“AN ANXIOUS DESIRE OF SELF PRESERVATION”: COLONIALISM, TRANSITION, AND IDENTITY ON THE UMATILLA INDIAN RESERVATION, 1860-1910

by

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A THESIS

Presented to the Department of History
and the Graduate School of the University of Oregon
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Master of Arts

June 2013

THESIS APPROVAL PAGE

Student: Patrick Stephen Lozar

Title: “An Anxious Desire of Self Preservation”: Colonialism, Transition, and Identity on the Umatilla Indian Reservation, 1860-1910

This thesis has been accepted and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts degree in the Department of History by:

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Degree awarded June 2013

THESIS ABSTRACT

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In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the United States government, in its relations with Native Americans, implemented a policy of assimilation designed to detribalize Indian peoples and absorb them into the dominant society. Subjected to this colonial agenda, the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla tribes of Oregon’s Umatilla Indian Reservation, as a matter of survival, endeavored to maintain community cohesion and retain their indigenous identity. In this context, I argue that the tribes confronted federal initiatives with a strategy of adaptive resistance that allowed them to approach these onerous impositions on their own terms. This study examines their diverse responses to assimilation and colonialism, specifically accommodation, adaptation, and diplomacy. Employing the investigative frameworks of education, religion, and economics reveals the variety of tactics applied within these categories, which range from incorporation to evasion. Through these actions and reactions, the tribes reaffirmed their capacity to assert native agency.

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PUBLICATIONS:

Tribal Legacies Project Catalog. Edited by Karen Estlund. Eugene: University of Oregon Press, 2013. *forthcoming

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are many individuals at the University of Oregon I wish to thank for supporting me in researching and writing this Master's thesis. First and foremost, my intrepid advisor, Jeffrey Ostler, helped guide my research and aided me in formulating my ideas into a coherent narrative. Dr. Ostler's insightful comments on my writing and suggestions for improvement greatly enhanced my scholarship. I am also indebted to Marsha Weisiger for her guidance and advice in navigating the field of Native American history and for graciously serving on my thesis committee. I would also like to thank Glenn May who provided important feedback in the early stages of the writing process and Terry O'Nell for organizing the "Working With Oregon Tribes" course from which I gained a stronger sense of tribal priorities and perspectives.

I am also grateful to those at the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation who directly or indirectly contributed to this project. Jennifer Karson in the Cultural Resources Protection Program was especially helpful in organizing my meetings with tribal consultants. Conversations with elders Antone Minthorn, Gerald Reed, and Ron Pond provided an indispensable tribal perspective of the historical record. Thank you to Ron Pond in particular for reading and screening several drafts of my work and to Bobbie Conner for allowing us access to the Tamastslikt Cultural Institute.

Additionally, I wanted to thank those organizations who granted financial support for my education and project research. The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes and the University of Oregon Graduate School and History Department provided crucial funding towards my education. Also, the Oregon Heritage Commission's research

fellowship was vital for financing my visits to the various archives where I conducted my work.

The "graduate student enterprise" played an important role in the development of this project. Many friends and colleagues read pieces of my work and provided perceptive and constructive comments that encouraged me to become a better writer and historian. Regan Watjus, Josh Fitzgerald, and John Bedan were especially helpful in this process as were all those who reviewed sections of my thesis in Grad Lab.

Finally, I would also like to acknowledge my family for their unwavering support. My mother, father, and brothers' encouragement sustained my resolve through graduate school and my sister and brother in-law put me up while on trips to the National Archives in Seattle. I could not have had any success in this project without the constant, tireless support of my wife, Joanna. Joanna's emotional reassurance, help in archival research, and accompanying me on research trips throughout the Northwest made all this possible.

To mom, dad, Joanna, and Danley.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Young Chief, a Cayuse headman, came from a strong tradition of tribal warriors, hunters, gatherers, and spiritual practitioners. By the 1870s however, something about this tradition had changed. In an 1871 council speech near the Umatilla Indian Reservation agency, Young Chief explained to federal commissioners Alfred Meacham and Felix Brunot about life on the reservation. He asserted, "Here in this land my father and mother and children have died. The father (priest) is the only one who straightens out my heart." Young Chief continued, "I see the church there. I am glad to see it, and think I will stay beside it and die by the teaching of the father. I see how I have sweat and worked in trying to get food." Finally, he concluded, "I see the flour-mill the Government has promised. I have gotten it. I see my friends. I like all that I have."[1] In his explanation to the government officials, Young Chief revealed several telling facts about Indian life on the reservation at this point, twenty years after his people's removal to the reservation. The relationships among kin, his parents and children, remain at the heart of his perspective and he appreciated the presence of his Indian friends around the reserve. Clearly important to him was the Catholic Church and the priest's spiritual guidance. He also expressed his willingness to work, in this case in wheat farming, and to use the agency mill for flour production. Farming, Christianity, and reservation infrastructure were all introduced into Young Chief's community by the US government to encourage their assimilation into the dominant society. Left with little choice, many Cayuse, Walla

[1] Young Chief (Wat-che-te-mane), 9 August 1871, in Thomas K. Cree Report, 15 November 1871, *Third Annual Report of the Board of Indian Commissioners* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1872), 114.

Walla, and Umatilla Indians like Young Chief accommodated certain aspects of American "civilization." Never during this period of adjustment, however, did the tribes fully resign to government designs for their social transformation. They approached and adapted to federal impositions on their own terms and reinvented their tribal identity in the process.

The Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla tribes of the Columbia Plateau operated according to cultural traditions and a seasonal food cycle for generations by the time of their contact with Whites.[2] To varying degrees, the three independent tribes and their several bands had arranged much of their food gathering and trading schedules according to the sacred law of *tamanwit*. This principle defined the tribes' relationship with the earth and their adherence to the seasonal round of food availability. The Indians' gathering, hunting, and fishing practices that sustained their economy, were guided by and spiritually tied to *tamanwit*. The tribes' acquisition of the horse expedited their travels to gathering and trading sites and influenced their standing in respect to other Plateau groups. Their adjustment to equestrianism represents one of the tribes' first recent examples of adaptation in the face of opportunity arriving from the outside. They would employ this valuable skill to a host of developments in their indigenous world in the nineteenth century.[3]

[2] I capitalize the term "White" and use the phrase "non-Indian" to describe Euroamericans as distinct from Native American or Indian people.

[3] Historiography on the tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation is rather sparse. This study contributes to the limited coverage that includes: Robert H. Ruby and John A. Brown, *The Cayuse Indians: Imperial Tribesmen of Old Oregon* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1972); Theodore Stern, *Chiefs and Change in the Oregon Country*, (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 1996); Robert E. Ficken, "After the Treaties: Administering Pacific Northwest Indian Reservations," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 103 (Fall 2005); Theodore Stern and James Boggs, "White and Indian Farmers on the Umatilla Indian Reservation," *Northwest Anthropological Research Notes* 5 (Spring 1971); Nancy Jean Owens, "Indian Reservations and Bordertowns: The Metropolis-Satellite Model Applied to the Northwestern Navahos and the Umatillas,"

The arrival of Europeans and Americans ushered in an era of irreversible change among Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla societies. Fur traders and missionaries began operating within tribal territories in the early nineteenth century and soon indicated their intention to stay. Many Indian bands incorporated the trading and missionary activities of these perplexing outsiders by engaging in the fur trade and, to an extent, voluntarily converting to Christianity. Soon the forces of settler colonialism rushed in by the 1840s and 1850s, pushing the limit of the tribes' ability to accommodate outside pressures. In a massive demographic shift, American settlers rode into and across Indian lands, causing great consternation among the tribes. The US government attempted first to regulate activities between the settlers and the Indians and then shifted focus to controlling the natives exclusively. An 1855 council meeting and treaty could not assuage tribes' frustration with the increased settlement. Tribal dissatisfaction produced a regional war. The routing of the disjointed Indian forces allowed the US federal government to round up the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla bands, remove them to the Umatilla reservation, and begin implementing a colonial policy of assimilation.

The federal government's reservation project consisted of exposing the Indian wards to a variety of institutions designed to remake their tribal identity and encourage their assimilation into the dominant society. The Office of Indian Affairs implemented this program by following treaty provisions that obligated the government to establish schools on the reservation in which teachers would instruct Indian children in vocational

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(PhD diss., University of Oregon, 1976); Brill, Lee, "Educational History of the United States Government Indian Schools on the Umatilla Indian Reservation 1855-1926," (MA thesis, Eastern Oregon College, 1966); James Kennedy, "The Umatilla Indian Reservation, 1855-1975: Factors Contributing to a Diminished Land Resource Base" (PhD diss., Oregon State University, 1977); Feather Lyn Sams-Huestis, "The Women Had Something to do Every Season: A Look at Gender Equality on the Umatilla Indian Reservation" (Master's thesis, Washington State University, 2004).

skills and the English language. Officials strongly encouraged the use of agriculture and eventually tribal members were allotted their own parcels of land for cultivation. The Indian Office also facilitated the Christianization of the Indians by staffing the agency with clergymen and allowing for the construction of several reservation churches. The ultimate goal for these institutions and the Indians' transformation was to solve the "Indian Problem" of federal wardship and concomitantly dismantle the reservation. In the process, tribalism would break down with each advancing generation. Fully assimilated Indians, much like late nineteenth century immigrants, could become part of American society as economic contributors and independent citizens. While the federal government saw some "successes" in this program, by the early twentieth century it had failed to realize a complete transformation and detribalization of the tribes of the Umatilla reservation.

