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The Intersection of Karuk Storytelling and Education

A Thesis Presented

by

Waylon Conrad Lenk

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Abstract of Thesis

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The Karuk Tribe is located in northwest California along the mid-stretch of the Klamath River. An understanding of Karuk dramaturgy cannot be complete without understanding traditional Karuk storytelling. And an understanding of Karuk storytelling cannot be complete without understanding its interaction with forms of education. The stories told by the Karuk people and the way in which they are told are intimately tied to the tumultuous changes that have occurred in pedagogical goals and structures over the past 160 years. To approach a better understanding of Karuk dramaturgy, this thesis shows that the intersection between storytelling and education exists in three different, but interrelated and overlapping realms. The first is classic Karuk education and the role of storytelling to support the goals of personal and communal empowerment. This thesis looks at the fundamental goals of this classic education, as well as three core institutions

in it – sweathouse, menstrual practices and mountain training – and the way these goals and institutions are infused by traditional storytelling. The beginning of the thesis considers how classic education existed before being overrun by American scholastic institutions, and ends with a look at how it is being revived today. The second trend is the assimilatory goals of establishing American schools in Karuk country, and removing Karuk people from that country to go to the schools. The rationale behind these goals is deeply infused by American and Christian mythologies. These stories were told in the boarding schools, and continue to be told in many public schools where Karuk students study. The third trend exists somewhere between classic Karuk education and assimilatory American education, and involves telling Karuk stories in the scholastic and academic settings. This thesis shows of educational structures pose an significant factor in changes and continuance within the practice of Karuk dramaturgy, specifically the realm of storytelling.

Dedication Page

This thesis is dedicated to my parents Karen Young-Lenk and Marty Lenk, Richie and Kathy McClellan, David and Jan Tripp, and all those who help make the Karuk Mountain Dance a continuing reality in my life and in the lives of our people. Without your efforts, endeavors like this thesis would not be possible.

Yôotva,

Waylon Lenk

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Acknowledgements

Much of this thesis comes from interactions that I've had with members of the indigenous community of northwest California and of academia. It's impossible to mention them all here, but the ones that have had a major effect on the trends and theories reflected in this thesis deserve mention. First, my own mentors, Richie and Kathy McClellan, help make the Karuk Mountain Dance possible. It forms the heart of my own Karuk identity, and as such, is at the heart of this thesis. Their own non-academic approach to education gave me a useful alternative to consider as this thesis germinated. Jack Norton, Jr., in our numerous conversations at the Mountain Dance camps, has been an inspiration in terms of being both a High Dance person *and* an academic. Amy Jensen, a colleague at Stony Brook, turned me onto the concept of Native theater, a synthesis that I should have been aware of, since it brings together two of the worlds I walk in. Maxine Kern's Production Dramaturgy class was the inciting incident for my own current work as a dramaturg-storyteller. Julian Lang's patience and willingness to share made that first foray into my current work, *Stories of Our People*, a possibility. For David Tripp's faith and excitement in Julian's and my project got us up in front of people, and he and his wife Jan's tireless work to make Mountain Dance a possibility, I owe him a "yôotva." I owe a huge debt of gratitude for my parents for their indefatigable support in my efforts to be a professional Karuk dramaturg-storyteller – I need all the support I can get, because it's not exactly a paying proposition. All of my friends and relatives in the Indian, academic and theater communities form a loose network of individuals whose creativity and persistence in

making the world a more beautiful place are to thank for supporting me as well. Any errors in this, of course, are my own.

Chapter 1: Introduction

This is a thesis about myths. It is also a telling and a critique of a particular myth, that I'm calling the "Myth of the Indian Renaissance." But, before we can continue, we need to establish a common definition of "myth." An etymological approach will only yield the definition "story," a definition that does not address the centrality of myth in human existence. Stories define us, both as individuals and as communities. Calvin O. Schrag holds that "To be a self is to be able to render an account of oneself, to be able to tell the story of one's life." (26) The first part of this definition owes an implicit debt to Plato's *Theaetetus*, where Socrates and Theaetetus consider whether giving an account of something is a necessary part of knowledge. (206c-209e) Although they reject that proposition, they do define "giving an account" as describing the parts of a thing. Schrag accepts that an account is a part of selfhood, but continues by requiring that the account be framed as a narrative. Why is this? "Narrative," according to Schrag, "provides the ongoing context in which the figures of discourse are embedded and achieve their determinations of sense and reference." (19) In other words, discourse, "an amalgam of speech and language," will disintegrate into individually senseless units without narrative. (20) But how does narrative contextualize in a way that dance, music, painting or other non-narrative media don't? The key difference is language. Dance synthesizes music and movement, music harmony and melody, and painting color and shape. But only narrative contextualizes language. What's the importance of language in the project of self-building? Robert N. Bellah cites Jerome Bruner's study that "conversations at home between mothers and preschool children showed that narratives occurred every

seven minutes, three-quarters of them told by the mothers.” (34) Further down the page, he cites Roy Schafer:

We are forever telling stories to ourselves. In telling these self-stories *to others* we may, for most purpose, be said to be performing straightforward narrative actions. In saying that we also tell them *to ourselves*, however, we are enclosing one story within another. This is the story that there is a Self to tell something to, a someone else serving as audience who is oneself or one’s self...On this view, the self is a telling.

These approaches indicate that language contextualized as narrative is important to the creation of a Self, but in so doing, they beg the question as to the importance of language. Bellah notes that the importance of pre-linguistic, mimetic communication (127), so what does verbal language contribute? He clarifies, importantly, that

...there is no reason to think that, because premodern members of the genus *Homo* did not have modern language, their mimetic action was silent (as the word ‘mime’ might imply). On the contrary, there is every reason to believe that vocalization had developed well beyond the simple cries in use by the great apes. Donald argues that some form of voluntary voice modulation – what he calls prosodic control of the voice – was a necessary step along the way to the evolution of language. He writes: ‘Prosodic control of the voice – that is, regulation of volume, pitch, tone of voice, and emphasis – is logically more fundamental than, and prior to, phonetic control; it is much closer to the capabilities of apes than phonology. It is close to what Darwin thought might have been the origin of the speech adaptation, a kind of rudimentary song.’ (128)

This position that mimetic and verbal communication exist in a continuum, as opposed to separate and discrete media, is significantly more pleasing than Schrag’s philosophical obsession with verbal and textual language. When we communicate in conversation with each other, a significant percentage of our communication is gestural. One of the artistic media that I aim to address in this thesis, theater, presents a fairly dramatic synthesis of mimetic and linguistic communication.

In all of this we have not addressed a significant factor of communication – it involves a speaker (I use the word loosely to extend to all who are on the giving end of communication) and a listener (again, loosely applied to all those on the receiving end). As such, communication and hence narrative are inherently social endeavors. And if narrative contextualizes units of discourse to constitute an identity for an individual, it can do the same for social groups:

Families, nations, religions...know who they are by the stories they tell. The modern discipline of history is closely related to the emergence of the nation-state. This is a peculiarly interesting example for our purposes. Families and religions have seldom been concerned with ‘scientific accuracy,’ with conceptual discursiveness, in the stories they tell. Modern nations have required national histories that will be, in a claimed objective sense, true. And unquestionably a great deal of accurate fact has been uncovered. But the narrative shape of national history is not more scientific (or less mythical) than the narrative shape of other identity tellings, something that it does not take the debunkers to notice. Benedict Anderson in *Imagined Communities* recounts both the widespread establishment of chairs of history within a generation of the French Revolution and its unleashing of nationalist fervor and of the strange mixture of memory and forgetting that that history produced... (Bellah 35)

So a myth is a narrative that helps the teller and audience constitute individual and social identities. This thesis is itself a story of vicious conflict and unexpected cooperation between two social identities – that of the Káruk-aráara, or “Upriver People” of the mid-stretch of the Klamath River on North America’s northern Pacific coast, and that of the United States. These narrative identities, these myths, have engaged with each other for the past 162 years to a great extent within the realm of education. I intend to tell that story, which in itself simply a retelling of another myth – that of the Indian Renaissance. While myths have a tendency to oversimplify and exhibit a straight flowing current, this thesis is intended in part to show the complications and eddies and whirlpools that are an integral part to this iteration of the Myth of the Indian Renaissance. But, especially as I

am a Káruk-ára from the villages of Taxasúfkara and Ka'tim'îin, my sympathies are decidedly with my people. As such, it's important for the reader to know the general structure of the story I'm telling so that they can judge for themselves how this river flows in spite of my admitted biases.

