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SERGEI KAN

Most of the papers appearing in this volume were first presented at the 2007 Conference of Tsimshian, Haida, and Tlingit Tribes and Clans, which took place in Sitka, Alaska, March 21–25, 2007. That conference was a continuation of a project initiated in the late 1980s by Andrew Hope III (Xaastanch). As Andy wrote two decades ago (Juneau Empire, September 23, 1992: 2), “The original premise for the conference was to reaffirm the customs and traditions of the Alaska Tlingit and the Kaigani Haida clans.” Eventually Alaska and British Columbia Tsimshians, Inland Tlingits, as well as the Tagish, Tutchone, and Tahltan Athabascan peoples from British Columbia and the Yukon Territory were invited as well to what became the first of a series of “clan conferences.” Held in Haines and Klukwan in 1993, the first clan conference was a tremendous success and was followed by several others: in Sitka in 1995 and again in 1997 as well as a smaller one in Ketchikan in 1995 dedicated solely to language preservation. None of these subsequent gatherings, however, matched the initial one in terms of the number of participants. According to the organizers, close to five hundred people signed the attendance book at the 1993 conference. The format for the meeting developed by Andy and his colleagues and adopted by the Haines-Klukwan conference continued to be followed at all of the subsequent clan conferences including that of 2007: a combination of plenary and smaller sessions and workshops in the morning and the afternoon, followed by Native dances, poetry readings, and other cultural performances in the evening. Most important, the 1993 clan conference differed from a regular academic one by virtue of the fact that, as Andy Hope wrote in 2000, “Probably for the first time ever, practitioners came together with scholars as equals to discuss their mutual knowledge of and experience with the cultures indigenous to this part of the world” (10, italics mine).
Fig. 0.3 (top) Clan conference, 1993, in Klukwan/Haines. From left to right: Forrest DeWitt Jr., Betsy McFarlane, Joe Murray, Andy Hope III, Richard Jackson, and Esther Shea. Photograph by Peter Metcalfe.

Fig. 0.4 (bottom) Traditional Native dancing at the 1993 clan conference in Haines/Klukwan. The two men dancing in the front of the group are Paul Marks (left) and Paul Jackson. Photograph by Peter Metcalfe.
A few of the papers appearing here have been previously published. The decision to include them has been prompted by several factors, such as my wish to showcase the current work by a major scholar in the field whose paper from the 2007 conference had already been committed to another publication (Madonna Moss), to present recent work in a new area of research by a young Alaska Native scholar (Alexis Bunten), and to honor several Native and non-Native elders and scholars who died in the past few years and to whom this book is dedicated (Frederica de Laguna, Mark Jacobs Jr., and Andy Hope).

For various reasons the periodic clan conferences stopped after 1997, but in 2006 the idea of organizing another one came simultaneously from me and from Steve Henrikson, both of us having decided to pay tribute to our recently deceased Tlingit teacher, friend, and clan relative through adoption, Mark Jacobs Jr. (Gusht’eihéen, 1923–2005). A prominent Tlingit and Alaska Native politician as well as the head of the Angoon branch of the Daḵl’áweidí clan, Mr. Jacobs was a man well versed in traditional cultural knowledge, which he had shared generously with both of us (see Kan 2001, this volume; Mark Jacobs, this volume; Harold Jacobs, this volume; Hollinger and Harold Jacobs, this volume).
Fig. 0.6 Daniel Johnson Jr., the spokesman for the Kak’weidí (Basket Bay) clan of Angoon, wearing a ceremonial Double-headed Raven hat, which belongs to his grandfathers from the Raven House of Angoon. Photograph by Peter Metcalfe.
Fig. 0.7 Edwell John Jr., the head of the Killer Whale Chasing Seal House of the Daḵl’aweidi clan of Angoon, wearing a ceremonial headdress and button blanket of his clan, at the 2007 clan conference in Sitka. Photograph by Peter Metcalfe.
volume). Having invited Andy Hope to serve as the third co-organizer of this conference, we began the preparations. Generous funding from the Arctic Social Science Program of the National Science Foundation as well as additional support from the Sitka tribe of Alaska and other sources enabled us to put together an impressive gathering of academic scholars, Native elders, and traditional culture experts as well as younger culture and language activists and artists to share their knowledge and current work. Andy Hope, joined by his colleague Peter Metcalfe, succeeded in raising the money that funded video coverage of the conference, which was produced by Metcalfe. Complete sets and individual DVDs that cover more than sixty hours of workshops and events can be accessed through a website sponsored by the University of Alaska Fairbanks (http://ankn.uaf.edu; search “sharing our knowledge”). All in all over one hundred participants took part in the conference, with several hundred attending all or at least some of its sessions and events.

