OPENING THE CURTAIN

Tlingit and Haida Elders and Spiritual Leaders Discuss the Meanings and Classifications of Cultural Artifacts and Human Remains in Museum Collections

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Friends of Sheldon Jackson Museum
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Alaska State Museums
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Juneau, AK 99801-1718

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OPENING THE CURTAIN
--Elders Panel--

Marge Byrd ***Shaawat chooku***
Wrangell Tlingit *Shx'atkhwaan* Kiks.adi Clan Sun House

Albert Davis ***Aankaadaxhtseen***
Sitka Tlingit *Sheet'kakhwaan* L'uknax̲.adi Clan Platform House

Oscar Frank ***T'eik eesh***
Yakutat Tlingit *Yaak'wdaatkwaan* Teik̲weidi Clan Golden Eagle House

Mark Jacobs, Jr. ***Gushdeiheen***
Angoon Tlingit *Xhoodzeedaakhwaan* Dakhl'aweidi Clan Killer Whale House

Anna Katzeek ***Kh'oots'ee***
Chilkat Tlingit *Jilkaatkhwaan* Shangukeidi Clan Thunderbird House

David Katzeek ***Khingheisti***
Chilkat Tlingit *Jilkaatkhwaan* Shangukeidi Clan Thunderbird House

Cecelia Kunz ***Khintoow***
Sitka Tlingit *Sheet'kakhwaan* L'uknaxh.adi Clan Outwards House

Erma Lawrence ***Ályuhl***
Klinkwan Haida *Hlingk̲waan, K'ayk'aanni* Double-headed Eagle Clan Shark House

Sylvester Peele, Sr. ***Sáanhl K̲ingwáas***
Massett Haida *Uttewas, Haida Gwaii* Raven Clan Double-finned Killer Whale

Clara Peratrovich ***Goox̲ Tlein***
Shakan Tlingit *Heenyakwaan* Tleneidi clan Dog Salmon

George Ramos ***Woochgix'oo eesh***
Yakutat Tlingit *Yaak'wdaatkwaan* L'uknaxh.adi Clan Frog House

Ester Shea ***Taasyei***
Tongass Tlingit *Taanta khwaan* Teikhweidi Clan House of Kaats'

William Smith ***Naakoo***
Klawock Tlingit *Henyakhwaan* Khaax'useedeetaan Clan Footprints House

James Walton ***Khaalaaxh***
Sitka Tlingit *Sheet'kakwaan* Kaagwaantaan Clan Wolf House

Lilly White ***Lgheis'k'***

Hoonah Tlingit *Xoonaa khaawoo* Chookaneidi Clan Iceberg House

In 1994, the Friends of Sheldon Jackson Museum, on behalf of the Alaska State Museums and Seattle Art Museum, was awarded a grant NAGPRA grant by the National Park Service to host a gathering of Tlingit and Haida elders and spiritual leaders. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss issues surrounding Tlingit and Haida artifacts and human remains preserved in the Alaska State Museum (Juneau) and Sheldon Jackson Museum (Sitka). Following a lengthy selection process, facilitated by the Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indians of Alaska and the Sealaska Heritage Foundation, fifteen elders were invited to attend the meetings. Thirteen elders are Tlingit, and two Haida, based on the approximate makeup of the collections of the Alaska State Museum and Sheldon Jackson Museum.

In May 1995, the elders met at the museums Juneau and Sitka, and in 1996-97, additional interviews were conducted with some of the elders, as funding and circumstances allowed. The discussions and interviews yeilded both information on specific objects in the museums collections, as well as general information on traditional customs and ideas surrounding artifacts and repatriation. This monograph is a compilation of the elders' general comments that may be useful to museums and cultural institutions with collections of Tlingit and Haida material.

The elders have authorized the use of this information by educational and non-profit institutions for educational and research purposes only. The information remains the property of the individual elders or their respective clans. Other uses of this material must be authorized in writing by the individual elders, who may be contacted through the Alaska State Museum or Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indians of Alaska, both of Juneau, Alaska.

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A 60-minute video entitled *Opening the Curtain* is available at cost ($10.00 US) from:

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INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

"I'm very pleased that this program is going on, and I want to thank you for sponsoring it, and I want to thank the National Park Service for funding such an important program. I think this will be very interesting, and I think it will be a learning process..."

Mark Jacobs Gushdeiheen

"I wanted to mention that to the elders here, they understand the Tlingit law. Alot of people say we never had any law. I was very fortunate to talk to my former father-in-law about Tlingit law to a certain extent. Right now, the way we are going here, one of the strongest Tlingit laws is that you do not tell the history of another clan. It is instilled in each one of us here, it was instilled in me, and I operated under that for many years. 'I'm not going to talk,' you know. If somebody brought it up, I'd say, well [Tlingit phrase]
'it is not mine to tell their history,' [Tlingit phrase] 'it is not of his business.' That is what we operated on. But it was a few years ago, my former mother-in-law, we were talking, and I told her 'I can't say anything on that.' She said [Tlingit phrase] 'it is o.k., it is o.k.' [Tlingit phrase] 'it is getting lost, the people are dying off, it is o.k. for you to try to learn the history of the other clans so that it will be remembered.'"

George Ramos Woochgix'oo eesh

"You know, it's no crime to say 'I don't know.' If we give the wrong information, it will stick—it will go on the record. Just like Columbus, when he came to America, he called us 'Indians,' because he was looking for India, and we're stuck with that name to today. So that's why I always advise my people don't be afraid to say 'I don't know, because if you make up your own information, it goes down on the history."