The Myth of the Indian Renaissance is not a single story, but rather a structure over which stories are woven. Hence, "myth" in this instance reflects Robertson's loose definition that "Myths are stories; they are attitudes extracted from stories; they are 'the way things are' as people in a particular society believe them to be; and they are the models people refer to when they try to understand their world and its behavior." (xv) This myth says that virtually all of the evils in Indian Country today can be traced back to colonization, and that the only way to resist is to hold true to one's own indigenous culture. Iterations have been told since Europe's invasion of the continent, and seem to have originated in part from concerns about economic dependence upon colonial powers.

The Delaware Prophet reported in 1762 that the Master of Life had asked him,

Wherefore do you suffer the whites to dwell upon your lands? Can you not do without them? I know that those whom you call the children of your Great Father [the King of France] supply your wants; but were you not wicked as you are you would not need them. You might live as you did before you knew them. Before those whom you call your brothers [the French] had arrived, did not your bow and arrow maintain you? You needed neither gun, powder, nor any other object. The flesh of animals was your food; their skins your raiment. (Mooney 665)

Religion was a prominent feature of the myth in its 1762 iteration – remember it's a prophecy given by the "Master of Life" – but by the late 1800s, religion had become the dominant feature. Tävibo, the first Ghost Dance prophet, said "The divine spirit had become so much incensed at the lack of faith in the prophecies, that it was revealed to his chosen one that those Indians who believed in the prophecy would be resurrected and be

happy, but those who did not believe in it would stay in the ground and be damned forever with the whites.” (702) This strong religious element has remained – in 1993, Bruce King told the Myth of the Indian Renaissance in his play *Evening at the Warbonnet*. In it, four characters must lay down their burdens, all connected to colonization, before they can cross the River that lies between here and the land of the dead. To do so, they must work with two spirits, Coyote and Loon. This myth is at the heart of the current revivalist movement in Native America. We are currently bad off, with broken families, drug and alcohol dependency, rampant unemployment and violence (so the story goes) because of the ongoing process of colonization. The only way we can defend ourselves and fix our world is to hold onto our ancestral traditions that have survived, and revive those that have become dormant.

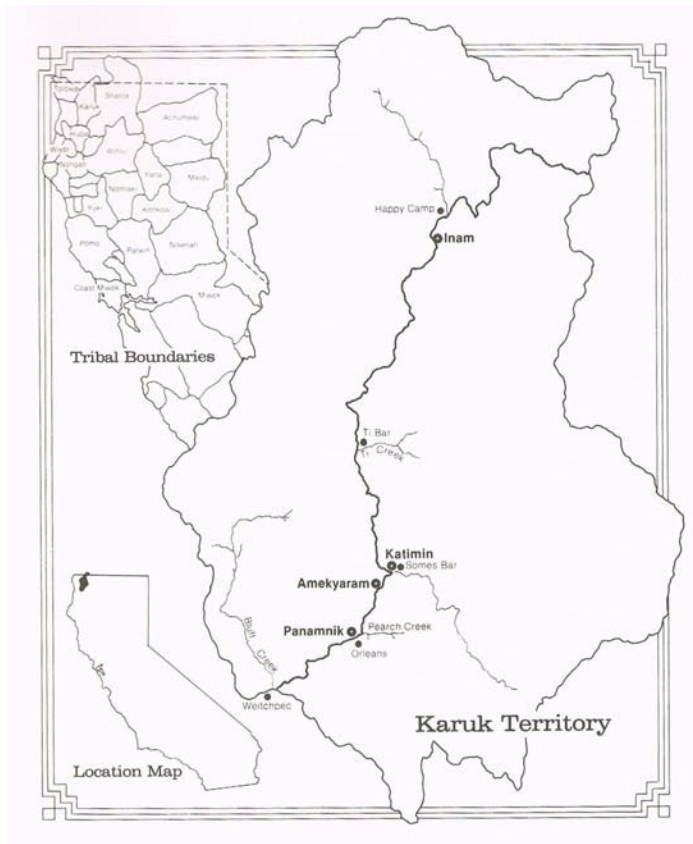


Fig. 1. A map of Káruk country.

The Káruk-aráara have lived on the mid-stretch of the Klamath River, between the current towns of Seiad and Weitchpec for time immemorial. My family comes from the villages of Ka'tim'îin at the confluence of the Klamath and Salmon Rivers (Ishkêesh and Masúhsav, respectively) and Taxasúfkara on what is now Pearch Creek. Our traditional religion or world-view is based around the High Dances (Vuvúha) Jump or Mountain Dance and the White Deerskin Dance, which were collectively dubbed by early anthropologists the "World Renewal Religion." My family has been instrumental in the continuance of these dances since they were given to us by the Creators, and continues to be active in Mountain Dance today. Our family also collects and makes the beautiful baskets traditional to our area. Excluding trade goods from the Chinook trade network on the Pacific Northwest Coast and the occasional Hudson Bay trader crossing the rugged mountains into our home country, our villages were mostly sheltered from the cataclysmic changes happening to our north and east at the hands of the Americans, and to the south at the hands of the Spaniards and Mexicans. All this changed when 49ers poured into our canyons and valleys in the early 1850s, exacting a devastating price on our people and country. After roughly two decades of laying waste to everything they touched, in a sort of inverted Midas touch, the gold diggers disappeared for the most part. Some, like my ancestor John A. Pearch, married Indian women and stayed to homestead the land, and the United States established the Hoopa Valley Agency some 26 miles down the Klamath and up the Trinity from Orleans (a mining town established on the Karuk village of Panámniik, across the Klamath from Taxasúfkara). But beside these sorts of contact, the United States had generally lost interest in our country, except insofar as the timber could be economically exploited. But they didn't lose interest in

Indians: the United States, as a settler colony, cannot exist without appropriating indigenous lands and negating the original inhabitants' title to the land. (Jacobs 84) After the Civil War, national policy shifted from a focus on wholesale slaughter of Native peoples (some have called it "ethnic cleansing" or "genocide," c.f. Norton) to one of assimilation. In the infamous words of Richard Henry Pratt, founder of the Indian boarding school system, "Kill the Indian to save the man." But before we can talk about the imposition of Euro-American education on our people, we have to consider classic Káruk education, and the ways in which storytelling inhabited it.

Chapter 2: Classic Káruk Education

Classic Káruk education, as I have received it, is predicated by two beliefs or “knowledges.” The first is that we all came into this world with a purpose, and it’s our responsibility to find out what that purpose is and to pursue it. We existed before we came here, and did so for a specific reason. The part of us that enters this world is our real self, and it is this that education is meant to develop. The second belief is that we can do that by learning about and practicing the teachings of Ikxaréeyavs, or the spiritual beings who inhabited the world before human beings and continue to do so as landmarks, plants or animals. One of the ways that we can begin to learn about the Ikxaréeyavs is to tell stories about them. These stories are called *pikvah*, or “creation stories,” and constitute a significant learning tool in classic Káruk education.