The timing of the Sitka conference and of this publication has been quite favorable for assessing the field of Tlingit (and to some extent, greater northern Northwest Coast, i.e., Haida and Coast Tsimshian) anthropology and related fields in the first decade of the twenty-first century. Such an assessment has not been undertaken for quite some time, even though the field has changed a good deal in the last couple of decades. One major overview of the state of Northwest Coast ethnology and the related fields is, of course, the relevant volume of the Handbook of North American Indians (Suttles 1990). Despite being a goldmine of information, it stops its coverage with the mid- to late 1980s and thus barely reflects the work of several generations of scholars who have entered the field since then and who began publishing in the late 1980s or early 1990s. Moreover, the Handbook has very little to say about the work done by nonacademic indigenous scholars and cultural activists.

As far as academic conferences have been concerned, the closest to our 2007 venue was the above-mentioned 1993 clan conference and the book based on it, published seven years later (Hope and Thornton 2000). Useful as that publication was, it contained only eight of the papers presented in Haines and Klukwan. More recently an international conference of Northwest Coast ethnologists from the United States, Canada, France, and other European countries, which had taken place in Paris in 2000, resulted in the publication of a volume entitled Coming to Shore: Northwest Coast Ethnology, Traditions, and Visions (Mauzé, Harkin, and Kan 2004). Several of the papers appearing in it
address the Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian cultures, while the editors’ introduction discusses a number of the new developments in the field of Northwest Coast ethnology, which the present book also addresses. However, only two of the contributors to *Coming to Shore* are Native, so that, in the end, the volume still fits the mold of a traditional academic publication.

The goal of *Sharing Our Knowledge* is different. In the last twenty years and especially the last decade, cultural anthropologists, museum specialists, archaeologists, and linguists working in southeast Alaska and the adjacent areas have engaged in a good deal of collaborative research with Native scholars, elders, and community activists. One might refer to this kind of work as “anthropology of mutual engagement” (cf. Lassiter 2000; Strong 2005; see also Field 2004). This collaborative work has focused on a number of time-honored topics, such as language and folklore, archaeology, ethnohistory, life history, and art history. At the same time, in recent years, several new areas or research and activism have developed, in which collaboration between academic and tribal scholars is not only desirable but also necessary and profitable for both sides. They include subsistence-related research, ethnogeography, archaeology, repatriation of human remains, clan regalia and other forms of cultural property, indigenous tourism, language preservation, and biography and family history.

The biggest change that has taken place in anthropology and related disciplines involved in studying the history and culture of the indigenous people of southeastern Alaska is the obligation most professional researchers feel to make sure that their research benefits the so-called source communities. This new ethics or philosophy of doing research, known as collaborative, community-based, or participatory action research, has emerged out of the changing ideological climate in the United States as well as the needs and demands of the native communities that researchers conduct their work in such a way as to benefit them and allow community input into the research design and the research process. In the words of Alison Brown and Laura Peers, “These new ways of working begin with the acknowledgment that dominant-society heritage professionals are not the only ones who know about, own, and control heritage resources: that local communities have rights in their culture and heritage and in its representation and dissemination” (2006, 101). This new approach to research has often been referred to as “the repatriation of knowledge.” This term is par-
particularly appropriate when it comes to enabling indigenous communities to gain access to archival documents, photographs, recordings of songs and stories and other forms of valuable cultural/historical data, which must find their way back to them, and engaging in (re)interpreting these data in collaboration with experts from these communities (cf. Ryan and Robinson 1990; Anderson and Nyce 1999; Krupnik and Jolly 2002; Schneider 2002).