This study identifies the ways in which the Umatilla tribes responded to federal Indian policies and settler impositions within the reservation setting. In this context, I argue that in order to preserve their indigenous community and maintain tribal autonomy, the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla tribes employed a strategy of adaptive resistance against the forces of American colonialism. This strategy consisted of several categorical approaches all enacted to achieve these same goals. Accommodation became a commonly used tactic when faced with outside interventions. Conscious accommodation allowed the Indians to incorporate certain aspects of government or settler initiatives on their own terms in order to control the pace and process of change. This accommodation is associated with the idea of adaptation, in which the tribes would adjust impositions to their own indigenous customs and structures, a response that confounded colonial agents.

Working within these constrained spaces, tribal leaders also asserted a modified though pragmatic diplomacy to ensure the best terms for the tribes' consent to American designs. These strategic approaches were used with more frequency than was overt resistance, which proved risky and oftentimes counterproductive. Though such categories do have their limitations, such as issues arising from overlap and situational complexity, they are useful for classifying and analyzing the varied responses to colonialism.

The Indians engaged these categories of adaptive resistance in a variety of creative ways. When government officials established the day school and boarding schools, tribal leaders influenced how and from whom their children would be instructed. When compelled to take up subsistence farming, Indian men and women incorporated the planting and harvest cycle into their traditional food gathering seasonal round. Many of those who had shown interest in or had converted to Christianity continued to visit their off-reservation relatives who engaged in the Dreamer religion of the prophet Smohalla. And when an Indian woman was detained for the outlawed practice of polygamy, her sympathetic family and friends resisted the agent's imposed justice system and broke her out of the agency jail. These varied approaches to colonial impositions range from incorporation and negotiation to evasion, foot dragging, and resistance, using what political scientist James Scott would refer to as "weapons of the weak."[4] Many leaders disagreed on which policies to accommodate and which to contest and in what manner. Their discussions regarding these decisions reveal tribal leaders and families' sometimes

[4] James Scott, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1985), 29-30; similarly relevant to the tribes' approach is James Scott's *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990), x-xii, 3-8, in which Scott describes the colonized or subjugated peoples' overt and "hidden" expressions of their relations with power holders.

inconsistent or competing visions for the future of their people. Still, they could agree on their desire to maintain tribal cohesiveness and control indigenous cultural and economic systems. To the Indian Office and their contemporaries, the Indians displayed an unexpected expression of agency amidst a rather dark period in Native American history.

Recent historical and anthropological scholarship on indigenous agency informs this study's explanation of Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla activities during the late nineteenth century. Among other goals, such studies have attempted to revise an entrenched historical narrative that holds that Indians could only confront Euroamerican expansion and colonialism using military force.[5] While militant reactions certainly did occur, an overemphasis on this response ignores the Native American ability to accommodate social, political, and economic change. Richard White highlights the mutual accommodation between the seventeenth and eighteenth century Great Lakes Algonquians and fur traders, missionaries, and Euroamerican diplomats in *The Middle Ground*. According to White, the Indians skillfully accommodated their White trading partners by incorporating social and trading practices in order to secure protection and economic stability.[6] In *Parading Through History*, Frederick Hoxie argues for the agency of Indians as historical actors who "initiate, adapt and win as well as suffer and lose" in their interactions with the American colonialism.[7] He stresses the Crow Indians'

[5] This is discussed in Tom Holm, "American Indian Warfare: The Cycles of Conflict and the Militarization of North America," *A Companion to American Indian History*, Philip Deloria and Neal Salisbury, eds. (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2002), 154-170.

[6] Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

[7] Frederick Hoxie, *Parading Through History: The Making of the Crow Nation in America, 1805-1935* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 2-4.

conscious efforts to reconstruct their tribal community into a native nation by applying traditional political and social patterns to American designs.

Additionally, Robert Bigart determines in *Getting Good Crops* that for the Bitterroot Salish in the late nineteenth century, community survival hinged on active diplomacy with Whites and government officials over buffalo hunting assurances and land retention.[8] Furthermore, Brian Hosmer's *American Indians in the Marketplace* exposes two tribal groups, the Menominees and Tsimshians, who had innovatively adapted their economic systems to enterprises of American capitalism. He argues that these native communities "had and have the power, indeed the flexibility, to adapt to market capitalism, and in a way that stops short of outright disintegration or loss of a sense of cultural distinctiveness."[9] These brands of native agency focus on accommodation and adaptation during times of significant change to indigenous worlds. The "reservation period," roughly the 1870s to the 1920s, is remembered as a particularly repressive and demoralizing era in Native American history. Indeed, the Umatilla tribes considered this one of the darkest and most traumatic times in their recent history. For Indian leaders and communities, asserting authority or autonomy within this narrowed, constricted space proved especially difficult. This was due to the debilitating and overpowering project of late nineteenth century American colonialism.

Applying this model of colonialism to the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla experience reveals the US government and its settlers' designs for the tribes' existence.

[8] Robert Bigart, *Getting Good Crops: Economic and Diplomatic Survival Strategies of the Montana Bitterroot Salish Indians, 1870-1891* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2010).

[9] Brian Hosmer, *American Indians in the Marketplace: Persistence and Innovation Among the Menominees and Metlakatlans*, 1870-1920 (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1999), 13-14.

Through the nineteenth century, the American settlers' desire for Indian lands and the means to acquire it developed alongside a federal Indian policy that intended to pacify and isolate Indian people. Lorenzo Veracini asserts that settler colonialism is distinct from traditional colonialism in that when settlers arrive in an indigenous territory, they intend to dominate the natives and establish their own sociopolitical regime.[10] Conversely, Jurgen Ostlerhammel contends that in "traditional colonialism" the lives of the indigenous peoples are dominated and regulated "by the colonial rulers in pursuit of interests that are often defined in a distant metropolis."[11] In the Umatilla case, as with the regional Nez Perce, Yakima, and Flathead, these two theoretical models operate in tandem and eventually converge. American settlers hoping for Indian lands rushed into the tribal territory, formed state and local governments, and petitioned the national government for the means to dispossess the natives. The federal government in Washington, D.C., representing Osterhammel's metropole, in turn acquiesced to the settler demands of Oregon by organizing treaty-based land cessions with the native occupants. Once this phase was complete, the federal government then began to implement an assimilation program that, if successful, would result in the natives becoming independent citizens with no need for tribalism or a reservation land base. This dissolution of the reservation stood as the final step in the settler's complete acquisition of the Indians' land.[12] The assimilation phase of colonialism, the focus of this thesis, has

[10] Lorenzo Veracini, *Settler Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 3-5.

[11] Jurgen Osterhammel, *Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview* (Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener Publishers, 1997), 16-17.

[12] This process is also discussed in Patrick Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native," *Journal of Genocide Research* 8 (2006): 392.

been the subject of a host of scholarly works, including Frederick Hoxie's *A Final Promise*, Jeffrey Ostler's *Plain Sioux and U.S. Colonialism*, Jackie Rand's *Kiowa Humanity and the Invasion of the State*, and David Wallace Adams' *Education for Extinction*.[13] These studies provide a firm historical foundation for work on American colonialism in practice and the Native American response.

Methodologically, this study considers Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla agency and adjustment through three distinct, though often overlapping, themes: economics, education, and religion. Tracing the course of change and transition using these particular themes reveals the variety of adjustments Indians made to a variety of impositions emanating from several sources. The indigenous economy that consisted of hunting, gathering, fishing, and trading was threatened during the Indians' transition to reservation life. When confronted with forces that compelled them to become farmers and participate in the market economy, the tribes incorporated agricultural production and wage labor into their seasonal round. Unlike the Plains groups that relied on the then diminishing buffalo herds, the Plateau people were able to persist with their food cycle mostly intact. By the 1880s and 1890s, wage labor and allotment leasing would make cash money an irreversibly central part of the reservation economy. As guaranteed in the Walla Walla Treaty of 1855, the federal government established an education system on the reservation as early as 1862. Exploring education as a source of change and accommodation among the tribes is useful because many tribal leaders and parents

[13] Frederick Hoxie, *A Final Promise: The Campaign to Assimilate the Indians, 1880-1920* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984); Jeffry Ostler, *The Plains Sioux and U.S. Colonialism from Lewis and Clark to Wounded Knee* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Jackie Thompson Rand, *Kiowa Humanity and the Invasion of the State* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2008); David Wallace Adams, *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1995).

supported this enterprise. Though the school program would be managed by teachers and administrators in the Indian Service, the Indians sought to control the manner in which their children were educated. Tribal leaders remained involved in school construction projects, decisions to send children to off-reservation boarding schools, and, indirectly, the structure of the school calendar. Finally, examining religion among the tribes from 1860 to 1910 reveals several examples of expansion and retraction of both Christianity and indigenous spiritual practices. In my analysis and presentation of native spirituality among the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla, I examine certain spiritual practices and select cultural customs from within the same category. For instance, some cultural dance ceremonies are discussed in relation to their sacred, spiritual meaning. From the economic, religious, and educational themes of this study emerge a variety of encounters with and approaches to colonialism. Found within the study's thematic structure are references to the political and social aspects of Indian life which were equally important but not highlighted in this thesis.