An important outcome of this worldview is that a person is ultimately responsible for his or her own education, his or her own well being. Thomas Buckley, in his discussion of Yurok education (the Yurok’s are, literally, the “downriver” neighbors of the upriver Káruk people, and are virtually identical culturally), phrases this concept in terms of Indian Law by saying that over-explanation is stealing “a person’s opportunity to learn, and stealing is against the Law.” (1979, 31). His research, and my own experience with classic Káruk education’s modern incarnations, indicates that “over-explanation” constitutes practically any explanation at all. According to Buckley, “...a young child is actively taught very little; it learns by watching and copying when it has enough interest. Most things are not explained, since people can only learn by and for themselves, learn to sort out facts, to draw conclusions about what works and what does not.” (30-31) In modern parlance, you “earn to learn.” That is to say, you have to work

through it for yourself. Otherwise, it's just somebody else's words, of which you have no understanding.

None of this precludes teachers. If one thinks of education like finding a path up a high mountain like Shasta, it helps and may save your life to have a guide. But you have to do your own hiking. In the old days, again according to Buckley, prepubescent children would find gentle mentorship from a grandparent figure. (1979, 31) This would change, however, at puberty, when a boy's uncle or a girl's aunt would take them under their wing. As Buckley explains, "Parents and grandparents are considered too emotionally involved to exercise the necessary rigor and objectivity." There were many ways that they could and would teach their pupils. The primary means was by example, but stories and songs would also be used. Buckley gives an example, in his book *Standing Ground* of a particularly compelling modern example: "Old ways of teaching have endured on the Klamath. In 1990 a friend told me that when he went to an elder for help in bringing back the jump dance at Pecwan, in 1984, the elder told him a single short myth, about Pulekukwerek and Condor and the origin of the jump dance. He had been thinking about the story ever since, particularly its last few lines which he went over again and again, mantralike." (106) Anthropologist A.L. Kroeber describes another instance in which Yurok elder Stone of Weitspus tried to educate him about the First Salmon Ceremony in 1902:

He told in brief outline the episode, familiar to every Yurok, of Wohpekumeu's theft of the concealed first salmon; another snatch, of the institutional myth type, about the salmon run; added some folklore not in narrative form about the great head-salmon Nepewo and his home Kowetsek across the ocean; summarized a formula, associated with Wohpekumeu, for luck in salmon fishing; went on, at somewhat greater length, to tell the story which explains the origin, or constitutes the kernel, of the formula spoken at the annual first salmon of New Year ceremony

made at Welkwäu at the mouth of the Klamath; and finished with interlardings of descriptions of the ritual and taboos. There is no formal unity to the account; but it seems to be much the sort of thing which a Yurok might now and then string together to tell his son or nephew as they lay in the sweathouse. (Kroeber & Gifford 1949, 120)

Buckley also describes a brief, *koan*-like poem that was used as a teaching tool. His description of its use bears notable similarity to the modern-day Yurok's repeating the end of a story, "mantralike": "Having been given such a song by a teacher it is up to the student to show the teacher that he knows what it means; that he is capable of perceiving, of experiencing the facts referred to." (1979, 36) Many *pikvah* also incorporate song, so what we're considering is in fact a collection of formally and thematically linked oral literature, rather than several discrete genres, *a la* Aristotle, that apparently stand apart from one another. It seems that while they can be lessons in and of themselves, they can often be used to help guide a student in another undertaking. I would like to consider three pursuits that have a significant role in education, and how *pikvah* and other forms of educational oral literature interact with them: sweathouse, classic menstrual practices, and mountain training.

Sweathouse was a standard element of men's and female doctors' training in classic Káruk culture, and is still used by some men and women today. Aboriginally a semi-subterranean structure, every village had at least one for daily use, which also served as the men's dwelling-space. Certain villages had one restricted to only ceremonial use. Kroeber and Gifford include this diagram of the Ka'tim'îin sacred sweathouse in their *World Renewal*:

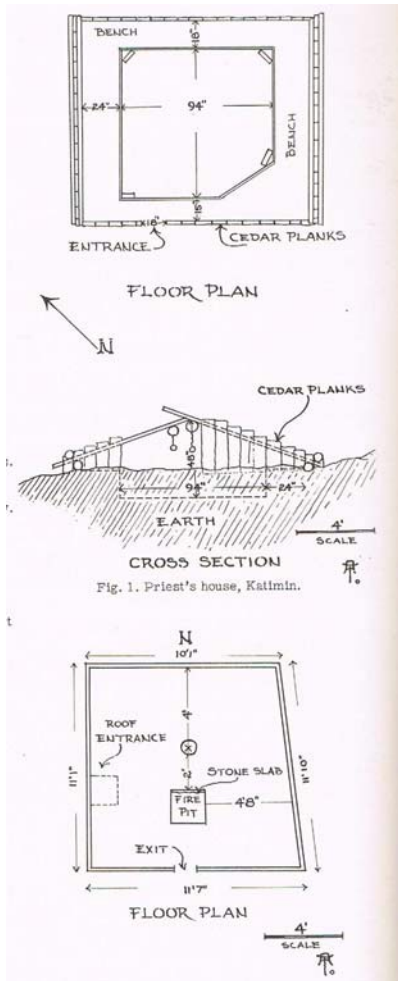


Fig. 2. The sacred sweathouse at Ka'tim'ïin.

According to Sweet William of Ishipishi, sweathouse was instituted by Great Dentalia, who travels downriver creating wealth and people to accumulate and appreciate it. (79) Since indigenous concepts of wealth have a direct bearing on classic education and the stories told as part of it, as well as standing in juxtaposition to latter Euro-American capitalism, they bear a closer look.

The basic currency before the influx of the American dollar was the dentalia shells traded down from the Puget Sound. In fact, the word for “dentalia” and “money” are both *ishpuk*. But besides this, other materials and composite creations, generally related in some way to the High Dance or World Renewal ceremonies, were and are considered

wealth. A key to understanding indigenous northwest Californian concepts of wealth as they differ from Euro-American concepts is what is often said about regalia currently housed in museums: “they cry to dance.” The first verb implies agency, although not, in my experience, the same kind of agency that human beings, plants and animals, or Ickxaréyavs have. Rather, it seems to be a kind of yearning to do what they were created to do. The similarity between this and the idea of individual purpose that presupposes the rest of classic Káruk education is notable. What they were brought into being for is to dance, that is, participate in the ceremonies that give us some of our greatest unity as a people. In fact, two indigenous social designations also suggest the centrality of High Dance or World Renewal to our communal identity. The Káruk, Yurok, Hupa, Wiyot and Chilula tribes are sometimes designated as the “High Dance People” or “Fix the World People.”

A rich person, then, is someone who has possession of a quantity of items used in ceremony, but who also lives in a certain way. A person can learn how to live right, in part, from the stories. And that brings us back to Sweet William’s story about sweathouse, another way to learn: Great Dentalia institutes three things along with sweathouse. The first is separate sleeping quarters for men and women, reflecting sexual asceticism as part of men and women’s spiritual training. Buckley writes “the problem for a man in training is that if he is thinking about sex he cannot think in an appropriately single-minded way about the objective of his training.” (2002, 112) Secondly, Great Dentalia says, “I will (make it that they) carry sweathouse wood. If a man brings down wood for the sweathouse, he will get money. Money will like that man. It will like him if

he carries wood (ihseira ahup) and cries.” (Sweet William 79) Journalist Stephen Powers described the practice of gathering sweathouse wood in the 1870s:

Fuel for the assembly chamber is sacred, and no squaw may touch it. It must be cut from a standing tree, and that tree must be on top of the highest hill overlooking the Klamath, and the branches must be trimmed in a certain particular manner. The Karok selects a tall and slightly fir or pine, climbs up within about twenty feet of the top, then commences and trims off all the limbs until he reaches the top where he leaves two limbs and a top knot, resembling a man’s head and arms outstretched. All this time he is weeping and sobbing piteously, shedding real tears, and so he continues to do while he descends, binds the wood in a fagot, takes it upon his back, and goes down to the assembly chamber. (25)

This brings us to the third part of sweathouse, as instituted by Great Dentalia: crying. One should focus on “the objective of his training” as he packs sweathouse wood, and cry for it. This is related, I believe, to regalia and baskets in museums “crying to dance.” In both instances, the subject yearns (and the yearning is sincere – they are “shedding real tears”) for its objective. And both objectives, it seems, have a direct bearing on both participating in the High Dance or World Renewal culture, and accomplishing one’s purpose for being in this world.