Our volume begins by paying tribute to the lives and contributions of Tlingit intellectuals, tribal scholars, and elders as well as non-Native scholars who have all inspired the conference organizers and participants by their deep knowledge of and appreciation for Tlingit history and culture (Tlingit Lingit kusteeyí). One of them is Frederica de Laguna (1906–2004), who bridged the Boasian era in northern Northwest Coast studies and the work of the current generation of scholars featured in this volume (Boas 1902, 1916; Swanton 1905a, 1905b, 1908, 1909; Garfield 1939, 1947; Olson 1967). From her initial survey of the northern Tlingit territory in 1949 (which included Yakutat, Haines-Klukwan, Hoonah, Angoon, and Sitka), to summers of archaeological and ethnological research in Angoon in 1949 and 1950, to a series of longer periods of in-depth ethnographic study in Yakutat in 1949, 1952, and 1954, combined with library research, Freddy (as she was known to her colleagues, students, and friends) put together the most detailed record of Tlingit culture and history than any of her predecessors in the field. Moreover, in the tradition of the “Americanist anthropology,” she did her best to comprehend this culture from the Tlingit point of view (de Laguna 1972).

It was in Yakutat that Freddy developed her closest ties with a number of Tlingit elders and, as a result, produced her monumental opus, Under Mount St. Elias: The History and Culture of the Yakutat Tlingit (1972), which continues to serve as a major source of information for academic and community researchers. De Laguna’s adoption by Katy Dixon Isaac into the Gineix Ḵwáan clan of the Raven moiety confirmed the fact of her acceptance by the Yakutat elders she worked with, while her ability to compose a Tlingit love song is a clear indication of her deep understanding not only of the key principles of the Tlingit culture but of the subtleties of its worldview, ritual etiquette, and performative culture. The history of “Freddy’s song” and her relationship with the Yakutat community is described in the article by noted Yakutat cultural historians Elaine Abraham (Chew Shaa) and her daughter, Judy Ramos.
Fig. 0.8 Frederica de Laguna at the University of Pennsylvania Museum, 1931. She is wearing the Marmot and Bat (or “Marmot and Its Prey”) frontlet headdress (NA8498) and is holding the Raven of the Roof hat (NA10511). The Raven of the Roof hat will be repatriated to the L’uknax.ádi clan of Sitka in the near future. Photographer unknown. Photo courtesy of the Penn Museum Archives.
One major difference between the state of ethnological research in southeastern Alaska prior to the 1980s and in the past three decades is a significant increase in the number of Native scholars involved in it as well as the number of collaborative projects between them and the non-Native representatives of the academy. Prior to World War II, the field of Tlingit studies had only one indigenous scholar, Louis Shotridge (Stoowǔkáa, 1882–1937), who became an employee of and a collector for a major American anthropology museum and wrote a series of informative and thoughtful articles about the material and spiritual culture of his people. Even though his collecting activity met with some resistance from Tlingit traditionalists and remains a subject of debate in the modern-day Native community, Stoowǔkáa’s deep appreciation for and understanding of the nuances of his own heritage and his impressive ability to convey them in the English language continue to impress scholars and general readers alike, whether Native or non-Native. While much has already been written about this remarkable man, our volume introduces two new essays on the subject: one by Robert W. Preucel on Shotridge’s work at the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Anthropology and Archaeology and another by Lucy Fowler Williams on collecting activities and the same museum’s current work on digitizing his very substantial archive of photographs and ethnographic notes. A special strength of these two essays, compared with some of the previous publications about Shotridge, has to do with the fact that Preucel and Williams, affiliated with the same museum, have for several years worked in close cooperation with members of the Tlingit community, verifying the accuracy of the information about Stoowǔkáa that they had found in their museum’s archive and researching the history of the ceremonial objects that he had collected in southeastern Alaska.