Cecelia Kunz Khintoow

"We have been here for generations upon generations, and your time is very limited, and we, I'm pretty sure that these people sitting here would like to go as fast as we can so whatever if you find it geographically that you can bring them out, and present them, or by item, which is the clan hats, the rattles, different, but whatever, I think, I have never been in a gathering like this, and I feel very privileged to be here but we can get tied up on very few items and not accomplish very much. That's what I feel."

George Ramos Woochgix'oo eesh

"In the older days, it used to be the custom that the storyteller was never countered when he was telling the story. They'd let him finish the way his version is, and invariably some listeners would detect not telling certain portions right. They wouldn't stop him, but they would say that 'this is an interesting story, let's have so-and-so retell it tomorrow night.' And the next night, this person would tell the story and get to the portion that was mistold, and put a little emphasis on it. Somebody would speak up 'not the way I heard it.' another one would verify it and say

'that's the way I know it,' and so on. During the story, it would not be appropriate to cut him off and say 'that's wrong.' Now you're having a recording, and I'm sure it's going to be recorded, and my suggestion is that if there is another version, that be told too, and without controversy as far as the story goes. Because there are different versions, and oral history, it's endemic that this kind of thing exists. But those are all true stories as the people know it, just because of oral history, orally told, these things have to be expected."

Mark Jacobs Gushdeiheen

"Some of the stories that have been told, our Native people don't like to try and over ride the next speaker. We show our respect by just keeping quiet....We don't want to hurt anybody's feelings. We respect them by just keeping quiet, and so that's all the comment I have. My colleagues in this area, alot of us show our respect by not speaking out. We just sit and listen, because the history is for all of us in Southeast—we all have stories."

Clara Peratrovich Goox Tlein

CREST OBJECTS

Editor's Note: The term "crest objects" used here refers to objects of high stature owned by a clan or house group, which correlates to the term "objects of cultural patrimony" embodied in the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act. Additional information about communally-owned crest objects, called by the Tlingit "at.óow, is provided in two books by Nora and Richard Dauenhauer of the Sealaska Heritage Foundation (jointly published with the University of Washington Press): Haa Shuká, Our Ancestors *and* Haa Tuwunáagu Yís, For Healing Our Spirit.

"Haa at.óow means 'our clan crests,' and it covers a vast amount of materials that we use in our potlatches. It covers our headdresses, and it covers *gungoosh* [abalone fin headdress], and it covers bracelets, some ornaments, and Chilkat robes, Chilkat dance shirts, and button blankets..."

Mark Jacobs Gushdeiheen

"And that word [*at.óow*] is a high word we use, because if you don't have that, you're little—'poor little thing,' you know. If you don't have those artifacts, and the blankets, and things like that, you're a little orphan."

Ester Shea Taasyei

"*At.óow* is something that belongs to you, as a clan, whichever clan you're in. And, like I said, every item, every crest, there's a story behind it."

Anna Katzeek Kh'oots'ee

"Like I mentioned before, they're all historical artifacts that's been carried down through the ages. And it's because of a happening, like I'll briefly state the thunderbird [story]. It was a beautiful day and the tide was way out, and young children were on a porch. This took place in Yakutat—Dry Bay. And they saw this big log laying on the beach, but there was something

different about it—it looked like it had hair. And the older people didn't think too much of it—they thought it was moss, you know, and the sun had dried it. And the girls, the sisters, were on the porch, and their brothers took off and were shooting arrows at it, and they were picking it up, picking up their arrows, that how the story went. And one of them kicked the log—it looked like a log, and it blew up, and it took lives--they didn't even find them, and they were mourning. They were feeling bad, especially the parents, and the clan. When something happens in a clan in the olden days, way back....it was like your body—everybody felt it in a clan, this was a loss, and they always looked at the younger people, they're the next generation, they're the ones that's going to take over the work we have, and the culture what we have taught them. And so the mother is the one that really felt it....And after many, took years, she couldn't get over the loss of her boys, and one night she dreamt a man came, and was like he had all that, the way the design is he had. He came in, he was standing in front of them, came where she was sitting, and said 'I'm the one that took your sons, and I've been hearing your mourning, so I came here to give myself to you, you can take me.' And she woke up, and that dream was so [real], it was so clear in her mind, and she told different ones, and then before, she thought, 'before I forget the way this man was decorated, I better make the design' So she's the one that did the rough draft on the design of the thunderbird. And also, she composed the song, bless her heart, which means, 'it cost us our lives when we kicked the Thunderbird feather.' so anyway, so that's how the crest, and the art which is an artifact, in our clan, the Thunderbird, that's how we obtained it, because of the happening."

Anna Katzeek Kh'oots'ee

"There are values that are brought in with respect to these *at.óow*. Every *at.óow* has a value that it teaches to future generations—current and future generations. It isn't just a story we could sit down and listen to, like maybe we're going to have a story hour and somebody's going to tell some entertaining stories. These particular *at.óow* really represent values that help us in being able to survive in a real tough environment such as southeast Alaska."