Traditional women’s seclusion during menstruation parallels sweathouse practices on many levels. (Buckley 1988, 190) Buckley cites a myth told by Weitchpec Susie to Kroeber in 1902 about the creation of menstruation and attendant practices. (194-195) These include ten day isolation in a designated structure and “a program of bathing and of firewood gathering.” The first article calls to mind men’s ten day isolation when preparing for ceremony or mountain training, and the second article here reminiscent of sweathouse practices described above. The *pikvah* goes on to state that Ikxaréeyav women menstruate, too. Since women’s periods would tend to sync up, often intentionally, in the tight-knit villages, this isolation would end up being a communal

activity between menstruating women. (190-191) This *pikvah* teaches the participants that the women's community, strengthened by the time alone together, extends beyond the physical world and includes Ikxaréeyav women. Where sweathouse was primarily a men's domain, and strengthened male unity, menstrual isolation seems to have strengthened old-time women's communal female identity on both a physical and spiritual level. In both instances, the spiritual aspect is facilitated largely through stories told about it.

Training in the mountains is one of our people's highest forms of prayer and education. As such, there are many stories told about different places in the mountains, and what people have done there. I would like to look at two: "Two Brothers Go Target Shooting," told by Phoebe Maddux to J. P. Harrington; and "The Source of Sregon Jim's Family Wealth," in Richard Keeling's *Cry for Luck*.

"Two Brothers Go Target Shooting" begins at the World Renewal Ceremony: the two brothers are target shooting. (16) Not only that, but "They ate no breakfast." That is, they're fasting as people do when preparing for spiritual business like ceremony or mountain training. Next, we learn that the two brothers are poor and, as such, excluded by taunts from the ceremony. That's when the tears come, and continue to come for ten nights. All this should now be familiar: the importance of wealth rooted in the High Dance or World Renewal culture, crying to participate fully in that culture, ten days as the usual amount of time for a man to prepare for spiritual business. After this, they head up the hill to the Lake of the Place where the Person Eats Himself (*'Arâar 'U'ípamvâanatihiróokram*). The first part of this process, going uphill, is reminiscent of firewood gathering for sweathouse or menstrual isolation. The second part is new: instead

of going to a tree, they're going to a lake. When they arrive, the older brother submerges himself in the water for five days, interacts with the Long Snake, *apsuunxára*, and on the way back down the hill wealth flocks to him. (17-18) He has achieved the purpose of his mission: fuller integration into the High Dance or World Renewal culture.

The story of Sregon Jim's great-grandfather begins with his annual summer training on a nearby mountain peak. Whereas the young man from Aftaram in Phoebe Maddox's story was swallowed up by an *apsuunxára* and given good-luck all at once over a period of five days, it took Sregon Jim's ancestor "many summers" make his breakthrough. (68) This calls attention to Buckley's observation that some people make a breakthrough that constitutes "a powerfully transformative experience or realization as a result of training." (2002, 123) But it also calls to mind the opposite, that Buckley observes on the next page, that "some people say that a trained man's transformation characteristically occurs slowly and almost of itself." (124) While both stories cited here involve ascension into the High Country, where the subject interacts directly with *Ikxaréyavs*, and the results allow him to participate more fully in the High Dance culture, the specifics of each case are individual. This holds true with other historic and contemporary accounts of mountain training, as well as with the basic assertion of classic Káruk education: that every person came here for an individual purpose, and it is their responsibility to find out what that purpose is and to pursue it. Note that while the young man from Aftaram has the support of his brother, he dives into the lake *alone*.

In this, albeit cursory, survey of classic Káruk education we see that storytelling serves to create examples of how to live, but not manual-like instructions. Education is the student's own responsibility, a process of self-discovery within the High Dance social

structure. As such, it would be counterproductive to over-explain or to use stories didactically. As we've seen in my descriptions, this kind of education has persisted parallel to the recently introduced American education. This, however, was contrary to the intentions of the early incarnations of American education in Káruk country, to be addressed in the next chapter.

Chapter 3: Assimilatory American Education

To understand American education in regards to Indians, one has to first understand one simple fact: the United States cannot be a country without the dispossession of indigenous peoples. There are two poles to the spectrum of colonial practice. The first is an “extractive colony,” in which the foreign, politically dominant group is smaller than the indigenous group, from whom they extract and exploit labor, or else extract and exploit the resources of the indigenous group’s land. (Jacobs 2-3 There is never any thought of the colonial group residing in the place permanently – once they’ve finished exploiting the land and its people, the colonists will move on. The second is a “settler colony,” in which the foreign, politically dominant group seeks to establish permanent colonies. In order to do that, they must extinguish other groups’ permanent claims to that land. The United States tends almost exclusively towards the latter in terms of its relations to North America and North America’s indigenous peoples. In order to firmly establish its claim to North America, the United States must extinguish the competing indigenous claims. This extinguishing is brutal: in this thesis we will focus solely on practices of child removal and forced assimilation, but the tactics run the gamut of acts that the United Nations calls “genocide.” (Norton 36-48) While some masons of America’s bloody foundations seem to have thrown themselves to their work with an almost sociopathic disregard for human suffering, most had to tell themselves stories to make their belligerent Americanism conscionable. One of the primary rationalizing narratives was that of social Darwinism.

19th century American theorist Lewis Henry Morgan posited a three-tiered approach to human cultural evolution. The first, savagery, was indicated by a hunter-gatherer economy and a “heathen” religion. I suppose my Káruk ancestors fit the bill. The second, intermediate tier was barbarism, and was marked by a pastoral economy. The highest tier, civilization, was modeled on Morgan’s own Protestant Anglo-Saxon culture. (Jacobs 66) This division was only part of the story: movement, irresistible and pre-ordained, was also key to justifying the horrors wrought by the settler colony. Alice Cunningham Fletcher, instrumental in Richard Henry Pratt’s child-removal project, said that “The life of the nations and the peoples of the world is like the life of the human being; it has the childhood period, the adolescent period, and the mature period... We speak of savagery, barbarism and civilization, - terms which merely represent these stages.” (Quoted in Jacobs 67) The moral of the story (and Western stories tend to be much more partial to morals than High Dance stories) was that, unless Indians could progress out of their savage state into one of civilization, they would be *naturally* annihilated by the more advanced American society. From there, it was a simple step for the reformers of U.S. Indian policy applying this narrative to American actions to argue that the United States had an obligation to help the Indians make this progression. This constitutes a core myth of the American assimilatory practices towards Indian peoples across the continent. It infused many of the teachers’ approaches towards their students, and influenced the identity-making of some of those students, and many of those students’ descendants.