This kind of close cooperation between Native elders and tribal scholars, on the one hand, and anthropologists, ethnohistorians, linguists, and other scholars working on southeastern Alaska culture and history, on the other, was relatively rare until the tone of the Native-Euroamerican relations in Alaska changed rather dramatically in the 1970s and 1980s. Among other things, there had been a significant increase in the number of knowledgeable Native elders/tradition bearers who had grown up speaking Tlingit as their first language but had also gone through the American educational system—at least through high school and
in some cases through college and graduate school. Among them one ought to mention such men as William Paul, Andrew P. Johnson, Cyrus Peck Sr., Walter Soboleff, and Mark Jacobs Jr. (see Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1994). Some of them recorded their own versions of well-known Tlingit myths and stories or wrote down their own accounts of Tlingit culture and history, while others, like Mark Jacobs, chose to publish a few works of their own and also collaborate with linguists and anthropologists (Jacobs and Jacobs 1982; Jacobs 1987; Kan 1985, 1999, 2001b, this volume). Others, who lacked extensive formal schooling, relied on the latter to record their impressive knowledge of Tlingit oratory, stories, and myths, cultural information about traditional subsistence, place-names, ethnobotany, crafts, and other subjects. Notable among them were Robert Zuboff, Charlie Joseph Sr., Jesse Dalton, Jimmie George, Lydia George, Austin Hammond, Sally Hopkins, Alex Andrews, Amy Marvin, Jenny Thlunaut, Willie and Emma Marks, Herman Kitka, Mary Willis, Charlotte and Thomas Young Sr., Mary Marks, and Esther Littlefield (Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer 1987, 1990, 1994; Dauenhauer, Dauenhauer, and Black 2008; Kan 1985, 1989, 1999; Thornton 2000a, 2004, 2008).

As the number of these elderly traditionalists gradually decreased, the few remaining ones took it upon themselves to carry on the work of recording the Lingit Kusteeyí, translating it into English, and explaining it to their non-Tlingit colleagues in the academic community. For several of the contributors to this book and myself, Mark Jacobs Jr. was such an elder. As Jacobs’s biographical sketch, written by his son Harold, as well as my own contribution explain, he was born and raised in a high-ranking family where everyone spoke Tlingit as their first language and where the older generations possessed deep knowledge of Tlingit history and ceremonial protocol. True to this upbringing and his family’s legacy, Mark grew up to be a very proud Tlingit aristocrat (aanyádi), on the one hand, and an American patriot and a devout Christian, on the other. As I have argued in an earlier article as well as in the one appearing here, these various strands of his identity rarely seemed to clash within his mind (Kan 2001a and this volume).

A fine example of Mark’s ability to blend traditional Tlingit and modern American cultures was his deep patriotism that grew out of his younger years when he and his brother volunteered to serve in the Navy during World War II. Having served with distinction in the Pacific, Mark saw a great deal of bloodshed and tragedy but also heroism, and

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he maintained close ties with his wartime Navy comrades. To honor this important part of his life and identity, I have included his reminiscences about the war as well as a song in Tlingit composed by his son Harold, in which Harold draws on the traditional images of Tlingit warfare and warrior’s pride and honor.