David Katzeek Khingheisti

"I think the clan objects are very important--they are valued, some of them are very sacred, and some of them have alot of history....But we identify ourselves by our clan connections. There are several Killer Whale Houses, each has a different name. Killer Whale Chasing Seal House I mentioned awhile ago. The one that Jimmy George headed before his death was Killer Whale Tooth House. And in Klukwan, we had some more clan houses....But I do know that the killer whale dagger that was in our family, until my mother sold it. Same way with the killer whale hat. We can't find the killer whale Chilkat blanket...and the dance shirt. I think that eventually we will locate them. It's surprising how much we can locate, because some of those items were sold for thirty, forty dollars, and to the Indians in them days, that was a tremendous amount of money. There was introduction of alcohol, which made [them] easy prey, getting some of these valuables. Some of those items actually grave robbers [took], that have gotten hold of it and sold to museums. I think for that reason, Senator Inouye said we just lump everything into one repatriation act, and at no cost to the original clan owners to get them back. I appreciate that very much, because I am the sole voter against selling any item whatsoever. "

Mark Jacobs Gushdeiheen

"I had the chance to address some of the elders up at my home here a few days ago, and I told them, you know, right now we are walking in two worlds, Tlingit world and the white man's world. Alot of the younger people, can't fit into either one: they can't speak Tlingit, and they don't have enough knowledge about it to fit in the white man's world. But the white man has monuments that are sacred to them, and we call it Washington Monument, Grant's Tomb, Lincoln Memorial. And Lincoln Memorial, to the white man, is so sacred you cannot make a loud noise in there, or you cannot sing in there. It just happened that when I had a dance group down in Washington D.C., we gathered in there, we were looking at the memorial--Lincoln Memorial--and our leader decided, well, we should sing a song to honor [him], and they [the guard] walked over to us and say 'you can't sing in here. You can't make noise in here.' So theirs is also sacred. This is what's happening now, we look at these [artifacts] they are very sacred to us. Each one is a monument to an event that took place in our history or our lives, and that the only way we can compare. There are very strong feelings, there is some of them, there was bloodshed, there was, some of them there was nearly bloodshed, because they were monuments to our ancestors. They are sometimes not even spoken about. It make it very difficult sometimes like he said. Yeah, but then, like I said awhile ago, you have to bring it out sometimes so that younger people that come after us can understand."

George Ramos Woochgix'oo eesh

"For me, when we bring out our artifacts, the thing that we're doing is that we're remembering the historical event that occured in our family, our specific family, at a particular time in the history of our family. And when we do that, it generates the thoughts, and the same types of experiences that people from the opposite clan may have experienced, and it causes them to remember the types of difficult struggles that they had....And for us, the custom and the practice of the people, our history and our heritage, our spirituality, is contained in our *at.óow*, our artifacts. It's a holistic type of thing—it doesn't just include the plastic arts, it includes all the parts of us as human beings....Alot of times people look at *at.óow* as just being a Chilkat blanket, a rain screen, a particular totem pole, a particular crest, and so forth and so on, and that's true, but there's other parts of our *at.óow*--the other part is our name, the names that we have, and the names that each individual in the family has is part of the *at.óow*....The other part of the *at.óow*—that blanket, that totem, whatever it may be, whatever that crest might represent, also includes the land."

David Katzeek Khingheisti

"The artifacts are like that, and alot of times when something is made, at a potlatch they show it, it creates a name, since us Tlingit people, there's no way to preserve our history because we have no writing. That's where the names come in—our Indian names. We're named for the things...."

Cecelia Kunz Khintoow

"Alot of our old time regalia and artifacts, so much of it had to do with their historic

names, and so on, and alot to times the language is necessary to identify what we are talking about, and how it came about. And it is a verification of who owns what, and it becomes part of our life, and some of it is very, very sacred. And the ownership, and acquiring [of] it, have a system according to Tlingit law how we pass our objects down to the next generation."

Mark Jacobs Gushdeiheen

"I've just been thinking. There is alot of stories of what you might call a supernatural metamorphisis—changing into human form and so on. All these different type of stories that go so long. I know alot of these stories that was used in our land claims evidence. The court says 'tell it like it is.' And alot of it was supernatural and that was accepted by the court. We know that some of these things take place, metamorphisis, and that hat that confused us, that frog, is a also good example where the indications look like it's a frog, but it's got teeth and ears and other, and the clan that claims it is not entitled to the frog. so its confusing, but I think its authentic."

Mark Jacobs Gushdeiheen

"BALANCING" CREST OBJECTS

Editor's Note: Though the elders agreed to suspend some traditional protocols due to time constraints, they were concerned that artifacts from the eagle moeity, brought before them during the meeting for discussion, should be"balanced" or "braced" by artifacts from the raven side. Achieving this balance with raven and eagle crest objects was challenging, as the Alaska State Museum houses mostly crest hats and ceremonial regalia from the eagle side (this imbalance would not be uncommon among museum collections in general) . Ultimately, a balance was acheived not in the order in which the objectswere brought out, nor by having the exact number of objects representing both sides match--Two, two raven hats, set on an adjoining table, were sufficient to"brace"over a dozen objects from the eagle side.

"[I'm] Reacting to the material brought out thus far--mostly eagle side, only one raven headdress. There's only one item that was brought out. Most of them were eagles. The raven--what I'm saying is that there's a balance in our culture—there's got to be a balance. So I say thank you very much."

Anna Katzeek Kh'oots'ee

"...the eagle and the raven, they have to balance. Same with their speeches, when they're doing their protocol and speeches. They have to balance these two—one cannot be above the other. You got to balance the whole. It's [about] respect, and the two respecting each other."

Ester Shea Taasyei

"The one part of our culture that so often is kind of missed is the area with respect to balance. That's part of our philospophy of life, that everything has to have a balance. That nothing can happen on one side, without it not effecting the other side. And so anything that anybody does,

whether its a ceremonial, traditional gathering of our people today, or whether it was 500 years ago, 600 years ago, a thousand years ago, or whatever. Everything had to be done in balance."