Much has been written about the effects of American education on Indian people, so I would like to concentrate here on its effects on storytelling, especially Káruk

storytelling. One of the most pervasive of these has been the change in languages. The Káruk language, or *Araaráhi* (“the people’s language”) is of questionable lineage. William Bright addresses this question in the “Introduction” to his monumental *Karok Language*: “The Karok language is not closely or obviously related to any other. It has, however, been classified as a member of the northern group of Hokan languages, in a subgroup which includes Chimariko and the Shastan languages, spoken in the same general part of California as Karok itself. Considerable work remains to be done before the historical position of Karok can be properly clarified.” (1) Historically, our people were often multilingual: we had to be, living in such close proximity to the Yurok, who spoke an Algic language; and the Hupa, who spoke an Athabascan language. For perspective, Hokan, Algic and Athabascan are language families like Indo-European or Sino-Tibetan. Káruk is as little related to the languages of our nearest neighbors as it is to English, or as English is to Han Chinese. So it comes as no surprise that Káruk speakers would have taken up English as well upon the influx of the Americans. In fact, learning English seems to have been a popular thing to do upriver when field matrons Mary Ellicott Arnold and Mabel Reed established a school there. What does not follow from this equation alone is that English would supplant Káruk, but our discussion of settler colonialism gives us our explanation: it’s in America’s national interest to annihilate anything that might constitute a competing claim to the continent, and elements of indigenous cultures do. How did schools factor into this? Arnold and Reed’s school seems to have been benign – they even made an effort to learn Araráhi. (Arnold & Reed 243-244) But their actions did not represent official policy. In its effort to extinguish Native cultures as viable rivals for the land, and to incorporate them into the fabric of

mainstream American life, the federal school service established English as the sole means of communication in their boarding schools in 1890. (Adams 140) This “no Indian” rule was often enforced with corporal punishment: “Minnie Jenkins frankly describes in her memoirs how on one occasion she laid thirty-five Mohave kindergartners – ‘like little sardines’ – across tables, whereupon she spanked them for speaking Mohave.” (141) This, coupled with the stigma of being identified in white communities as Indian, had a devastating toll on fluency in indigenous languages. For example, William Bright estimated that there were 100 speakers of Káruk in the 1950s. (1) It should be mentioned that population-loss is also a factor in that low number. The tribe was around a quarter of its 1850 population in the 1950s at 755 people. Still, that comes to about 6/7s or 86% of the population not speaking their indigenous language only 100 years after colonization. The effect on storytelling is clear – stories were now largely told in English. But what were the stories propagated by the new education system?

Some of Grimm’s fairy tales and Norse myths factored into the mix. Arnold and Reed write about a student being horrified at the fate of Little Red Riding Hood’s Grandmother (97), and Chippewa student Maude Martin at Haskell tells an “Indian Story of Cinderella.” (*Indian Legends and Superstitions* 58-60) a Papago student references “The Heroes of Asgard” in that same publication. (98) But Christian mythology took up a lion’s share of the introduced storytelling repertoire. This comes as no surprise: as we saw above, Christianity was considered one of the necessary features of civilization. Hence, when the government ended the patronage system of appointments to the Indian Office, they contracted administrative duties to Christian groups. (Cahill 2011, 43) As Herbert Welsh of the Indian Rights Association enthused, “the work must be done, not be

official mechanism, but by Christian spirit and Christian knowledge.” Christianization of colonized groups seems to be a dominant factor in the American mythos, as expressed in the concept of Manifest Destiny. In 1823, Massachusetts Congressman Francis Baylies justified American expansion thus:

Sir, our natural boundary is the Pacific ocean. The swelling tide of our population must and will roll on until that mighty ocean interposes its waters, and limits our territorial empire... To diffuse the arts of life, the light of science, and the blessings of the Gospel over a wilderness, is no violation of the laws of God; it is no invasion of the rights of man to occupy a territory over which the savage roams, but which he never cultivates... The stream of bounty which perpetually flows from the throne of the Almighty ought not be obstructed in its course. (Quoted in Robertson 72)

In fact, if one needs to root this policy even further in Scripture, one need look no further than the Book of Joshua. With the “captain of the Lord’s host” (5:15) on their side, the Israelites wipe out the populations of Jericho (6:24), Ai (8:19-22), and God even holds the sun still so that “it came to pass, when Joshua and the children of Israel had made an end of slaying them with a very great slaughter, till they [the Amorites] were consumed...” (10:20) All this was acceptable because the people of Canaan didn’t worship the God of Moses, as the Israelites did. The same logic is applicable to the Americans’ treatment of the Indians. The difference is that, in the assimilation period from roughly the end of the Civil War to the 1930s, Christian charity also factored in. As Jesus tells Paul,

But rise, and stand upon they feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou has seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom I now send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from the darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me. (Acts 26:16-18)

Or, more to the point, “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me.” (John 14:6) And how did all this play out in the schools? Of the Hampton Institute, David Wallace Adams writes, “In Sunday school, the Hampton Institute reported, ‘the teacher endeavors to put into these almost empty minds the simplest, and at the same time the most strengthening, truth of God’s Word.’ . . . Stories of David and Goliath, the separation of the waters, the slaying of the Philistines, and the resurrection of Christ were easily the equals of the wonders told by tribal medicine men.”

(168) While some of this Christian indoctrination worked, and may be part of Christian practice in Indian country today, sometimes it fell on deaf ears. Adams continues,

Some students were apparently confused by it all. In some schools pupils were forced to repeat the words of Bible verses and hymns with no explanation of the meaning behind the phrases. For younger students, language presented a problem. A former student at Tuba City boarding school bitterly remembers two-hour Sunday sermons, even though ‘some of us who did not understand the full meaning of the sermons would get bored and fall asleep.’ (170)

Sleeping through boring sermons is by no means exclusive to Indian children, but in the context of government mandated assimilation, it also constitutes a passive means of resistance. Other students were more active in their resistance to Christianization.

Chippewa student Thomas St. Germaine wrote in a Haskell Institute publication in 1914 that “There are two gods, the white man’s god and our god, and if you break the laws of our religion by adopting that of the white man and try to enter where their souls go they will not take you in...” (*Indian Legends and Superstitions* 89), a sentiment reflected in current neo-conservative religious beliefs amongst some of the High Dance People of northwest California (Buckley 2002, 254)

These stories were also told through song. Arnold and Reed, interacting with the Káruk-aráaras penchant for music, fared well with teaching their pupils/congregation hymns from the Episcopal hymnbook. Their efforts seem to have been well received, and, they were not exclusionary to Káruk music. They note that Sunday School at ‘Ayíthrim would begin with Christian hymns, repeating the verse eight or ten times Káruk style, and end with Káruk drum and hunting songs. (174) They also take credit for an upsurge in the popularity of traditional dances in the region, at the expense of alcohol-fueled “white dances.” (206) Elsewhere, the Indian education system was more interested in replacing Indian storytelling repertoires with the mainstream American one, as opposed to adding to it. In the 1890s, the Indian Office seems to have tried the tactic of not leaving the students time for anything but Christianity:

...schools were also expected to develop a systematic program of religious instruction. A typical week’s activities included Sunday morning, afternoon, and evening services, daily morning and evening prayers, and a special Wednesday evening prayer meeting. As for the content of religious instruction, teachers were encouraged to emphasize the Ten Commandments, the beatitudes, and prominent psalms. (Adams 167-168)

Drama also found its way into the curriculum. Cahill mentions that the Hoopa Valley School put on a production of Ernest Thompson Seton’s musical *The Wild Animal Play for Children*. (141) As one of the founders of the Boy Scouts of America, and the founder of the Woodcraft Indians (“Biographical Information about Ernest Thompson Seton”), the administrators at Hoopa Valley must have thought his work would be appropriate for Indian children. While institutions like Woodcraft Indians smack of cultural appropriation and “playing Indian” to the modern ear, and the BSA has certainly been guilty of these things, the intent seems to me to have been to incorporate things into the curriculum that the administration thought the students could relate to. As such, it is

pedagogically linked to both Arnold and Reed's activities upriver about a decade later, and to ongoing development of indigenous curricula in Indian education today. But for Káruk-aráaras shipped to off-reservation boarding schools, the drama wasn't so Indian-friendly. In 1802, the Hampton Institute put on "Columbia's Roll Call," a pageant of American heroes like Christopher Columbus, John Smith and George Washington, presented to the Indian students by the American goddess Columbia, wrapped in an American flag. The play ended with the following exhortation to the Indian audience:

And the still ways of peace we would follow –
Sow the seed and the sheaves gather in,
Share your labor, your learning, your worship,
A life larger, better, to win.
Then, foeman no longer nor aliens,
But brothers indeed we will be,
And the sun find no citizens truer
As he rolls to the uttermost sea. (Adams 197-199)

The parts were all played by Indian actors, but it is unclear if any Káruk-aráaras participated. In 1909, the second year that Arnold and Reed were working to promote English literacy and pride in traditional ceremonies in Káruk country, the Haskell Institute put on a play written by a teacher called "Chief Strong Arm's Change of Heart." Again played by Indians, the play is a propaganda piece about a fictional chief Strong Arm who initially opposes boarding schools like Haskell, but sees the light when he witnesses the positive changes that the school has had on his son. It ends with the lines

The past seems lost,
Far, far away as in the night;
Alone I seem to stand –
I find no pathway leading to the light.