By the time I met Gusht’eihéen, he had already begun writing down the information on Tlingit history and culture that he had been obtain-
ing from knowledgeable Tlingit elders, and he had been preparing an essay on traditional Tlingit foods, which he had started writing while his father was still alive. This piece was published in a 1982 collection edited by Andy Hope (Jacobs and Jacobs 1982) and was followed five years later by a publication based on a presentation Mark gave at the Second International Conference on Russian America on the Tlingit version of the circumstances of the 1804 battle between the Tlingit and the Russians in Sitka (Jacobs 1987, reprinted in Dauenhauer, Dauenhauer, and Black 2008). By this time, he was already busy keeping a journal consisting of his own reminiscences, stories told to him by various elders, and bits of ethnographic data. Steve Henrikson and I are convinced that he was a natural-born anthropologist/historian with a particular legal bend. After all, he did begin studying law in college and always regretted not being able to complete his education in that area. It is also clear, as I demonstrate in my contribution to this book, that the work I began with Mark in 1979–80 stimulated him to become interested in an even deeper probe into the Tlingit social and ideational culture. The relationship that the two of us established differed greatly from that of an “anthropologist–informant (consultant),” which was more common in American anthropology before the 1970s. As I argue, ours was a dialogue in which Gusht’eihéen acted as a mentor. This student-teacher relationship, which continued for much longer than anthropologist-informant relationships often lasted in the past, was further affirmed when Mark adopted me into his clan and gave him his younger brother’s name. At the same time, as the information I was acquiring from Mark, combined with that which I was collecting from other sources, began to generate articles and books, my mentor and older brother was gaining greater and greater respect for anthropology (“when it was done right,” as he would put it).

I had not been the only anthropologist with whom Mark Jacobs shared his deep knowledge of Tlingit history and culture. Various researchers, ranging from those working for the National Park Service to those representing the State of Alaska Department of Fish and Game, benefited greatly not only from his phenomenal memory but also from his openness, friendliness, and the great care he took to “tell it like it is” without embellishment or being self-serving. In the last decade of his life, he also spent a good deal of time interacting with curators and other museum professionals involved in researching, taking care of, and repatriating the precious material representations of the crests.
of Tlingit clans and houses. This work involved him in visits to a large number of American museums and introduced him to museum professions (see Hollinger and Jacobs, this volume).

If Mark Jacobs was one of the giants of the last generation of the traditional Tlingit elders/fluent speakers of the Tlingit language who generously shared their knowledge with the younger Native and non-Native scholars, Nora and Richard Dauenhauer have served as a bridge between those elders and several generations of the younger researchers and Tlingit language and culture activists. Born in 1927 into a family that combined a subsistence way of life with commercial fishing and cannery work and used Tlingit as the primary language of communication, Nora Marks Dauenhauer (Ḵeixwnéi) began to speak English only when she went to public school. Steeped in the Tlingit oral tradition and oratory, she was able to transfer that knowledge to an academic setting when in the early 1970s, encouraged by her recently deceased husband, linguist and folklorist Richard Dauenhauer, she earned an undergraduate degree in anthropology and began transcribing and translating the potlatch ora-
tory she herself had recorded a few years earlier (see Nora Marks Dauenhauer 2000, 31–53, and Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer, this volume).

This type of work had never been done before. To begin with, very few ethnographers had an opportunity to be present at the potlatch (koo.éex’). And even those who were able to witness one did not record the ceremonial oratory verbatim. Moreover, they did not have the necessary command of the Tlingit language or a sufficiently deep understanding of the intricacies of the local social structure and interpersonal relations to be able to place those speeches in their proper sociocultural context.10 Nora’s work, which first appeared in small mono- and bilingual brochures produced by the Tlingit Readers,11 demonstrated a major advantage that a Native scholar who combined a perfect command of the native language with academic training would have over his or her non-Native counterpart. In Ḵeixwnéi’s case, the success of her work was further increased by close cooperation with Richard, whose own expertise complemented hers very well. Their joint work on translating and interpreting the meaning of Tlingit oratory (both the speeches delivered in the potlatch and those given outside of it) resulted in the 1990 publication of a major work, Haa Tuwunáagu Yís, for Healing Our Spirit: Tlingit Oratory.