As with many histories of non-Western, colonized people, non-Indian produced sources present issues with reliability, ethnocentrism, and interpretation. A majority of primary sources used in this study came from the Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs collection in the National Archives and Records Administration in Seattle. These sources consist primarily of Umatilla Indian agent correspondence and Indian Office reports. Communications in the Annual Reports to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs were also used extensively. The cultural biases of the White agents and government officials in these documents obscure many of their descriptions of Indian activities and traditions. Even the tribal-government council minutes, recorded by non-Indian scribes, contain

misinterpretations of statements made by Indians.[14] In later chapters, I refer to state and local newspapers, which contain similar problems with bias and misconception as elicited by racialist editors and editorials. However, it is possible in such a work of ethnohistory to separate the authors' bias from their descriptions of actual events that may contain revelations of Indian perceptions or motivations. Particularly glaring problems are addressed specifically at various points in the thesis. To incorporate a native perspective when possible, sources deriving from the tribes themselves have been utilized. During the research process, I consulted tribal elders who provided important insights into the tribes' experiences and historical memory. Also, the Confederated Tribes have recently produced an edited volume of their history, *As Days Go By: Our History, Our Land, Our, People*, written mainly by tribal members.[15] This proved to be a vital reference guide for contextualizing Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla history and accessing native voices.

The thesis that follows contributes to the growing scholarship in the fields of indigenous studies and colonialism in a historical context. Concentrating on the development of one reservation community subjected to the most relentless efforts of colonialism reveals parallels with other subaltern groups. Umatilla parents choosing to keep their children home from school for fear of contracting influenza in the 1890s resembles Lakota Sioux families' attempts to bring their children home from the Carlisle Indian boarding school on account of rampant disease.[16] Catholic and Protestant Indians participating in the dance ceremonies of the Umatilla Fourth of July celebration relates to

[14] For an informative explanation of source problems in Native American historical studies, see Bigart, *Getting Good Crops*, 5-7.

[15] Jennifer Karson, ed., *Wiyaxayxt As Days Go By Wiyaakaa?awn: Our History, Our Land, and Our People, The Cayuse, Umatilla, and Walla Walla* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2006).

[16] Ostler, *Plains Sioux*, 156-158.

the Catholic and non-Catholic Menominees together engaging in their ceremonial Dream Dance.[17] And the Umatilla women's reapplication of gathering skills to commercial hop picking in the 1900s parallels the experiences of White Earth Anishinaabe women employing handwork in the market production of needle point lace.[18] At various times throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, different Indian tribes and bands confronted the capitalist, Christian-oriented, assimilationist forces of American colonialism. The Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla experience provides a compelling example of agency and adaptive resistance enacted against the resolve of an American government and its settler society that desperately sought to assimilate their people out of existence.

[17] David Beck, *The Struggle for Self-Determination: History of the Menominee Indians since 1854* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005), 38-39.

[18] Melissa Meyer, *The White Earth Tragedy: Ethnicity and Dispossession at a Minnesota Anishinaabe Reservation, 1889 - 1920* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994), 83-85.

CHAPTER II

"*I BEG YOU WILL LEAVE ME IN THIS WAY*": TRADITION, CONTACT, AND CHANGE, ORIGINS TO 1860

As a way of life and survival, the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla tribes became master strategists in adapting to harsh environments and challenging situations. For thousands of years, the tribes mitigated the subsistence limitations of an unforgiving high desert environment and later successfully incorporated equestrianism into their culture and economy. Early nineteenth century pressures, however, would fiercely test the tribes' ability to maintain traditions and adapt to shifting opportunities. Together, settler colonial motives of fur trade companies, missionary agents, and emigrant squatters stressed the Indians' capacity to accommodate change to the point of resorting to overt resistance. The tribes reacted to the intensifying American colonization of their homelands by launching a military strike against what they perceived was an invasion. Through the calamitous 1850s, the United States government used tribal resistance as a pretext to conquer and consolidate the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla onto a reservation. Through fifty-five years of accommodation, transition, and resistance, the tribes confronted the wrenching colonial impositions advanced by agents of the encroaching United States to retain their land base and tribal sovereignty.

Forging an Existence on the Land

The people of the southern Columbia Plateau maintain oral traditions that explain their presence in the world based on the philosophy of *tamanwit*. Designated tribal storytellers and elders preserved historical, cultural, and spiritual records by passing

down stories to succeeding generations. These stories hold that in the beginning of the Indians' world, water was created first, then land and life in the form of plants, animals, mountains, and rivers. According to tribal cultural director Roberta Conner, the Creator imparted to the ubiquitous trickster, Coyote, the message of man's arrival to the animals' world. Coyote then explained to a council of animals and plants that the Creator charged them with taking care of the *Natiitayt*, the people, by feeding them and teaching them. In turn, the *Natiitayt* must then care for the plants and animals.[1] Upon the human's arrival, their hosts taught them how to gain sustenance from the earth and to care for the environment and its creatures as stewards of the land in a relationship based on the tenets of *tamanwit*, or natural law. Umatilla religious leader Armand Minthorn stresses that the Indian people did not migrate to their pre-nineteenth century homeland; they arrived there by the Creator's placement, and *tamanwit* has guided their interactions with the land ever since. [2] In this time when animals and plants could talk, they advised the people how to survive in their new environment of rivers, mountains, and plains.[3]

From the peaks of the Blue Mountains to the shores of the Columbia and Snake Rivers, the *Natiitayt* carved out a functional existence. The arid Columbia Plain, an ideal region for pastoral activity, is penetrated by the John Day, Umatilla, and Yakima tributaries, which flow into the mighty Columbia River. To the east, from the formidable

[1] Roberta Conner and William Lang, *Wiyaxayxt As Days Go By Wiyaakaa?awn: Our History, Our Land, and Our People, The Cayuse, Umatilla, and Walla Walla*, ed. Jennifer Karson (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2006), 23; Tribal Cultural Resources Program, "Comprehensive Plan - The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation," 20-22; Clifford E. Trafzer, *Grandmother, Grandfather, and Old Wolf: Tamanwit Ku Sukat and Traditional Native American Narratives from the Columbia Plateau*, ed. Clifford E. Trafzer (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1998), 1-6.

[2]Nicholas K. Geranios, "A Lock On History: Kennewick Man rests in vault while tribes, scientists clash," *Spokesman-Review*, August 10, 1997.

[3] I will use the Sahaptin term *Natiitayt* (the People) when describing the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla as a collective group in contexts in which each tribe shared a common experience or trait.

Blue Mountains flows the Grande Ronde River that empties into the Snake. In the west, waters from the Cascade Range drain through the Deschutes River that connects with the Columbia near Celilo Falls.[4] For much of their history, these rivers teemed with salmon, eel, and suckerfish as reliable seasonal runs replenished fish populations. The upland zones of the Blue Mountains provide reasonable forage growth for game animals including elk, deer, and mountain goats. Above and below this elevation grow a variety of edible roots and berries. Budding seasonally, huckleberries, blackberries, and chokecherries appear at higher altitudes, while camas, *latitlatit* (wild celery), bitterroot, *cous*, and wild onions grow further down the mountainsides. [5] The fluctuating availability of this environment's game, fish, and plants, in addition to the arid climate, would prove challenging for human subsistence practices.

The three tribes that became known as the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla survived off the land in similar ways. By 1750, the Cayuse, or Waiiletpu, followed a well-established seasonal subsistence round centering on the Blue Mountains. Closely tied to their Nez Perce kin, the Cayuse fished during the spring and fall salmon runs along the Columbia, Walla Walla, and Umatilla Rivers. To efficiently engage in root and berry gathering practices, the Cayuse broke into as many as nine bands during the spring and summer seasons. Into late fall, the Cayuse moved over the Blue Mountains to hunt elk and deer and established winter lodging in the Grande Ronde Valley.[6] The Umatilla

[4] D.W. Meinig, *The Great Columbia Plain: A Historical Geography 1805-1910* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1968), 4-12; Nancy Langston, *Forest Dreams, Forest Nightmares: The Paradox of Old Growth in the Inland Northwest* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1995), 42-50.

[5]Conner and Lang, *As Days Go By*, 28-29; Robert J. Suphan, *Oregon Indians II* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1974), 94-96.

