everyone's eyes, including ours. That really struck me. Their comments were coming from the heart. (Russo, K.W. 2000, p. 182)

The Way Forward: Signifying the Sacred

To appreciate the significance of the Values Project and its predecessor, the *Inventory*, it is necessary to understand these projects in the context of their time. In the 1980s, the issue of Native American cultural use was a newly-emerging management concern for many public land managers. Agencies such as the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest and the DNR had little information or understanding about the nature and extent of Native American cultural use of public lands. Furthermore, there was precious little legal or institutional incentive for public land managers to devote significant time or resources to this issue. In this context, the *Inventory* and the Values Project should be understood and judged as part of a larger effort that helped raise awareness of the cultural use of state and federal forestlands. In the case of the DNR, new management strategies, standards and protocols were developed for protecting cultural use sites, areas, and resources.

Although progress has been made on cultural resource management, the underlying issue *beneath* the surface remains: the marginalization of Native American traditional knowledge and tribal cultural values. It is an enduring issue in the Pacific Northwest and in other parts of the United States. To cite one example, solar farms are now being developed on public lands across a vast area in the eastern Mojave Desert that is a sacred landscape for the Chemehuevi Indians. The development of the solar farms is proceeding apace without giving equal consideration to the impacts of these solar panel carpets based on tribal cultural values. Whether in the Pacific Northwest or in the eastern Mojave Desert, consultation, communication, and cooperation are certainly necessary, but are by no means sufficient when confronted with the marginalization of Native values connected with ancestral knowledge.

What is needed is parity between divergent world-views—that which is expressed in Western science, and those that are reflected in indigenous worldmaking processes. At the present time the Western scientific frame of reference, ostensibly impartial and objective, is the final arbitrator of what is real and true knowledge. Among those critical of positioning science as a neutral arbitrator is the philosopher and linguist Nelson Goodman. In his argument for what he refers to as a “multiplicity of worlds” (the “pluriverse”) he points out the paradox of culturally-based frames of reference:

If I ask about the worlds, you can offer to tell me how it is under one or more frames of reference; but if I insist that you tell me how it is apart from all frames, what can you say? We are confined to ways of describing whatever is described. (Goodman, 1978, p. 2-3)

In a similar vein, in her discussion about the social sciences, Margaret Somers observed that:

concepts, and ultimately institutions, are built by men and women observing the empirical world through culturally constructed...cognitive maps. It is the particular shape and logic of these cultural maps that makes it possible to see some things but not others. (Bonnell and Hunt, 1999, p. 127)

Despite the progress made over the past twenty-five years, Native American ancestral knowledge—even when it is acknowledged and respected in the public arena—often remains unseen as real and true knowledge by the courts as well by public land management agencies. Skeptics discount traditional knowledge as folklore or as largely symbolic. But for other scholars, such as the late-Vine Deloria, Jr., the problem is the uncritical acceptance of a pervasive land management ethic that “prevents us from seeing that higher spiritual powers are still active in the world.” (Deloria, 2006, p. xix)

Conclusion: At Play in the Field of Values

The challenge remains: how can we work in a meaningful way in a pluriverse of contrasting world-views? Many perplexing questions can be found in this field of conflicting values. How can tribal communities as cultures of remembrance—where the cultural past is in the present—work with agencies that believe newer is almost always better, or truer, and that devalue

knowledge from the past? Moreover, how should land managers address the sacred and the secular—the private and the public—when addressing the Native American cultural use of public lands? How can complex organizations, as temporary collectives of self-interest, work with tribal communities made up of interrelated families and clans that have lived side-by-side for countless generations? How can land management organizations—or the courts—assign a relative value to the irretrievable loss of a cultural site or resource that is integral to the place-based identity of one or more tribal communities?

These are just some of the questions that should be asked, and answered. It is not only a matter of improved consultation processes and practices, new legislation, or new court rulings. Rather, it is fundamentally a matter of understanding how and why we construct what is real and true for ourselves, as well as about the cultural ‘other.’

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