David Katzeek Khingheisti

"Knowing these things--what Anna is saying is that the feelings get pretty deep. As we are sitting here as eagles, seeing our elder put on his hat, our feelings went deep, but they showed a raven and that balanced our feelings out so that we didn't feel too hurt....We're just saying this is the way our people are, this is the main movement, what you're witnessing here. And when [you] balance it out with the raven mask here, then we feel better, because the raven's are our daddies. Thats how it goes."

Lilly White Lgheis'k'

THE RETENTION AND OWNERSHIP OF CREST OBJECTS

"These objects that have been used in potlatches. The succession from one potlatch to another enhances the value of these items. You'll find that some of the very old Tlingit *at.óow* are very very valuable today, because the original owners have not sold it, and will not part with it. It's their life, and their identity, and I think that they exercise tribal sovereignty when they claim what they own. Because it's very sacred....I think its very important that *at.óow* means a great deal—they're sacred, some of them are so old, it's too bad that so much of it has been sold. And I attribute this to alcoholism....One of the first statements in [the] European encounter, [upon] the first introductions of this hot liquid drink, was a chief wearing his sea otter robe, turned to his nephews, saying that 'This liquid will be a curse, and will destroy our people's culture.'"

Mark Jacobs Gushdeiheen

"It isn't their right to sell what [is] owned by the whole clan. If they so want to do so, they should have asked everyone there to see, and I believe if wouldn't have been sold, you know. And it's a shame when this happens, you know, because it rightfully belongs to everybody in the clan."

Ester Shea Taasyei

"And even with respect to sales—some of the sales may have been done in frustration, someone looking back and saying, you know 'all the money, and everything that I did, for my clan, now I'm getting ready to go, and nobody ever did anything I don't need to leave it to them to just take and selfishly sell it.' And to a certain degree, that kind of spirit is kind of happening—people who have not been responsible, when they had the opportunity to be responsible, are now saying 'hey, now, this is mine, because I belong to this clan, and I don't think you should do anything with it.' Well, when the house needs to be rebuilt, when certain types of things need to occur, it's the time to remember 'I belong to this clan,' and it's a time to do what needs to get done, and it's a time to practice our culture, not just at the Celebration. It's a time to really stand up and be counted."

David Katzeek Khingheisti

“I have an example. My uncle Joe [White] was going to put a rug or linoleum in our tribal house, and it’s going to be another big memorial doing. He came over to our house....and he said ‘I want to sell the dance leaders stick’....It has beautiful artwork, done by my grandfather, Archie White, a carver from Hoonah. And he said [Tlingit phrase] ‘I want to hear from you what do you feel about it.’ And I didn’t say anything right away. My mother was there too, and then I said ‘Uncle Joe,’ I said, ‘how much are you going to sell it for?’ And he didn't say anything. And then I said in Tlingit ‘I want to know how much you want for it’....And Uncle Joe’s tears came down—he was testing us, for when he passes on, are we going to sell the artifacts, you know.”

Anna Katzeek Kh'oots'ee

“My personal opinion is that the crest, the art, and so forth, and the history, and what happened in the entire family, belongs to the family. As it relates to the materialistic creation of a particular artifact, I think that theres a certain point where, for example, even though I've been given the responsibility to care for my tribal house up in Klukwan—which is Thunderbird, and has the *tin.aa gaas* [copper plate house posts], and it has the thunderbird on the wall, and it has another screen in there that was done during the time—those belong to the entire clan. As it relates to a hat that was created, made, for me, that hat belongs to me. When the time comes, I’m not going to go to my clan and say ‘what do you think I should do with it—do you think I should leave it here,’ or ‘I’m going to sell this,’ and if I do, it’s the responsibility of the clan, to take the initiative, which was very well described by my mother when she said ‘I’ll buy what’s there—I’ll pay the price.’ It’s one thing for everyone to say ‘it all belongs to us’—but when the time comes to be responsible, you see our *at.óow* also brings a value that says ‘we are responsible.’”

David Katzeek Khingheisti

“Regarding whether a traditional leader or clan leaders would come together and make a decision to place *at.óow* in the trust of a museum or another instititution, like say the university, or whatever, because there wasn’t a leader in their clan to take over the responsibility, that is a high probably—I think some of those kind of things have occured, where, for example in the clan, certain individuals just didn’t want to see their *at.óow* sold, for example, by somebody in their clan, or they didn’t want to see their *at.óow* go to somebody elses clan, like from an eagle to a raven clan, or whatever, and then it being sold. Where maybe certain totems or things of that nature were turned over to a particular institution, because there wasn’t anybody to be able to care for it, and nobody answered the call, like what my mother described. So the individual said, instead of me giving it to my nephews and nieces, I think I better put it in a museum, and have it held there in trust, until somebody might come along and say ‘this is mine, we want it back, we want to take it and do with it,’ you know, ‘put it in our new tribal house that we have.’ And I think that type of thing has in fact probably occurred.”

David Katzeek Khingheisti

"A replica of a hat might be made when a family is separating, and they want to show their history, used to show what he is. He has his own copy, but not without the clan knowing—they talk about it first before giving authorization."

Clara Peratrovich Goox Tlein

INDIVIDUALLY-OWNED PROPERTY

"Those *at.óow*, that is displayed and used in potlatches, [are] the ones that are clan owned. The others may be considered mere chattels, and later on when the cash economy was taking hold among the Tlingit people, and maybe other ethnic tribes, that they began to recreate some of these clan carvings, cause of its monetary value to the tourist trade. Same way with the mocassins and other clothing items that were created with the Indian designs on it. I think those became valuable for its cash value in the tourist trade—they are not subjects of a potlatch....Although they're very beautiful pieces of duplications of some of those carvings, bowls and totem poles and other items that were brought out. But those were not subject of repatriation—those were simply made for cash value, tourist trade."