[6] Robert H. Ruby and John A. Brown, *The Cayuse Indians: Imperial Tribesmen of Old Oregon* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1972), 3-6. Ruby and Brown claim in that the Cayuse moved into their

tribe adhered to a seasonal round that pivoted around the mouth of the Umatilla River. Primarily a riverine people, the Umatilla engaged in deep net fishing on the Columbia's southern shore and tributaries of the Umatilla and John Day rivers. Gathering parties collected camas and huckleberries in the Cascades and Blue Mountains followed by fall hunting, which often included neighboring groups. The Walla Walla, or Waluulapam, consisted of three principal bands settled around the big bend in the Columbia at the mouths of the Snake, Walla Walla, and Yakima rivers. From this zone, the Walla Walla followed a similar pattern of seasonal subsistence practices to that of the Yakama, Palouse, Umatilla, and Wanapum tribes. These groups developed an expert sense of timing salmon runs and of perennial plant availability. Though competition for resources did lead to some overlap in land use, most groups recognized and honored their neighbor's gathering, hunting, and fishing site use rights. Linguistically, the Umatilla and Walla Walla spoke Sahaptin and the Cayuse spoke Waiilatpuan, a dialect of the Penutian language stock. These groups developed their cultures and sociopolitical organizations around the cultivation and extraction of their life-sustaining foods.[7]

The introduction and use of the horse caused a world-altering ecological and cultural shift in Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla societies. Sometime around 1730, the *Natiitayt* began incorporating the horse into their subsistence economies. This accelerated and expanded their food gathering movements. Equestrianism extended the ancient

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previously described homeland from the Mount St. Helens region, while Theodore Stern presumes in the *Handbook of the North American Indians* that they always lived near the Blue Mountains.

[7] Conner and Lang, *As Days Go By*, 26-29; Eugene S. Hunn, *Nch'i-Wana "The Big River": Mid-Columbia Indians and Their Land* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1990), 170-172, 179; Theodore Stern, "Cayuse, Walla Walla, Umatilla," *Handbook of the North American Indians*, vol. 12, *Plateau*, rev. ed (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1998), 395-396. Some linguists believe that the Cayuse language, Waiilatpuan, was distantly related to Sahaptin, but the speaking of Waiilatpuan largely disappeared in the early nineteenth century, making it difficult to analyze its characteristics.

Columbia trade networks through which staples such as dried salmon, venison, and camas cakes, and commodities like shells, obsidian, and whale oil, and later buffalo hides, were exchanged. Cayuse and Umatilla hunting parties began riding out to the buffalo country across the Continental Divide for long term buffalo hunts and trade on the Great Plains.[8] Anthropologist Verne Ray asserted that these tribes "adopted Plains type warfare…subsequent to the acquisition of the horse." Equestrian warfare became deadlier as intertribal raids and counter raids were carried out faster and with greater force.[9] The increasingly confident mounted Cayuse began to assert their regional authority over the horse-scarce bands that inhabited lands where bunch grass grew abundant. They eventually moved northeast and northwest from the Blue Mountain foothills into the fertile grasslands of the Walla Walla Valley. Though some Umatilla and Walla Walla bands used the horse extensively and others less so, all groups felt the social, competitive, and organizational effects of the animal's presence.[10]

Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla bands organized locally starting with the extended family. Villages and encampments centered on kin-based relationships as displayed in the size of family lodges, which held up to thirty occupants. Headmen spoke for their multi-family lodges in village decision-making councils, while select men and women led hunting parties. These leaders held councils to determine camp movements and military operations. Decisions made in council were not binding; dissenters could leave if they disagreed. Cayuse and Walla Walla villages, which numbered as high as 235

[8] Hunn, *Nch'i-Wana*, 23-25, 224.

[9] Verne F. Ray, *Cultural Relations In the Plateau of Northwestern America* (Los Angeles, CA: The Southwest Museum Administrator of the Fund, 1939), 42-43.

[10]Ruby and Brown, *Cayuse Indians: Imperial Tribesmen*, 8-12.

people, were largely autonomous, though connected to other villages through trade, intermarriage, and ethnic ties. Likely facilitated by horse mobility, this interconnectedness also devolved the consolidation of Cayuse bands into just three primary groups.[11] However, applying strictly tribal designations to these bands and villages, while convenient for the business of later Euroamerican officials, implies a large-scale political organization that did not really exist. Ray does argue that, in fact, the Umatilla did form a single tribe, perhaps because of their smaller population.[12]

The localized nature of village organization dictated food collection and processing practices, as well as materials manufacturing. The division of labor was most visible in roots and berries gathering, and in hunting and fishing. Seasonal gathering, inaugurated by the first foods ceremony, was conducted almost exclusively by women. Wives, mothers, and sisters dried and processed the roots, berries, fish, and animal hides. Women also skillfully produced clothes, handicrafts, baskets, and tools. Men led hunting parties, fished, and served as community woodworkers. According to oral tradition, women broke and wrangled their growing horse herds with some male assistance.[13] Aboriginal slavery, as it existed after the arrival of the horse, eased the Cayuse and Walla Walla workload. While never a central feature of their societies due to the nature of their subsistence practices and small village sizes, slave raiding and trade did help to recoup population loss from military encounters and later, epidemic disease. Captives, usually

[11] Stern, *Handbook*, 402-403. Stern cites an early census, likely conducted by Presbyterian missionary Henry Spalding between 1838 and 1842, of a Cayuse-Nez Perce village that numbered around 235. Stern also provides far likelier average village populations that range from 10 to 150 persons.

[12] Ray, *Cultural Relations*, 12.

[13] Feather Lyn Sams-Huestis, "The Women Had Something to do Every Season: A Look at Gender Equality on the Umatilla Indian Reservation" (MA thesis, Washington State University, 2004) 33, 35-37, 44-51.

females, more often than not married into the tribe and "could ascend to higher stature by excelling, demonstrating worth to the community, and proving commitment to the people," all in the context of kin-based relationships and responsibilities.[14]

Elders, parents, and the extended family all contributed to instructing their children in food production, social expectations, and indigenous knowledge based on precepts of *tamanwit*. Mothers and grandmothers taught young girls gathering techniques and the locations and seasonal availability of roots and berries before their first root dig. As in other regional native societies, elders and family members exposed young men and boys to hunting and fishing practices and mounted warfare, all the while imparting the importance of leadership and cultural values. [15] Aboriginal knowledge of survival and social behavior was often explained to the tribal youth through storytelling. Storytellers conveyed notions of morality and tradition by offering examples of these values through characters like *spilyay* (Coyote), whose actions or inactions produced value-laden consequences. Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla society, economy, and culture thrived in the generations before and during the early horse period and into the nineteenth century.

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[14] Robert Ruby and John Brown, *Indian Slavery in the Pacific Northwest*, (Spokane, WA: Arthur H. Clark, 1993), 26-27, 227, 230-235; Roberta Conner, "Our People Have Always Been Here," in *Lewis and Clark Through Indian Eyes*, ed. Alvin Josephy (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006), 99. See similar discussion of aboriginal slavery/captivity in Christina Snyder, *Slavery In Indian Country: The Changing Face of Captivity in Early America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), 4-6; Pekka Hamalainen, *The Comanche Empire* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008), 253-255; James Brooks, *Captives and Cousins: Slavery, Kinship, and Community in the Southwest Borderlands* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 54-56.

[15] Alberta Yeboah, *Education Among Native Americans in the Periods Before and After Contact with Europeans: An Overview*, Paper presented at the Annual National Association of Native American Studies Conference, Houston Texas, Feb. 14-19, 2005; Jon Reyhner and Jeanne Eder, *American Indian Education: A History* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2004), 14-15.

Spiritual traditions, guided by community shamans, directed social behavior within the individual. The *Natiitayt* believed their bodies contained the soul's vitality, which could be corrupted by negative thoughts or behavior and prohibited from moving on after death. To ensure personal success in relationships, status, or honor, or in a particular skill, an individual hoped to acquire a strong *weyekin*. A *weyekin* is "the Totem or spirit ally that becomes the informer and protector" of a male or female who successfully experienced a lone vision quest. [16] In seeking a *weyekin*, a quester's mentor brought the individual to a particular spot where they waited for days for a potential tutelary spirit to contact him or her. If visited by a spirit, the seeker returned to the village for sweatlodge purification and the later announcement of their *weyekin*, which could take the form of an animal, flora, heavenly body, or ghost spirit. Custom dictated that the individual wait a number of years to begin using the power and skills - hunting, warfare, gathering, shamanism - provided by their tutelary protector. Those who became strong *tewats*, or shamans, maintained spiritual knowledge and powers of healing. They carried medicine bundles for curing the sick and in some instances intervened in nature to make game and plants available during times of scarcity. [17] Some precepts of the traditional spiritual beliefs and practices of the *Natiitayt* found their way into the nascent Washani religion developing among Plateau tribes in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Pre-contact practices of spirituality among the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla informally guided social and cultural, community and individual, behavior.

[16] J.M. Cornelison, *Weyekin Stories: Titwatit Weyekishnim* (San Francisco: E.L. Mackey, 1911); 4-7; Pond and Hester, *As Days Go By*, 122-123.

[17] Stern, *Handbook*, 410-412; Huestis, *Women*, 25-26.