But when I turn,
And look into your faces bright,
And there behold your joy, your hope,
My heart is soft and light;

And Strong Arm yields, yes, yes!
It must be right.

Now golden sunbeams pierce the gloom,
A way appears in light;
A radiance steals into my heart.
Clearing the darkness from my sight;
I only turn me back to say,
Farewell, O night! (Adams 240-243)

Separate schools for Indians had never been a long-term goal: they were meant to assimilate Indian children into mainstream American life, whereupon they could be integrated into the public school system. (319) This process began slowly and early, in 1890, and by 1920 the number of Indian children in public schools was higher than that in Indian schools. This was coupled by a move towards a pluralistic mindset with the Indian New Deal in the 1930s. Shoshone teacher Essie Horne, employed by the Indian Service, enthused, “Those days were so exciting! Finally, we no longer had to hide the fact that we were incorporating our cultural values into the curriculum and student life.” (Cahill 2011, 257) But while this was a step in a healthier direction for Indian students, the dominant narrative continued to white-wash American history, relegating Indians to a place in the past. Tony Platt, in his new book *Grave Matters*, does a brief survey of popular California history books and finds that they tell the story of Manifest destiny, that “Violence against peaceable Indians was to be deplored – so went the emerging California Story – but as an inferior civilization stuck in the past they were destined to extinction anyway.” (57) This story, and ones like it, continued to be told through the duration of last century, rationalizing the supposed disappearance of Indians, and hence denying living Indians a place in the present. Pluralistic approaches like those advocated by Arnold and Reed or Horne only began to gain traction in the last 50 or so years, a

movement that coincided with the revival of traditional forms of education and the stories that go with them. But to understand this, we first have to take a look at some of the white academics who documented Káruk culture in the 20th century whose work has in no small way helped this revival.

Chapter 4: Early Academic Interest

Four men and six books are of note. A. L. Kroeber, father of U.C. Berkeley's Anthropology Department, was markedly more interested in the downriver Yurok. But he did contribute in no small part to the anthropological literature dealing with the upriver Káruk people. He treats on classic Káruk culture in juxtaposition with other tribes in his massive *Handbook of the Indians of California* (1925) and in collaboration with fellow anthropologist E. W. Gifford for *World Renewal* (1949). Their work appeared side by side again posthumously in 1976 in *Karok Myths*, envisioned by his widow Theodora Kroeber as “a companion volume to *Yurok Myths*”. (xv) Joining them from the field of linguistics were J. P. Harrington who collaborated with Káruk elder Phoebe Maddux for their *Karuk Indian Myths* and more substantial *Tobacco among the Karuk Indians of California* (both published in 1932). William Bright, a relative late comer on the scene, wrote the monumental *Karok Language* for the University of California in 1957. Together, these constitute something like a core canon of early academic literature concerning the Káruk-varâara.

Kroeber writes about “The Karok” in the fifth chapter of his *Handbook*. The first four are about the Yurok, arguably his favorite tribe. He makes what he said about them also apply to us in his opening sentences: “The Karok are the up-river neighbors of the Yurok. The two peoples are indistinguishable in appearance and customs except for certain minutiae; but they differ totally in speech.” (98) The rest of the chapter is largely taken up with discussing the nuts and bolts of our religion. As such, it can be seen as a

precursor to his later book with Gifford called *The World Renewal: A Cult System of Native Northwestern California*. A detailed survey of the various ceremonies in Káruk, Hupa, Yurok and Wiyot country, this book begins with the data Gifford compiled from Káruk and Hupa sources, followed by Kroeber's contribution on Yurok and Wiyot ceremonies. Working with Káruk informants like Shan Davis, who was also instrumental in reviving the World Renewal Ceremony, or *Írahiv*, at Ka'tim'îin, Gifford created a technical description of the ceremonies centered out of four major Káruk villages. Kroeber and Gifford appended a small collection of *pikvah*, preserving them for future generations, and Gifford touches upon the traditional transmission of these stories. Writing about the ceremonies at Inam on testimony from Sally and Daisy Jacobs, he states that, "The priest's formulas are not spoken by anyone until time comes to instruct the new priest, except that in December young people, both boys and girls, are told about the ceremony. When the priest is instructed, others may listen. (These two last statements are contrary to descriptions of practice elsewhere in Karok territory.)" (12) In regards to Ka'tim'îin, on testimony from Georgia Orcutt, he describes the similarities and differences between the two villages:

The formulas or medicines used by the priest were never sold; they were taught without charge to new priests, so they could carry on the pikiavish ceremony...Ixtupkidisha, Sandy Bar Bob's father, instructed the priest. After him his three sons, Bob, George, and Sam, served as instructors. These Chamikninach people were reputed to be specially versed in the formulas for the pikiavish, teaching them to the men selected to serve as priests. This instruction was given in the sweathouse; no outsiders were allowed to listen. When the priests grew old, they became advisers and instructors of younger priests. (52)

Whereas the *Handbook* glosses over the Káruk-varâara in favor of the Yurok, and *World Renewal* has ceremony at center-stage (while making clear the central importance of

storytelling), the posthumous *Karok Myths* puts our oral literature at center stage. While the title page and Theodora Kroeber's "Forward" make it look as if Kroeber and Gifford are the authors, their actual text puts the stories and the tellers (eleven of them) at center stage. The anthropologists' writing is limited to brief introductions of the tellers and their stories, bracketed text interspersed in the tellers' words to make it more user-friendly for a white academic audience, and ethnographic notes by A. L. Kroeber in the center of the book.

Representing the field of early Káruk linguistics, J. P. Harrington and William Bright dominate the scene. Like Kroeber and Gifford in their *Karok Myths*, Harrington is credited as author of *Karuk Indian Myths* and *Tobacco among the Karuk Indians of California*. But in reality, the words are those of Phoebe Maddux, a Káruk storyteller and basketweaver. Harrington was the one with the academic connections to publish books, but Maddux is the true author. As the driving force behind the creation of *Karuk Indian Myths*, Harrington writes,

Indian myths are valuable as literature in direct proportion to the faithfulness of the old style Indian linguistic form in which they are told. Volumes of mythology distorted by being told loosely in English will be of only secondary usefulness in the future... The only proper method for recording mythology is to obtain the services of a good mythologist and then take down syllable by syllable in his own language, with unrestrained literary freedom, the story as he tells it, and as nearly as possible as he heard it from those a little farther back in the line of elders. (1)

His style is to write out Maddux's Araaráhi telling, and then work with her to get an English translation that approximates it as close as possible that follows the original directly in the book. In *Tobacco among the Karuk Indians of California*, they engaged in the same process, but he lays the original and the translation out side by side on the page. In addition to Maddux, Harrington worked with nine men informants. His approach to the

second books is merely a continuation of the first: “Knowledge and practice of the California Indians with regard to tobacco has up to the present time been insufficiently explored...Furthermore, the method pursued by others has been wrong. A constant basing of the study upon language is the only path to correctness and completeness. Every act and status must be traced through language to the psychology and mythology behind it.” (1932, 1) His devotion to Arâarahi is evinced by these two quotations, and driven home by a reading of his and Maddux’s books. These books, as well as his unpublished field notes, have been instrumental in the revival of the language. But even his contribution in recording Arâarahi for future generations is overshadowed by that of William Bright.