Mark Jacobs Gushdeiheen

"It's because the person that owns—say there's a replica of the thunderbird or there's a replica of another [crest]. They ordered it for themselves, and they paid for it, and so they rightfully say it's theirs. They're a clan member, but its going to be in their possession."

Anna Katzeek Kh'oots'ee

"I believe most of the crests on each object, and everything they make, with the crests that identifies the tribe, belongs strictly to the whole tribe. And there are some pieces that are individually-owned, for instance, like I have some pieces that were made especially for me, and those are my little souvenirs, and so it was long ago, but the bigger pieces, they had, they had ceremonies when they were presented, they were presented [in] public. With the crest of the tribe on them."

Ester Shea Taasyei

LOSS OF ARTIFACTS

"Now that I have the floor, I'll take the opportunity to explain why there isn't so much of the Haida artifacts here. I discussed this with Erma a little while ago, and she concurs with the idea. I feel rather bad about it, but it just happened, before the 1900s, they had two villages, Howkan and Klinkwan, two Haida villages not too far apart, about 16 miles apart. And the missionaries came among them. The missionaries taught them it was the wrong thing to do, to own these big totem poles....They believed what the missionaries told them, that 'you folks are like heathens, you worship the poles, you pray to the poles.' There was a stone seal, made of stone, about three feet high—it's in the park in Hydaburg now. They left all that behind, believing what the missionaries had told them, that this was the wrong thing to do. There is a piece of paper in

Hydaburg today, signed by the leaders of that time, saying that 'we renounce the ways of the Haida.' It's hard to repeat this, it's hard to say."

Sylvester Peele, Sr. Sáanhl Kingwáas

"When the missionaries first landed on the shores, you know, of these little villages, somehow the Haida people could tell these people were different—they were coming in on big 'canoes,' and they could tell right away they were not foe, they were friends. There was women among them, and the Haida people just welcomed them in the old- fashioned way—by carrying their canoe up the shore, and just bring it up as far as they could, and giving them a place of respect inside the community house. So, they were received gladly....and I was proud of that. I heard that happened up around the Chilkat valley, too, when the missionaries went up. They knew that these people were different. Grandpa was a kind of a person that was far sighted, he could see ahead, and he weighed the differences, and he went according to what the missionaries came quickly and adopted it and made a complete change around....My mother was raised in the culture, on the west coast of Prince of Wales Island, in the little village of Klinkwan, where my grandfather was the headman there, but by the time I came on the scene, they did away with Indian culture, My grandfather [was] Edwin Scott....By the time, like I say, I came on the scene, everything was towards Christianity, and my grandfather actually—physically—put all his regalia away in a trunk, and it was just like turning a page in a book. And he lived up to it, he did not go back to it....So, I'm glad they did it that, in a way, except that, along the way, like say, we were suppressed for about eighty years, and I think were fortunate, [to have] some people like Ester [Shea] that are bringing back the songs and the dances, which I think is good. You can have both—you can have Chirstianity, and why forget your identity. You can have both—and accept that it doesn't absorb every phase of your life....The saddest thing that can happen to any tribe of people is to lose their identity. Then they really don't belong in either world, the Native or the White. And so I'm glad that they're bringing it back—and the little ones are learning, and there's no reason to lose your culture, because language and culture go together—you can't separate the two."

Erma Lawrence Ályuhl

"Its really misunderstood, about our artifacts, especially if they put the hat [on]. We think of the person who first ordered the hat, and he's no longer with us. It's not that [because] we're thinking of it [as] holy....I'm going to think of my dear son, who was killed in an car accident, when these things are coming—he's no longer here, and I'm going to think of my sister, my younger sister, who died at thirty nine. And my mother. And then as we're going to sing the song, memory is going to come back to me—my dad in his old age requested that we put this on tape. And so different ones will be having tears in their eyes, and those tears are misinterpreted as if we are so, we are like worshipping the thing, that we are so touched by it. That's not the way we look at it."

Anna Katzeek Kh'oots'ee

"My mother thought that I would never continue, because I became a member of the church, and I'm making peace with my heavenly father and accepting his son as my savior, and this was

interpreted as I'm abandoning—like the old timers, when they became Christian people, they abandoned their old way. This did not happen in my case. It was drilled into me, and my brother, and my younger brother, and my sister, who we are, where we came from, what our clan names are, what we actually own as clan crests—all of these things were drilled into us ."

Mark Jacobs Gushdeiheen

NAGPRA CLAIMS AND STANDARDS OF PROOF

"Before I was ever aware of the repatriation act, I spotted a number of things at the Smithsonian, daggers, armor vests, and Chilkat blankets, spears, other objects, I never had any inkling of an idea that those things can be repatriated by without a question the owner clan—not just anyone saying 'my clan crest is killer whale, those are mine,' and let it go at that. There should be no such a thing—a person's got to know without a shadow of a question, who has a right to them."

Mark Jacobs Gushdeiheen

"If I was to claim anything, where I come from, where my mother originated from Tongass Island, I saw some pieces, I saw some raven pieces and the brown bear pieces, and if I was to go and say I want it back, to get all of this, I'd find a place for it—a good place, and not keep it in my home. I would talk to my tribe first and see, sit in a meeting: 'o.k., how will we do this, how will we get the papers for ownership to prove it rightfully belongs to us,' and work at this, before we could rightfully claim it. And then a place to put it, otherwise, I wouldn't try to take anything out unless I was very very sure. I couldn't say 'that belongs to me, I want it,' because you have to prove it, just like anything else....You have to know all its history. And if there is a story that goes with that, then you have to know the story. If you can find the story, or information, and then the names of the people that owned it—the Tlingit name, the tribal name—these are important....Like my mother, she was always talking to us, in Tlingit. She repeated everything over and over, because they had no written language. And so she repeated over and over and over, 'don't forget this one, don't forget why this one is here, don't forget who made this, don't forget this song, this and this.' And that's how they remembered who did this, and why. She said 'don't forget why--why this was done'....They were very patient. She repeat over and over [laughs]. We had to listen, whether we liked it or not."