The *Natiitayt* forged a functional existence on the Columbia Plateau that served their social, political, cultural, and economic needs. Independently, though in some cases together, the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla people followed the lessons of *tamanwit*. Provided by *spilyay*, these teachings encouraged the *Natiitayt* to draw from the land for their sustenance with a sense of balance. The bands and tribes developed cultural ceremonies based on the seasonal availability of the region's foods. They respected and maintained gendered labor roles and leadership structures according to their tradition of localized organization. The Cayuse, and later the Walla Walla and Umatilla, successfully adapted to the presence of the horse. They effectively employed this foreign beast to expedite hunting, gathering, and trading operations, as well as to bolster their diplomatic influence.

Horses, introduced by Spanish settlers in New Mexico and driven north by Ute and Shoshone traders, represented the first indirect contact between Euroamericans and the *Natiitayt*. The arrival of the Spanish horse perhaps inspired prophesies of other new encounters in the Indian's world.[18] According to oral tradition, a *sukwat* (a person with the ability to see into the future) once prophesized that a great change would accompany the arrival of men who "come out of the ocean" with "blue eyes." Although not by the ocean but by land, a mangy group of men led by a pair of blue-eyed explorers, did straggle into Walla Walla territory in October of 1805, unexpectedly fulfilling the *sukwat*'s revelation.[19]

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[18] Colin Calloway, *One Vast Winter Count: The Native American West Before Lewis and Clark* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2003), 293-298.

[19]Conner and Lang, *As Days Go By*, 26; Janet Benge, *Meriwether Lewis: Off the Edge of the Map* (Lynwood, WA: Emerald Books, 2001), 28; Landon Y. Jones, *William Clark and the Shaping of the West* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2004), 192.

Contacts and the Fur Trade

After trekking for seventeen months, members of the Corps of Discovery encountered the Walla Walla people at the confluence of the Snake and Columbia Rivers. The Corps' leaders, Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, approached the Indians as representatives of the distant United States government. In this capacity, Lewis and Clark, under orders from President Thomas Jefferson, peacefully interacted with Walla Walla leaders. These tribal headmen were unaware of Lewis and Clark's motives or of the continental land transfer that brought the explorers to their village. In 1803, the US diplomatically acquired imperial France's discovery rights and land claims to the Louisiana Territory. With these western lands in mind, Jefferson hoped that White Americans would "cover the whole … continent, with people speaking the same language, governed by similar forms, and by similar laws."[20] To assess the conditions and assets of this territory, Jefferson called for an exploratory expedition of the Missouri River, Rocky Mountains, and beyond. Aside from the mission's various scientific, commercial, and cartographic goals, Jefferson directed the Corps' leaders to determine the aborigines' habits, economies, populations, and organizational structures. He also stressed that they should record "the extent & limits of" the Indians' "possessions."[21] By cataloging the Native American landscape - agricultural potential, navigability of rivers, fur trade prospects - Lewis and Clark's reports could promote further western expansion. Indeed, Umatilla cultural director Roberta Conner has asserted that, "the expedition

[20] Paul Ford, ed., *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson Vol. 8* (New York: G.P. Putnam's and Sons, 1897), 103-104.

[21] Gary E. Moulton, ed., *The Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition: July 28 – November 1, 1805, Vol. 5* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1988), 277; Donald Jackson, ed., *Letters of the Lewis and Clark Expedition with Related Documents 1783-1854* (Urbana, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1978), 63.

knowingly conducted reconnaissance with foresight and intent to dispossess Indians of their lands."[22] An extension of US authority meant more than developing trade relationships with "the people inhabiting the line" (Indians), it intended to incorporate them into general American society. The Corps of Discovery exposed the Walla Walla, and later the Umatilla, to the initial phase of the American colonization project by classifying the tribes' land wealth and holdings.

After an extended stay with their Nez Perce hosts, the Corps lumbered down the Snake River and reached the Columbia in mid-October 1805. Here, Yelept (Yel-lep-pet), a Walla Walla headman, welcomed the travelers, offering them firewood, salmon, and dogs for food. In return, Lewis and Clark smoked tobacco with Yelept and headmen from neighboring Palouse and Wanapum bands and presented these leaders with peace medals, tokens of friendship between the US and the Indian "nations."[23] The visitors' gifts and supplies piqued Yelept's interest, and he wished them to stay a while longer in order to continue trading, but they moved on.[24] Further down the river, Umatilla fishing villages warily observed the arrogant trespassers' erratic behavior (Lewis' shooting a crane out of the sky unnerved them). Avoiding the explorers proved difficult, however, Clark forced himself into the Umatilla lodges to speak to the people and ascertain their

[22] Conner, *Lewis and Clark Through Indian Eyes*, 111.

[23] Frederick Hoxie provides a practical discussion of the use of terms like "tribe" and "nation" to describe native community organization and designation in *Parading Through History: The Making of the Crow Nation in America, 1805-1935* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 58-59.

[24] Moulton, *Lewis and Clark Expedition, vol. 5*, 278. 286, 296,303; James P. Ronda, *Lewis and Clark Among the Indians* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), 167-168. Yelept, the Walla Walla leader described by Lewis and Clark may have actually been Ollocot (Ollicot) of the Cayuses - in Sahaptin language, yelept (yalipt) means "trading partner."

social practices, resource use, and political organization. [25] The Corps then continued their journey down the Columbia and wintered among the Clatsop and Chinook. Upon their return in late April 1806, Lewis and Clark missed the Umatillas but spent more time with the same Walla Wallas and also some Yakamas. Again, Yelept, seeking further access to trade goods and gifts, attempted to convince his guests to stay longer. Though Lewis and Clark left the Walla Wallas after four days, they instilled a strong impression that more *soyapos* (White people) would follow.[26]

On the heels of Lewis and Clark came fur traders intent on exploiting the resources of Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla lands and establishing settlements in their territory. Aside from resource extraction, fur trade colonization consisted of constructing frontier forts that would act as regional trading centers. Soon after their establishment, these forts encouraged nearby settlement, thus increasing the Euroamerican population on a more permanent basis.[27] This continental process began in the Pacific Northwest five years after the Corps of Discovery departed from the region. By 1811, several foreign companies expanded the lucrative fur trade into the Oregon Country and the Columbia Basin. This area centered on the major fur extraction operations of the American Pacific Fur Company and the British North West Company. Beginning in 1811, representatives of these fur companies, namely David Thompson and

[25] In *Among the Indians* Ronda claims that the (most likely) Umatillas whom Clark startled with his gun reacted to his shooting of the crane because they have never "heard a gun." This fact seems unlikely due to the fact that since acquiring the horse, Umatilla bands had joined other Plateau groups in buffalo hunts on the Plains sometime in the second half of the eighteenth century, where they almost certainly had been exposed to Euroamerican guns.

[26] Moulton, *Lewis and Clark Expedition, vol. 6*, 302-303, 173-189; Ronda, *Among the Indians*, 220-221.

[27] Jurgen Osterhammel, *Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview* (Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener Publishers, 1997), 6-7, 10-11; Osterhammel refers to this process as belonging to the "Exploitation Colonies" form of colonization.

Alexander Ross, initiated trade with the Indians of the Columbia River and its tributaries, including the Walla Wallas and Cayuses.[28] The *Natiitayt* were less concerned with trapping beaver than exchanging horses and dried salmon for the traders' metal goods and guns. After the Pacific Fur Company folded in 1812, the Nor'Westers initiated a stronger push inland towards the confluence of the Columbia and Snake Rivers. The Nor'Wester fur trapping brigades established a recognizable route through the Snake River region, inadvertently providing a blueprint for the later overland Oregon Trail.[29] By 1818, the foreigners' fur trade operation reaffirmed their presence by establishing Fort Nez Perces at the mouth of the Walla Walla River.

With a more permanent commercial center in Fort Nez Perces, fur trade administrators could expand company operations and plans for their Indian partners. By 1821, the Hudson's Bay Company merged with the North West Company, inheriting the NorWesters' business plan and nascent program for Indian administration. The "Company," as it was known, initiated the process of reconditioning Columbia Basin native societies involved with the fur trade to produce a manageable legion of Indian laborers. Their scheme involved exposing native children to Western education and religion, encouraging summer farming when beaver was unavailable, and more firmly attaching the Native Americans to the market system of exchange for Euroamerican goods.[30] However, by the early 1830s, the Company saw few successes in achieving these colonial goals.

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[28] Robert Ruby and John Brown, *Indians of the Pacific Northwest: A History* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1981), 33, 35, 40-43.

[29] Alvin Josephy, *The Nez Perce Indians and the Opening of the Northwest* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1965), 45-53.

[30] Hunn, *Big River*, 32-38; Ruby and Brown, *Cayuse Indians: Imperial Tribesmen*, 27-34, 36-40.