Bright came to the Klamath River and worked with native speakers of the language from 1949 through 1954. In his introduction, he gives credit to Harrington as well as his own seven informants (including my relative Julia Starritt). He recorded a substantial body of *pikvah* from them, which he published with the original facing his translation on opposite pages. In this regard, *The Karok Language* resembles Maddux and Harrington’s books. But these take up only roughly a third of the 457 page book. The first third is a grammatical description of the language, and the final third is an Araarâhi-English/English-Araarâhi lexicon, with a special focus on etymology. The impact of his book on language revival has been so monumental, and his continued work with the community so well-received, that upon his passing in 2006, the Karuk Tribe conferred the *only* honorary tribal membership of an outsider on him.

The initial impact of these four men upon the community was generally separate from their impact upon their own academic communities initially. They came, they

studied, they left and published. There books were certainly present, to some degree, on the Klamath River, but their popularity and usefulness has skyrocketed in the modern, revivalist era. It is to that era, our era, that we now turn.

Chapter 5: Modern Era

Public school attendance by Indian children nationwide has remained at about one percent of total enrollment since 1986, with about a third of them going to school in remote rural areas like the Klamath River. (National Center for Education Statistics, *Status and Trends in the Education of American Indians and Alaska Natives: 2008*) The enrollment percentage carries over into college: roughly one percent of students enrolled in college are Indian, with a slight preference for two-year not-for-profit institutions. (National Center for Education Statistics, *The Condition of Education*) Until the rise of revisionist historians like Dee Brown (*Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*) in the 1960s, these students were taught the mainstream Manifest Destiny account of American history. The Indian side of the story was brought home to northwest Californian academia by Jack Norton, a Hupa scholar and traditional singer and dancer.

His parents met at Haskell Indian School. (Norton 14) He describes it poetically: “Old glory fluttered in the Kansas plains while their eyes met across the ranks.” (Personal communication, August 7, 2011) His father, Jack Norton Sr., was the first Hupa to graduate from college (Norton 14), and Jack Norton Jr. followed in his footsteps, graduating from Humboldt State University in Arcata, California, in 1955. (16) Although he majored in Biology, he began teaching high school World and U.S. History in Fortuna, California in 1958. (18-19) He couldn’t have picked a better time, because he saw the nascent activism by American Indians in his first decade as a teacher. He was aware about all-Indian school experiment by the Navajo in 1966 (19), and the more local federal grant to Humboldt State to train Indian public school teachers. (20) Both moves were

meant to combat high drop-out rates amongst Indian students. He stepped fully and publicly into the world of Indian activism with his book *Genocide in Northwestern California: When Our Worlds Cried*, in which he subverts the dominant narrative of “The California Story” by describing the conquest of northwest California in terms of the Geneva Convention’s definition of genocide. He was applying for a tenured position at a state university at the time. (Buckley 2002, 71) Later, he was employed at a different state university, Humboldt State, where he founded the Native American Studies Department in 1998. (Cahill “Tales of Subversion”)

Norton’s story typifies and exhibits many of the positive changes happening for Indian students during a watershed moment in American Indian history. However, his academic pursuits were only part of his life. Norton was and is a ceremonial singer and dancer in High Dance ceremonies. The period in which he participated in Indian people’s struggle to claim American institutions of education in an effort to make them work for Indian students was marked by activism and religious revivalism both nationally and locally. Some elements of traditional education continued (cf. Buckley 2002), but the Indian generation that came of age in the 40s and 50s is colloquially known as the “lost” or “short-hair” generation, referencing their alienation from their traditional culture, symbolized by their wearing their hair short to try to assimilate into mainstream American society. In 1970, however, a group of Yuroks, largely from the villages of O-pyúweg on the coast and Mowr-rekw on the Klamath River founded the Northwest Indian Cemetary Protection Association (NICPA) with other indigenous northwest Californians to fight the looting of their ancestors’ graves. (Platt 128) Their movement began to gain steam after a showdown with anthropologists from San Francisco State

University who hoped to excavate graves at the village of Tsahpekwa on the Yurok coast. Feeding off the upsurge of social consciousness and respect for Indian people, the SFSU team, lead by Michael Moratto, set up a meeting with NICPA in June of 1970 at Humboldt State to discuss the most culturally responsible way to dig. Expecting a collaboration, Moratto instead met with a century of repressed rage boiling over. The respectful way to dig, he learned, was not to dig at all:

The meeting...quickly turned tense and argumentative. After Moratto nervously explained that the sheriff's ban on excavations did not apply to state land, and that he hoped to salvage what remained of Tsahpekwa and "to avoid cemetery areas," he sat and listened to a lecture of complaints: "Archaeologists have not contributed much beyond what is already known of Yurok history and traditions...Archaeologists and anthropologists take artifacts and information away from the Indians and their territory without returning anything of value to the Indians...It is sacrilegious to store the artifacts and bones of deceased Indians in museums..."

"I was totally intimidated," recalls Moratto. "A big guy there – about six feet across his shoulders – spoke up: 'I don't know about you archaeologists, but you ain't going to dig at Tsahpekwa.'" Moratto recalls "one particularly irascible Yurok logger"...who "spiced the dialogue with periodic threats of actual violence. Not wishing to jeopardize lives or future Indian-anthropologist relationships, I conceded to leave Tsahpekwa and undertake research elsewhere." Moratto was too stunned to turn the incident into a learning experience for his students. "I was shell-shocked for several days." (141)

Activism thrives on success. It shows the activists that going the edge, putting themselves in a sometimes vulnerable position against structures of power pays off, and this early success was healthy for the nascent activism in native northwest California. But sometimes a long fight, even if it doesn't result in unilateral victory, can also be healthy for community organizers. The G-O Road fight was that for the emergent leaders in the region. Children of the short-haired generation, the members of NICPA and other community leaders were set to reclaim their culture, and a concerted assault by the

United States on their ancestral homeland and religion was the spark that ignited the already smoldering spirit of revivalism into a conflagration.

It's not clear if the Forest Service has any legal right to administer the High Country where the places involved in mountain training are. No tribe in California has a ratified treaty with the United States, so it could be that their only deed to that country is the fact that the United States is particularly nasty to anyone who stands in the way of its perceived destiny. But they do effectively control it, and in the late 60s the Forest Service started planning a road to connect Gasquet on the coast to Orleans on the Klamath River. This road would cut right by some of our most spiritual places, Doctor Rock and Chimney Rock especially, places intimately associated with traditional education. The controversy proceeded until 1988, when the U.S. Supreme Court handed down a decision (*Lynng v. NICPA*) in favor of the Forest Service, and the Forest Service backed off in the face of stringent local protest. (Buckley 2002, 197-198) The intervening years were full of politically driven anthropological research on indigenous spirituality, and by an upsurge in indigenous spiritual practice. Involved in the anthropological endeavors were Indian people like Julian Lang (Karuk/Wiyot) and Kathy Heffner (Wailaki), both to be instrumental in the resurgence of indigenous ceremonies, around which, we will recall, indigenous education is structured. There was substantial cross-over between the anthropology and cultural revivalism Lang and his wife Lyn Risling (Karuk) revived Íhuk at his ancestral village of Vunxáarak, and Heffner and her husband Richie McClellan (Karuk) were central to the revival of the Káruk Mountain Dance in 1994. Also part of the Káruk Mountain Dance was Terry and Sarah Supahan. The Supahans and Lang have both been instrumental in the revival of Araráhi. The Supahans helped create the Karuk