Ester Shea Taasyei

"I think, first of all, if you're dealing with respect to clans that may be claiming the various pieces of artifacts, let's say Clan A says this is theirs, Clan B says no this is ours, and so forth and so on. And the tests that I have heard done by traditionalists, or comments and remarks by historians, the remarks that I have heard—and I think it's a good one, a good test....What the elder would do, or the historian would say, 'if this is yours, and I'm not saying that it isn't yours, could you tell me what the name, the place, where this occurred, tell me the story. Tell me the song, and tell me the name of the people that occurred,...and the geographic location of where this particular event occured, and maybe the name of that particular place'....So that's one of the tests that I think museums and others can do. If you want to here, this is mine, it belongs to me, you might be able to find out when they got it and so forth, and so on, and if its an old artifact, you know you can tell something that was done today and something that was hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of years old. You can ask the individual, 'we'd like to know what the story is behind this.' And it's a very simple thing, because if you're buying a piece of art, why

get something you don't know anything about—it's a real natural thing. Say 'I need to have the history behind this particular piece of art,' and if the person can't give it to you, then I think you need to think twice about it, because the individual may not own it."

David Katzeek Khingheisti

"I think that the Native Amercian Repatriation Act has resulted in a variety of different human behavior, that I think has always, in a way, been there. One of the things that I'm really concerned on my side of the clan—not thunderbird clan only, but as a Tlingit—is the creative history, and some of the creative cultural customs and practices, that I'm hearing being talked about by individuals for the primary purpose of getting their *at.óow* back. And I think that is a great mistake to myself, to my children, and future generations. Because it gives a part of the history of our people that is incorrect."

David Katzeek Khingheisti

"I think that the museums, the Forest Service, or any other institution, because of the repatriation and because alot of the questions that you are asking like right now, I think it's the Native peoples responsibility, as well as the governments responsiblity, to set up a group of people that are knowledgible of the traditions and the customs and the culture and the heritage of the Tlingit people—and these are not necessarily people that have PhDs....They're looked at as individuals who are knowledgible of the culture. There are people that are still around--people like Lilly White, Anna Katzeek, Lydia George, Ethyl Makinen, Harold Jacobs, myself, George Ramos—there's a fair number of people that are still around that have some understanding regarding our traditions and our customs, and the ownership issues. We may not come to the same agreement, but the point of it is, that we all have the common ground and understanding of what ownership is regarding *at.óow*...."

David Katzeek Khingheisti

SHAMANIC ARTIFACTS

"The main subject here now is the shamans stuff, we all know the importance of it, like she was saying, all the young generation now, don't know, it's in the dark, some of them are bothering the shamans [graves]. They never used to bury them, they had them out in the open, with devils clubs around it, with all their box with their rattles and stuff they used, aprons, and crown like claw. And they had so much power, some of them, [that] they didn't have to lift it—he'd call upon his spirits and they walked in themselves. The people seen it, and that's how come there was so much fear."

Lilly White Lgheis'k'

"We were taught that it was always taboo, you know. But when our parents sat with us, they explaning to us what it is, what it really stood for—to help the people. The way they explained the shaman was that we did not have doctors and medication among us, in those dark days, and they were the ones to do these things. And after the white man came, and we had doctors,

medication, shots, and whatever they brought, it seems like they pushed it back, and pretty soon it stopped. But in today and age, we still have their songs, we still have their stories. And it's going down on historical periods because no one's a shaman anymore. We keep it as our historical [record]...like a gem...We know the stories, we know the songs, and we're keeping it....I think its been in the dark long enough, some should be given and told, because there's been too many laughters about it, you know, the doctors and stuff, but they actually did have powers, and they were seen and they were proven by the people. They weren't just quacks like they call them now days."

Lilly White Lgheis'k'

"The artifacts used by shaman, the shaman when they know that their time on earth is coming to an end, they would instruct how to deal with his remains, and often times he would select a cave, and the result is mummified. And some of these caves were known. If that was not available, he'd designate an isolated island, put a platform on there, and all of his regalia, fetishes, would be put with him. There for the graverobbers."

Mark Jacobs Gushdeiheen

"The shamans things should have never been touched to begin with. When they buried everything with him, and that means everything, and it was a thing that you do not go near it, you do not touch it, you stay away from that vicinity completely. And you know it was there, you know, and thats it, and you dont go near it, because it was taboo, you don't touch."

Ester Shea Taasyei

"...our people, we never bothered the shamans outfit because it was something that was left behind with all the shamans power, and if you removed it, perhaps you'd be cursed, and we've seen results, Ester probably may speak about that, but not just her. But over in our Prince of Wales Island, there's loggers that tampered with our shamans sacred ground, and the loggers didn't live a day. We can perhaps look at it, but not touch it. We can look at it, but don't touch it, and don't say nothing about it....because you or I don't have the authority to go handle it and not know what will happen to you, because our native people are taught right from the time we were small: don't ever, ever go near the sacred ground. It was drilled into me."