Indian leaders supported the construction of Fort Nez Perces (renamed Fort Walla Walla after the corporate merger in 1821) because of the valuable goods traders introduced into the native economy. [31] Traders exchanged guns, a coveted commodity among the tribes, for native horses and, when available, processed furs. Indian families that occasionally lived around the fort also traded for beads, metal tools, pots, ammunition, and tobacco.[32] Though the Indians valued these items, their desire for "articles of British Manufacture" fell short of company officials' aspirations of shackling them to the market.[33] Through this exchange, the British fur companies hoped their Indian trade partners would become dependent on foreign-made manufactured goods. In theory, this would bind the Indians to British trade as customers and clients, but the *Natiitayt* displayed a frustrating ambivalence toward trade goods.[34] This shortcoming coincided with the Company's inchoate Christian conversion policy. At first, various Company officials imparted piecemeal religious instruction to the Indians. A feasible attempt to mold the Indian traders into thrifty, acquisitive, and Christian trading partners would require formal indoctrination. The Company offered a program of religious conversion and education to a few Cayuse leaders in 1830, to which several headmen responded by recruiting their own sons to participate. Unfortunately, the Company's

[31] Paul Franzmann, "The Many Fort Walla Wallas," *Whitman Mission*, http://www.nps.gov/whmi/historyculture/the-many-fort-walla-wallas.htm (accessed July 15, 2012). Contemporaries spelled Fort Nez Perces differently than the Nez Perce Indian tribe.

[32] Elizabeth Vibert, *Traders' Tales: Narratives of Cultural Encounters in the Columbia Plateau, 1807-1846* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997), 122, 3.

[33] Conner and Lang, *As Days Go By*, 46-47; Quoted in Vibert, *Traders' Tales*, 144.

[34] Timothy D. Willig, *Restoring the Chain of Friendship: British Policy & the Indians of the Great Lakes, 1783-1815* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2008), 29-30; Theodore Stern, *Chiefs and Chief Traders: Indian Relations at Fort Nez Perces, 1818-1855* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press), 137-139; Vibert, *Traders' Tales*, 5.

investment in the two young Cayuse converts' education at the Red River School in Manitoba, Canada, paid few dividends as the students returned to their people only to face ostracism, sickness, and death. Still, a distinct interest in the *soyapo*'s religion did develop throughout this period. The Indians' increasing captivation with this "strange new thing" coincided with a renewed American interest in the resources and souls of the Oregon Country.[35]

A resurgence in sustained American activity on the Columbia Plateau began after initial fur trade operations in the area failed in the first decades of the nineteenth century. After the War of 1812 caused John Jacob Astor to surrender his Pacific Fur Company ventures to the North West Company, American interest in the region tapered off for a time. By 1826, however, Company traders encountered more and more St. Louis-based Rocky Mountain Fur Company traders along the Snake River encroached on the territory of Fort Walla Walla. Rocky Mountain Company and independent American trappers in the region, including Jedediah Smith and the Sublette Brothers, had established unregulated trade relationships with the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Nez Perce. The noted American traders associated with these Indians at annual rendezvous to barter, gamble, and socialize. As the interactions between the Americans and Indians increased, the Indians sought more knowledge of the traders' religion and the power it seemed to possess. Many tribes and bands, coping with the demographic and subsistence exigencies associated with Euroamerican contact, developed a desperate interest in Christianity. They hoped this new religion would enhance their spiritual power to address rising

[35] Theodore Stern, *Chiefs and Change in the Oregon Country* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 1996), 9-14; Larry Cebula, *Plateau Indians and the Quest for Spiritual Power, 1700-1850* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2003), 59; Z. A. Mudge, *Sketches of Mission Life Among the Indians of Oregon* (New York: Carlton & Philips, 1854), 199.

disease epidemics and concomitant disruptions to their food gathering practices.[36] This desire for Christianity culminated in the 1831 journey of seven Nez Perces and Flathead Salish to St. Louis to meet with church leaders and convince them to bring their religion to the Indians. Though almost all of the native sojourners perished on the voyage, Protestant mission societies heard of the aborigines' yearning "for the salvation of their fellow beings." Soon after, numerous missions were planned for the Columbia district.[37]

Spiritual Interludes

For many Cayuses, the arrival of Presbyterian missionaries represented a new opportunity to experience Christianity and harness the power contained therein. Methodist minister Jason Lee, of the later Willamette Valley mission, journeyed to the Oregon Country in 1834 to survey the natives' propensity for Christian conversion. On his western tour, Lee encountered several Walla Wallas and Cayuses eager for his party to establish a mission among them, even offering horses to Lee to display their sincerity.[38] Lee's news of Indian desires for teachers of Christianity caused Presbyterian ministers Henry Spalding and Dr. Marcus Whitman of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) to heed the "Macedonian Cry" and establish a mission colony near Fort Walla Walla. By 1836, the Whitmans and Spaldings arrived at Waiilatpu in Cayuse country and Lapwai in Nez Perce territory, respectively,

[36] Cebula, *Plateau Indians and the Quest*, 72-74.

[37]Quoted in Cebula, *Plateau Indians and the Quest*, 93; Conner and Lang, *As Days Go By*, 48. This story of the Nez Perce and Flathead religious journey to St. Louis has been covered in a host of studies including, Alvin Josephy, *The Nez Perce Indians and the Opening of the Northwest* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1965; John Fahey, *The Flathead Indians* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1974); Albert Furtwangler, *Bringing Indians to the Book* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2005).

[38] Josephy, *Nez Perce*, 65-70.

and began construction of their missions. The Whitmans' establishment of a mission among the Cayuses represents a particular brand of settler colonialism that focuses on the colonizer's intention to transform indigenous cultural and spiritual identity. This transformation, conducted through Christianization efforts and a repression of tribal lifestyles, intended, in part, to prepare Indian people for the coming of the missionaries' countrymen. The Waiilatpu mission acted as the crucial first step in this assimilationist enterprise.[39]

As soon as they broke ground on the mission, Marcus Whitman began providing Sunday church services while his wife Narcissa taught in the mission school. Indian converts attended both, though never in particularly large numbers.[40] Not all Cayuses who wished the Christian missionaries to come and work among them did so with spiritual goals in mind. Certain Cayuse leaders who had profited from the fur trade believed that the Whitman establishment would serve as a rival fur post to Fort Walla Walla. If this were the case, the Indians could use the American mission as a platform for trade competition against the Company. However, Whitman adhered to ABCFM guidelines that prohibited missionary trading activity. Vexing incongruities such as this persisted throughout the ten-year existence of the Waiilatpu mission.[41]

An early attempt to apply American jurisdictional authority over the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Nez Perce in 1842 exposed US colonial objectives. The US and Great

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[39] Gray Whaley describes a similar development occurring in western Oregon during the same era in *Oregon and the Collapse of Illahee: U.S. Empire and the Transformation of an Indigenous World, 1792-1859* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010).

[40] Cebula, *Plateau Indians and the Quest*, 88-90.

[41] Francis Paul Prucha, *The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indians,* Vol. I (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), 392-39; Stern, *Chiefs and Change in the Oregon Country*, 43, 49-51, 54, 56.

Britain, through the Hudson's Bay Company, shared occupancy rights to the Oregon Country up to 1846. However, with the increasing immigration of American settlers into the region, the federal government agreed to post an Indian agent near Fort Walla Walla. Congress charged former Methodist-settler Elijah White with the task of urging the Cayuses, and to a lesser extent, the Nez Perces and the Walla Wallas, to maintain peace with each other and other nearby tribes. A crucial piece of White's assignment involved identifying band and tribe headmen to recognize as sole leaders of their respective groups. Accordingly, White selected several headmen from the tribes and introduced a code of civil laws to a tribal council gathered at the Lapwai and Waiilatpu missions. He strongly encouraged the headmen to adopt the laws and coerce their people to abide by them. The code established punishments for infractions ranging from murder to property destruction. White's "Nez Perce Laws" required that Indian "chiefs" carry out sentencing, which was in many ways inconsistent with indigenous social behavior modification mechanisms. Though unevenly applied in practice and not particularly durable, the "Nez Perce Laws," represented a first attempt at imposing US authority over the *Natiitayt*.[42]

Throughout the 1840s, the Whitmans' colonial program of religious and cultural conversion contended with native strategies of accommodation and selective incorporation. Marcus Whitman first intended to establish a routine of Sunday church services to expose his charges to the fundamentals of Christian doctrine. Feeble attempts to learn the Nez Perce *lingua franca* stalled Whitman's delivery of sermons and Biblical instruction. Though some Cayuse neophytes taught by Narcissa in the mission school did

[42] Elijah White, *Ten Years in Oregon* (Ithaca, NY: Press of Andrus, Gauntlett, 1850), 189-190.

learn English, language instruction was limited at best. The practice of sedentary farming, encouraged by Whitman, did take root with some Indian families. However, many of those who did farm near the mission simply incorporated the planting and harvest schedule into their seasonal round. They tilled the soil and planted in the spring then left Waiilatpu to gather, hunt, or fish, and then returned to harvest their crops in the fall. Many Cayuse farmers who gained limited agricultural training and who began to rely on their meager crop yield resented the farming successes exhibited by the mission settlement *soyapos*.[43]

Dr. Whitman's ability to heal the impaired actually frustrated many *tewats* who believed the missionary doctor usurped their position as traditional healers. Some of the Whitmans' greatest rivals in their evangelization efforts were the *tewats* who continued to practice "pagan" rituals of "witchcraft" and "devil worship." Still many Cayuses and Walla Wallas who avoided Whitman's suspicious medical procedures continued to visit the village *tewat*.[44] In an 1841 meeting between three Cayuse leaders and Whitman regarding spiritual power, Whitman assumed that the chiefs "complain because the young and common people are taught as well as themselves. They wish us to teach two or three of the principal chiefs and let them teach the people, as they used to do at the fort before we came."[45] Though Whitman supported the Cayuses fully embracing Christianity, he injuriously ignored the *Natiitayt* hierarchy of spiritual leadership and instruction. For a time, the Indians under Whitman's missionary charge adjusted to the reverend's

[43] Stern, *Chiefs and Change in the Oregon Country*, 54-57.