Language Program at Hoopa High School (Walters), and Lang works one on one with students in the immersive Masters-Apprentice language program. Susah Gehr (Karuk) worked with William Bright on a new Karuk dictionary before his passing. It currently exists in print and online, hosted by the Karuk Tribe and U.C. Berkeley. The website includes a translator, and texts from Bright's original book. (*Karuk Dictionary and Texts*) All owe a huge debt of gratitude to Terry Supahan's great-aunt, the late Violet Super, who worked with William Bright, the Supahans, their children, Lang, Gehr, and many others to keep the language alive. According to family legend, Super (born Violet Ruth "Vasitíhniich" Johnny) was the only one of her siblings not to go to boarding school – her parents hid her. (Walter) As such, she was bilingual in Araráhi and English. One of her other nephews also active in language revival, André Crambit, remembers

When [we] started pestering Auntie [Violet] to start teaching [us] Karuk, she balked. Why didn't [we] just speak it? she asked...Pretty soon she was talking in Karuk to kids in the high school language classes and agreeing to be a master speaker in the master-apprentice program. [We] studied with her. So did her great-great nieces, Elly and her twin sister Nisha.... "She was a force of nature," recalls Gehr. "One day she told me, 'I've got to live to be a hundred. I've got this job to do, I've got this language to pass on to everybody.'" (Walter)

Elly and Nisha Supahan are my generation – the second since the short-haired generation. At least since mid-childhood, our ancestral culture has been a part of our lives. Our parents have given us an easier start than they had, and many of our generation take full advantage of it. The Káruk Mountain Dance, now about twenty years revived, serves as a hub of communication for many of us, where we can exchange ideas and inspire each other, probably like it was in the old days. Mountain Dance, which occurs every year at a village site above the Klamath River, keeps many of us emotionally and spiritually strong and committed to our ancestral culture. I met Elly and her husband Phil

Albers, who are raising their three children to speak Araráhi as a first language and telling them our old stories in their original language. My sister is designing curricula for Indian students for the Portland School District in Oregon. And I am writing an M.F.A. thesis at a state school in New York, where I have been exploring new and old approaches to indigenous Káruk storytelling. I would like to take a look at the debt those endeavors owe to the story this thesis has told so far.

I developed two pieces based on Káruk storytelling at Stony Brook University, and, as it was storytelling done by a Káruk-ára, these two pieces constitute part of the body ongoing tradition of Káruk storytelling. I am also currently contracted to tell stories for Portland Public Schools in Oregon this summer (2012). The first piece, *Stories of Our People*, I created with Julian Lang, and performed it at the Consortia of Administrators for Native American Rehabilitation's (CANAR) conference in December of 2010 in San Diego. It came out of a project for Maxine Kern's Production Dramaturgy course, taught in the Spring of 2011 for the Theatre Department at Stony Brook University. The project was to have the concept for a dramaturgically driven project, and find a collaborator to help you develop it. The end result for the class was to be a dramaturgical protocol of the project, but *Stories of Our People* went well beyond that. The initial concept was to create a "Native Western," as a way of reclaiming indigenous histories as portrayed in the Western film genre. Knowing that Lang has background in theater, I reached out to him. We settled on using stories of contact between Káruk and Euro-American society and approaching them dramaturgically in a rhizomatic, "storyweaving" structure. Our basis for this structure was entirely indigenous, and our examples were ones such as the network of stories cited above from *The World Renewal Ceremony*. (120) Our stories

were selected from received oral and anthropological literature, forming a synthesis of classic methods of transmission with new, literary ones introduced by white academics writing about our people. My personal reading of the audience reaction was that rhizomatic or episodic approaches are largely lost on an audience accustomed to climactic plot structures like those seen on TV. So, whereas traditional storytelling can weave an assortment of stories linked thematically, but not causally; audiences today expect a clear progression of events, each necessitating the ones after it, culminating in a climactic point of dramatic tension.

The second piece, *Coyote Hunts the Sun*, relied on more literary sources from across the continent, but still concerned moments of contact between indigenous and colonial societies. Structurally, it fell somewhere between the free-flowing *Stories of Our People* and *Law & Order: SVU*. It didn't lose the audience like *Stories of Our People* seemed to do, but it did challenge them with an episodic structure. It also experimented with competing storytelling: two storytellers telling the same story in different ways. The source material was culled from books like Bright's *Karok Language* and Kroeber and Gifford's *Karuk Myths*, as well Black Hawk's *Autobiography*. Its reliance on oral testimony was minimal compared to *Stories of Our People*. A staging in the Fall Semester of 2011 for the purposes of workshopping the piece showed me that I have a long ways to go before *Coyote Hunts the Sun* is finished.

In thinking about what stories I'm going to tell the students in Portland during their summer session, it became clear to me that the indigenous myth *Coyote Hunts the Sun* is a useful format for telling whatever stories I want to about America. In its college campus incarnation, the stories were those of colonialism. If I tell it to the grade-schoolers, and I

probably will, it will be about different kinds of animals. The official curriculum that I am telling stories within has to do with animals, so everything I do will have to be animal stories.. On a more implicit level, my telling Indian stories to Indian children has the hoped-for effect of helping them develop pride in their indigenous heritage, something that was explicitly meant to be stamped out by previous incarnations of American educational institutions amongst Indian people.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

Educational forms have had a pervasive impact on Káruk storytelling from classic times to the present. In classic Káruk culture, storytelling was one part of a broad educational structure that ranged from the sweathouses and villages on the creeks and River, to the high spiritual places in the mountains. Storytelling was often used to help students find their way from the villages to the mountains and back again in an effort to learn more about themselves, about why they were in the world, and how they fit into a cultural complex based around High Dance or World Renewal ceremonies. American education, in policy and often in practice, meant to annihilate these stories and the culture they were a part of, replacing them with American stories and cultural practices. America cannot exist without appropriating other people's countries, and in the effort of nation-building and nation-sustaining, it must negate competing claims to those lands. The powerful bond between Káruk culture, with its partner constituents education and storytelling, constitutes such a claim. As such, America used education and storytelling to assimilate Káruk-varâaras into mainstream American society. The educational system began as the segregated Indian boarding schools, but progressed into integrated public schools. But the same stories were generally still told, especially the American myths of Manifest Destiny and the Vanishing Indian. The first is told to establish American title to the continent, the second to negate those of indigenous peoples. As can be expected, Indian culture didn't fare well with the children being indoctrinated with these stories. This, however, was accompanied by another trend, one that subverted it. This trend involved Káruk-varâaras continuing to speak our language, tell our stories, and sometimes use sweathouse and practice mountain training. (cf. Buckley 2002) But it also

involved teachers like Arnold and Reed who interacted with the Káruk community as equals. They taught English and Christianity, certainly, but they also studied Araráhi and promoted Indian dances. This second trend was finally able to hold its own out in the open with the one of assimilation beginning in the 1960s, and seems to have constructed a myth of its own to counter that of Manifest Destiny. This myth I've coined that "of the Indian Renaissance" as I haven't heard or read it discussed elsewhere as such. It is an identity-constituting narrative that has been told as part of American Indian revivalist movements like that of the Delaware Prophet or the Ghost Dance, and is being told again now. It casts American colonization as the root of all evil in Indian country, an evil that can only be driven out by holding true to ancestral ways, especially ancestral spiritual ways. In practice, this myth can mean many different things to many different people. For what it's worth, this thesis is one way it can be told. Perhaps more complicated than it can be sometimes (not all white people are bad, and colonial institutions can be claimed and/or subverted by indigenous forces), but the core story that colonization has had an adverse impact on indigenous people who are finding healing in the revival of ancestral practices is the same. My hope is that this telling of the story, as it regards the relationship between Káruk education and storytelling, can help us learn how to continue to improve these two interrelated fields for ourselves and our descendants yet to come.

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