Clara Peratrovich Goox Tlein

"And so we respect it, to this day, [shamans power] we have a shaman grave several places on our island. To this day, there's one place they [call] Shaman Point. And if you're traveling by it, you have to give something to the shaman, and it's always a fisherman that passes by, and they always give him a piece of tobacco, so that is to respect the shaman because he liked smoke, tobacco, when he was alive. and for luck, you always gave something to the shaman, spiritually."

Clara Peratrovich Goox Tlein

HANDLING AND EXHIBITING SHAMANS EQUIPMENT

"But the idea of shaman regalia and fetishes was absolutely a no-no to be removed. That the shaman left instructions, 'if you want to visit my grave, you come from a certain direction—from the direction where the sun rises.' Before you do that, you purify yourself, you cut some devil club bark and boil and brew it, and wash yourself from the liquid. I don't think I'd go through that process myself today, because I feel that those objects should be left where they were found. If we returned them to those sites, that just put there for another grave robber. If there's any question, and if I say anything that, I kind of have a scary feeling on some of these things, but I would probably prefer it to be kept in a museum, and that would be my decision, there might be conflicting decisions with my son Harold, saying 'this belongs to your clan--why don't you take charge of it?' But why should I—I could never display those things at a potlatch, those were taboo items that belonged to our great or powerful shaman."

Mark Jacobs Gushdeiheen

"I don't think it should be out for the public to see, that's not what it was for to begin with. They shouldn't bring it out, even during the time the shaman among us, he was off by himself, away from the people, and leaving us far, far away. So, they respected his privacy....I think it depends on what kind of containers they're in, you know, and kept away, left alone, as much as can be, you know. If there is no where else to put it, you know. I heard that the devils club was used to put around such things, you know, they kept it around there, that's what I heard. And kept it by itself."

Ester Shea Taasyei

"Well, I think they should be kept, probably, in the right container with certain tempuratures. They still feel that these objects still have power. One time we had a piece of artifacts—it was a headpiece that had a frog on it. Even the cat, the cat we owned, acted strangely. So, they were, you know, powerful—even an object can have spiritual power. But, as long as it isn't claimed by anybody, it's alright to store it in a museum."

Erma Lawrence Ályuhl

"There are things that our people—alot of things they're not going to talk about. It's like witchcraft—it's never mentioned, but we know its there. It's never mentioned. Alot of the shamans things, you know, they'll just talk, they can talk clear around it like this. I listened to those old guys, you know, then they'll stop. [laughs] There's not too many of them now, that does it—those old scholars, they were brilliant men, I marvel at them."

Ester Shea Taasyei

"My dad lived to be over a hundred years old, he passed away 1962. James Klanot, Thlaunaut is a Tlingit name. But anyway, I listen to him, from the time I was little, and both of my parents didn't speak a word of English, or read or write, you know, and he told me it depends on the person who touches it. If you—my dad says its not going to hurt you—you pick it up [with] a clean, pure mind, nothing will happen to you. Everyone was afraid of...a shamans mosquito mask, and none of the clan people would ever want to touch it, because it's the real thing....And my dad would carry it, and nothing happened to him. He said 'you got to have a clear mind,

don’t think anything’....So, I don’t believe the [museum] staff should be afraid of it, or even one of us, because he said it does not bother you unless you start thinking about it, you know....Well, since it’s today, it’s 1997, and we don’t have any more shamans left, and as far I'm concerned, it’s just another artifact....And so I believe that’s the way it is, and I don’t think it should be hidden, you know, I really don't think it should be, because we did have strong, strong shamans before the church came about.”

Anna Katzeek Kh'oots'ee

“Regarding the use of them [shamans artifacts], I guess I would say it would be up to the museum and what they want to feel. I think they should take a look at it, and do a little bit more research to determine specifically how they may want to handle those particular things. To a certain extent, I agree with my mom regarding how they should be displayed, and I think also possibly a reference should be made to those particular *at.óow* in a way that references 1) the clan that it came from, and 2) the basic information that people might be interested in having....The bottom line for me regarding those things, I lean more towards the traditionalists—that if they were to be returned, they should be just left alone by our clan, and let them become part of what the intention was at the time when they left the individual and his *at.óow*.”

David Katzeek Khingheisti

HUMAN REMAINS

“I certainly wouldn’t want my mother’s bones dug up and be displayed in a museum. There is still a feeling of, no matter how many generations back, that that historic person was a shaman, and his body was preserved and mummified and then displayed for a tourist attraction, then the lineage of that clan should protest it, or they can go ahead and say ‘this is fine, we’re proud of our shaman, and proud to be offspring of that—go ahead and display it.’ Or it might be disgraceful to him, proper burial is in order....I think that if there is an individual that comes and says ‘I protest the display of that Indian shaman.’ Is he a relative? Do you know his history? Do you know who he is? If they can’t answer that, what right does that person have to protest?”

Mark Jacobs Gushdeiheen

“I believe they should be kept in a private place in the museum, and just like anybody would feel about their dead—they don’t want their remains to be moved around, and shown, and everything else. They should be left there until its time for when they can go, forever.”

Ester Shea Taasyei

“I was really awful when I went to the Smithsonian and they were showing me all this, getting us through the Smithsonian, parts of it, and I asked them “where”s George Washington’s remains--the skeleton and all that?” And she said ‘why do you ask?’ Because I want to take it back with me to Alaska. [laughs] But anyway, that's all I'm going to say.”