[44] Clifford M. Drury, *Marcus and Narcissa Whitman and the Opening of Old Oregon* (Seattle: Northwest Interpretive Association, 1986), 142.

[45] Stern, *Chiefs and Change in the Oregon Country*, 60-61; Quoted in Stern, *Chiefs and Change in the Oregon Country*, 60.

paternalist tendencies. However, their capacity to accommodate Whitman's recalcitrant methods diminished with their suspicion of his role in a disease outbreak that coincided with an influx in American emigration.

European-introduced diseases had already ruptured Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla populations by the 1840s. Smallpox, one of the first epidemics to pass through the Columbia country, struck the Nez Perces in the 1770s. The Cayuses avoided this outbreak by stealing away deep into the Blue Mountains. [46] However, at least two more smallpox epidemics raged at nearby trading sites in the early nineteenth century, presumably introduced by infected traders or visiting Indian groups. Evidence shows a separate smallpox outbreak among the Cayuse in 1825.[47] The Umatilla were exposed to whooping cough in 1844, and the Walla Walla felt the traumatic effects of "fever and ague" in 1824-25.[48] Pestilence traumatized the *Natiitayt*, who grew disillusioned with their inability to care for their families and trust in their *tewats* and traditions. The epidemics also led to an escalating frustration with the *soyapos* who seemed unaffected by the epidemics. Cayuse disaffection towards Dr. Whitman, whom they believed possessed the power to spread disease on purpose, grew along with the increased traffic along the burgeoning Oregon Trail.[49]

By the mid-1840s, the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla all experienced the degradation of their homelands by the rapidly expanding overland immigration along the

[46]Ruby and Brown, *Cayuse Indians: Imperial Tribesmen*, 17.

[47] Hunn, *Big River*, 27-31.

[48] Robert Thomas Boyd, *The Coming of the Spirit of Pestilence: Introduced Infectious Diseases and Population Decline Among Northwest Coast Indians, 1774-1874* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1999), 52.

[49]Julie Roy Jeffery, *Converting the West: A Biography of Narcissa Whitman* (Norman: University of Oklahoma, 1991), 124-126.

Oregon Trail. Progressively larger parties of American emigrants migrated from the Midwest and Upper South from 1841 to 1847, on their way to Oregon's verdant Willamette Valley. Indeed, the number of overland travelers jumped from 100 in 1842, to 1,500 in 1844, to 5,000 in 1847. [50] As the wagon trains passed through the Grande Ronde Valley, Blue Mountains, and Walla Walla Valley on to the Columbia Gorge, they hunted local game and scrounged for wild foods. The travelers failed to compensate the Cayuse and Walla Walla for exploiting these resources. [51] Early on, some Indians traded dry meat and berries for random emigrant goods, such as rolling pins and furniture. Eventually, however, the "pioneers" began extracting what they needed from the *Natiitayt* homelands with no sense of balance, which in Indian eyes violated the principle of *tamanwit*. Numerous emigrants noted the fine agricultural lands around the Walla Walla and Umatilla Rivers and some seriously considered settling there if the natives could be corralled. Many trains stopped at Waiilatpu, which Whitman encouraged. Whitman even began leading parties from the Grande Ronde Valley on through to The Dalles. Whitman's preoccupation with the emigrants frustrated his Cayuse converts, who felt he focused less on their salvation and more on settler colonization. Of the increasing emigrant trains, the Cayuses began to strongly "fear the Americans are going to overrun

[50]Hunn, *Big River*, 31; For more on Indian-Overlander interactions, see John David Unruh, *The Plains Across: The Overland Emigrants and the Trans-Mississippi West, 1840-60* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993).

[51] Clyde A. Milner, *The Oxford History of the American West*, ed. Clyde A. Milner, Carol A. O'Connor, and Martha A. Sandweiss (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1994), 164.

the country."[52] Concern for what the *Natiitayt* believed was an invasion grew to a fever pitch by the fall of 1847.

The events of 1847 resulted in a wave of increased US government intervention into the lives of the Plateau Indians. The Cayuse and Walla Walla's interactions with the flood of Whites arriving to Waiilatpu by October 1847 increased the frequency of microbial exchange, specifically lethal diseases. An epidemic of measles raced through Cayuse villages in October, killing half of their band population. Joe Lewis, a mixed-blood Delaware at the mission familiar with the destruction of Indian societies by the Americans back east, began spreading rumors about the origins of the disease outbreak. He claimed that the Whitmans intentionally spread the disease among the Cayuse to destroy them and claim their land for the US.[53] Tales abounded and when the Cayuse young men and leaders in Teloukaikt's band (whose three children had just died of the measles) felt they had run out of options, they struck. Midday on November 29, Teloukait, Tomohas, and perhaps ten more Indians entered Marcus Whitman's house and murdered him. The infuriated Cayuse insurgents killed twelve mission associates and captured more than forty survivors. Of those few men who escaped the attack, three fled to the nearby Fort Walla Walla and Lapwai station to sound the alarm. The citizens of

[52] Marcus Whitman to David Greene, 8 April 1844 in Stern, *Chiefs and Change in the Oregon Country*, 96, 106-109; William M. Mowry, *Marcus Whitman and the Early Days of Oregon* (New York: Silver, Burdett, 1901), 269.

[53] James Mooney concludes that that Marcus Whitman went back "east to get a bottle of poison for" the Cayuse as early as 1842. Barbara Mann cites evidence that after the 1847 massacre, a Catholic priest found in Whitman's house a "vial with something white in it," which she concludes was strychnine. Dr. Whitman very likely possessed poisonous materials, but whether he explicitly threatened the Cayuse with a bottle of poison is unclear. For these references, see James Mooney, *Fourteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology, 1892-1893* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1896), 724; Barbara Mann, *The Tainted Gift: The Disease Method of Frontier Expansion* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2009), 109-110.

Oregon who sought Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla lands now had a pretext to launch a military invasion and introduce the *Natiitayt* to the American capacity for conquest.[54]

American Conquest and *Natiitayt* Resistance

The armed conquest of the Cayuse and their allies hastened the American colonization project in the Oregon Territory. The "Cayuse War," as it became known, followed the killings at Waiilatpu. Upon learning of the depredations, territorial governor George Abernathy asked the provisional government for the resources necessary to raise a volunteer army. This army soon initiated the pursuit of the hostile Cayuse posse believed to be harboring the Whitman murderers.[55] Father Alexander Blanchet, a Catholic missionary sympathetic to the Cayuses, tried to convey to the authorities that the Indians' murder of Whitman resulted from what they perceived was a threat to their existence. He asserted, "the tragedy…had occurred from an anxious desire of self preservation."[56] Such reasoning went unheeded and the mobilization continued. Tiloukait's band attempted to gather support from regional tribes, succeeding with some - Umatillas, Walla Wallas, and Palouse - and failing with others - the Nez Perce. Sporadic fighting between the loose Cayuse coalition and the volunteers lasted for over a year and a half. The already weakened Cayuse soon realized that the American's military capabilities outmatched their own. Some Cayuse bands, particularly those under the leadership of Young Chief, sought an end to hostilities. The Provisional Oregon Army

[54] Stern, *Chiefs and Change in the Oregon Country*, 96, 170-175; Jeffery, *Narcissa*, 216-219; Drury, *Marcus and Narcissa* , 251-252, 262, 266-267.

[55] Stern, *Chiefs and Change in the Oregon Country*, 186-188.

[56] House of Representatives, Memorial of the Legislative Assembly of Oregon Territory, August 10, 1848, 30th Cong., 1st Sess. (Salem, OR: Frank Baker, State Printer, 1894), 21-22.

claimed title to the lands of the at-large Cayuse bands, claiming they had relinquished ownership to the land through their hostile actions. The provisional government, already strapped for funds to prosecute the war, banned traders from providing guns to the Cayuse "hostiles."[57]

Under Joseph Lane, the recently appointed governor of Oregon Territory, the American war aims shifted to focusing exclusively on apprehending the Whitman killers in order to end the conflict. Young Chief, the leader of the nonaligned bands, convinced the accused murderers to turn themselves over to Lane, which they did in March 1850, a full two years after the beginning of hostilities. The accused were led to The Dalles where US Marshall Joe Meek then transported them to Oregon City for trial.[58] The kangaroo court trial that found Teloukaikt, Tomahas, Isiaasheluckas, Clokomas, and Kiamasumkin guilty of murder imposed a foreign system of adjudication on the "Cayuse Five." Language barriers, jurisdictional issues, cultural misunderstandings, and a denied change of venue request all contributed to the problems inherent in trying Indians in an American court. The defendant's death sentence was carried out and the accused were hung on June 3, 1850.[59] Though the "Cayuse War" ended with these men's sacrifice, the *Natiitayt* would again experience the American conqueror's determination, and they would become even more familiar with institutionalized colonialism.