Anna Katzeek Kh'oots'ee

THE ROLE OF MUSEUMS

"There's so many items that I think I spotted in museums, especially this last trip to Washington D.C. on the Maryland side, [some artifacts] in the drawer, I told Ed Thomas [President, Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes] about them, I said 'those things would be destroyed if you even tried to pick it up. It's best to keep it where it is—it's so delicate, so old, so valuable, I don't want to see it destroyed by a claimant that will tear it to pieces, or find it a nusiance to keep it around because, it needs special care.' So many objects are like that, it needs special care, special place, special protection, and I was pleased that we had to go through high security to even get a glimpse of those things. That's a good feeling, when those things are protected in that manner."

Mark Jacobs Gushdeiheen

"I believe that alot of times, I think, our pieces, our important pieces are better kept in museums. Under glass, unless we could take care of them ourselves, unless we have the proper place to put them, you know, and take care of them. But as for tourists, which will be seeing more and more as the years go by, I'm not in favor of them, you know, just coming in, because its our life, it belongs to us as individuals, and we still live that life—or we try to maintain it [to] the best of our knowledge, to try to teach our children and pass on what we know to them. And through our beautiful things that was made long ago to be kept, they were kept for the younger generation to carry on the tradition. The way they did this—this is [why] it was kept for them."

Ester Shea Taasyei

"The other thing that I want to say regarding museums—it's kind of a bittersweet type of thing, kind of a love-hate type of thing, too, as it relates to artifacts of our people and so forth. The other side is that I do appreciate the caring that happens regarding that. You know, being able to look at what belonged to a particular clan hundreds of years ago, still kept in a real nice condition, I think is a very very valuable service, that the museum provides—not just for Native people, but for the entire public, for people to come in and see what was of the past of our people, that adorned the houses, and houseposts, of our people, I think is really really a valuable service that the museum has [given]."

David Katzeek Khingheisti

"The older people said that when an artifact was taken that's really valuable, that it will return, and when I heard about this repatriation, I thought that my, they really knew what they were saying. It's going to return back. They used to comfort each other: 'Don't feel too bad, it's going to come back. You're going to see it again,' and I thought isn't that a prophesy they made, you know."

Anna Katzeek Kh'oots'ee

"I would just like to say something about my late uncle Austin Hammond....He told me that 'My dear daughter, when you see the artifacts, be thankful they were preserved for you.' When we went down to the museums—went all the way to Boston and all over, I said to them, talked to them [the artifacts], 'you are in a good place,' that's what he told me—just feel good about it. I guess he knew that in the future we would be, you know, coming here and that the different artifacts would be shown to us. So I just feel that he was telling me this. Thank you."

Anna Katzeek Kh'oots'ee

IN CONCLUSION

"I represent Wrangell. I've been getting alot out of this. Our elders are all gone, we have to reach out to all of the elders here to do the right thing. I feel I was born too late, because I love my culture, but I was brought here at this time for a purpose, to pass it on to people who are in the same boat that I'm in. I work hard in my community to keep it alive, it's a struggle. We must work in unity for the benefit of the young people."

Marge Byrd Shaawat chooku

"I'm going to bring this message back to the people about this gathering here, of how important it is to store some of your things in museums such as this one. The display of these things were very beautiful, and I've learned alot by you folks—how you treasure your hats, the dance hats, and the different articles we saw in the last few days. I thank you, I think this is a beautiful presentation. I'm glad I had a part in it, and I appreciate it."

Sylvester Peele, Sr. Sáanhl Kingwáas

"Just listening to Sylvester, I'm reminded of a gentleman from Massett at the Hydaburg [ANB] convention. He got up and talked, and he said there was a young man slated to become a chief. So, he was sent up into the woods, and as he walked along by himself, he came upon a group of people sitting around a bonfire with a pot on the fire. And he looked at them, and they all had wooden spoons tied to their arms....they were long, and they couldn't bring it to their mounths, they tried. So the young man, he looked at them, and he said to them, 'feed the one next to you.' So they all did that and it went on around this pot, and they all ate. The thing behind it is, you work, feed your neighbor, be good, be kind. And with a little practice after, he became chief ."

William Smith Naakoo

"I think one of the most important things I heard here, other than the artifacts, is that we must feed each other. Very important what this man said. [Tlingit phrase]. He's asking us 'what am I going to do, how am I going to help you.' This is a very good time. We will not have too much trouble identifying our objects. We have enough people yet. What we must keep in mind, I think, is we must be in unity [Tlingit phrase] let's work together, let's feed each other....Very important. It's up to us now. [Tlingit phrase]. Those that will follow us—Sealaska people—what are we going to give them? We have all ours shown to us. I have a very good history. All of us have a very good history. I think if we work together, we will pass a heritage down that they will be proud of. This meeting will go down in history, it will go down [Tlingit phrase]. We

must give something to our children, those of us sitting here [Tlingit phrase]. That is what it means, we are all one....The feeling of our people when we saw these articles, the feelings were great, unbelievable, and what we are saying is that the future generations will have these same feelings, and that we have to continue, so that we pass that on. Our people must view these objects, they must understand these objects, for their own self esteem...."

James Walton Khaalaaxh

"The way this thing was planned was very wonderful to me. and it was also educational, for some. And the way it was brought to us. And some of the things my mother talked about, came alive to me on some of these objects . I know the stories on them, and I know the way of our people because I was taught from childhood, and I greatly appreciate it, and I think the way it was handled was very very good....Most of the stories I have heard in my lifetime corresponds with what I'm seeing here. It's just like they opened a curtain and here's what here's what your mom talked about. Like the ones we saw in Juneau. The stories that she told me seemed like a real old history, you know, to me, but when we were in Juneau, there they were. I couldn't believe it."

Lilly White Lgheis'k'