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[57]Kurt R. Nelson, *Fighting for Paradise: A Military History of the Pacific Northwest* (Yardley, PA: Westholme Publishing, 2007), 58-63; Ruby and Brown, *Cayuse Indians: Imperial Tribesmen*, Chapters 7 and 8.

[58] Stern, *Chiefs and Change in the Oregon Country*, 216-223; Hubert Howe Bancroft's *History of Oregon Vol. II* (San Francisco: History Company, 1888) contains the legendary quote by Teloukaikt in which he replied to the question of why he and his compatriots surrendered, "Did not your missionaries teach us that Christ died to save his people? So we die to save our people."

[59] Helen Hunt Jackson, *A Century of Dishonor* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1881), 408-411; For more on the trial itself see Ronald B. Lansing, *Juggernaut: The Whitman Massacre Trial, 1850* (Pasadena, CA: Ninth Judicial Circuit Historical Society, 1993).

The US government followed the end of hostilities by dispatching federal agents to regulate the activities of the Cayuse and their allies. In 1850, Congress allowed Oregon Superintendent of Indian Affairs Anson Dart to negotiate with Cayuse and Walla Walla headmen to establish an agency on the Umatilla River. The tribal leaders agreed. In return, they wished that the agent build a sawmill to provide wood for houses for those bands tolerating the government's presence. Dart had the Utilla (one of many spellings of Umatilla) Agency constructed at "the Meadows" along the Umatilla River about sixteen miles upriver of the Columbia and assigned Elias Wampole as agent in 1851.[60] In addition to administering the Indians of the area, the agency also served as a stop along the recently reinstated Oregon Trail. Some of those emigrants who passed into the Indian country stayed, realizing that the regional climate of the southern Columbia Plain would be excellent for livestock grazing. Cattlemen, who began settling in the valleys with the permission of the Indian agent, frustrated the Indians near Utilla.[61] These *soyapo* settlements, coupled with reinvigorated traffic along the Oregon Trail expedited by the Oregon Land Donation Act, nearly caused another outbreak of hostilities by 1853. To avoid this fate, settlers, emigrants, and agents demanded the negotiation of treaties between the Indians and federal representatives. Treaty making became a common practice in western Oregon as early as 1851. Whites in the Walla Walla and Umatilla Valleys petitioned the federal government to sequester the potentially hostile "savages" onto reserves to open up Indian lands and reroute overland migration routes away from

[60] Ruby and Brown, *Cayuse Indians: Imperial Tribesmen*, 173-178.

[61] Colonel William Parsons and W.S. Shiach, *An Illustrated History of Umatilla Country and of Morrow County* (Spokane, WA: W.H. Lever, 1902), 156.

reservation communities. Officials from the Oregon and newly created Washington Territories heeded this call and began to hold councils in the mid-1850s.[62]

One such treaty council, held near Fort Walla Walla, included the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla tribes and was coordinated by Commissioners Joel Palmer and Isaac I. Stevens. US Army officer Isaac Stevens, appointed governor of Washington Territory in 1853, held the offices of railroad surveyor and *ex officio* Indian superintendent. Stevens' experience with settler demands for Indian reservations and his dealings with surveying railroad paths through tribal lands fortified his support for treaty councils and Indian land cessions.[63] In late 1854, Oregon Indian Superintendent Joel Palmer, in cooperation with Stevens, sent message runners to band and tribe leaders, including the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla. Though the Cayuse were hesitant to meet with the officials, they agreed, primarily to take the opportunity to express their frustrations with unauthorized settlements and the activities of squatters on their lands. At Mill Creek, near the Walla Walla River, government officials held a three-week long council with delegates and headmen from the Cayuse, Walla Walla, Umatilla, Nez Perce, and Yakama tribes. Those like the Lawyer of the Nez Perce sought above all else to avoid war and to keep his bands intact, even if that meant accepting the reservation system. Walla Walla chief Peopeomoxmox, a reluctant friend of the Americans, grudgingly agreed to Palmer and Stevens' reserve. Wenap Snoot of the Umatillas conceded to do so as well. Cayuse

[62]Alexander Gunkel, "Culture in Conflict: A Study of Contrasted Interrelations and Reactions Between Euroamericans and the Wallawalla Indians of Washington State" (PhD diss., Southern Illinois University, 1978), 228-232.

[63] Hazard Stevens, *The Life of Isaac Ingalls Stevens,* Vol. II (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1900), 23, 25-26.

leaders Five Crows and Young Chief held out until the Nez Perce bands not represented by the Lawyer could arrive and have their say.[64]

During the deliberations, Stevens' plan for establishing two large reservations - one for the Yakama and other Columbia River Sahaptins, and another for the Nez Perce and the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla tribes – was bitterly contested by Cayuse leaders. To keep the negotiations from gridlocking and avoid any possibility of conflict, Palmer suggested a third reservation, which the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla leaders accepted.[65] By June 9, the American officials drew up the treaty, and Peopeomoxmox, Wenap Snoot, Young Chief and Five Crows, among others, signed. They agreed to the treaty's guarantee of agents, schools, vocational training, annuities, and protection and to reserving a 512,000-acre tract of their aboriginal homelands. To Palmer and Stevens, the treaty first and foremost allowed for the opening of ceded Indian lands. The commissioners explained to the council that no Indian lands would be exchanged until Congress ratified the treaty, which they estimated could take up to two years. However, within one month after the council, Stevens took out newspaper ads announcing the availability of the Indians' land. This premature announcement, along with an ill-timed discovery of gold in Washington Territory, quickly intensified emigration into the region. Unauthorized settlement and travel through *Natiitayt* lands caused a watershed eruption of hostilities on the Plateau in 1855.[66]

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[64] Ruby and Brown, *Cayuse Indians: Imperial Tribesmen*, 189-192; Stern, *Chiefs and Change in the Oregon Country*, 286-289; Isaac Ingalls Stevens and Darrell Scott, ed., *A True Copy of the Record of the Official Proceedings at the Council in the Walla Walla Valley 1855* (Fairfield, WA: Ye Galleon Press, 1985), 80, 86, 97, 205-110.

[65] Ibid., 89-90.

[66] Terence O'Donnell, *An Arrow In the Earth: General Joel Palmer and the Indians of Oregon* (Portland: Oregon Historical Society Press, 1991), 205-207; "Treaty with the Wallawalla, Cayuse, etc., 1855," *Indian*

Frustrated with the treaty and the rush of settlers and miners into their neighbors' country, *Natiitayt* leaders repudiated the treaty's provision for peace. The seemingly peaceful summer of 1855 soon gave way to a bloody autumn when the Yakamas, already disturbed by the treaty council outcome, found themselves in a scrap with miners operating in their lands. The eruption of murders and counter murders between Yakamas, Palouses, Klickitats and settlers and volunteer soldiers eventually caught up with the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla. Bands from all three tribes began attacking Fort Walla Walla and the Utilla Agency's Fort Henrietta,. The hostilities on the Plateau in the fall of 1855 coincided with Indian-White conflicts in southwestern Oregon and western Washington. In what settlers perceived was a general uprising, volunteer militias felt overwhelmed, and territorial officials implored the federal government to intervene. Unlike the limited Cayuse War that had ended only five years before, the US Army mobilized to provide a more efficient pacification campaign against the "insurgent" Indian "confederacy." The Army's Department of the Pacific, consolidated as a frontier military division in 1849, approached the Plateau conflict as one theater of a massive Pacific Northwest war.[67] The Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla would come to perceive this expanded military intervention as part of a scheme to carry out the final conquest of Indian lives and lands.

The Yakima War, as contemporaries labeled it, had drastic and debilitating effects on those tribes implicated in the conflict. The Oregon Mounted Volunteers murdered

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Affairs: Laws and Treaties, http://digital.library.okstate.edu/kappler/Vol2/treaties/wal0694.htm (accessed July 24, 2012); Andrew Fisher, *Shadow Tribe: The Making of Columbia River Identity* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2010), 53-54.

[67] Nelson, *Paradise*, 102-106, 67; Stern, *Chiefs and Change in the Oregon Country*, 326, 338; Whaley, *Collapse of Illahee*, 215-218.

Walla Walla leader Peopeomoxmox in December 1855. Cayuse families preoccupied with the conflict were unable to care for their horses, exposing the herds to the deadly winter storms of 1855-1856. In July 1856, a Cayuse root-digging party of women, children, and old men in the Grande Ronde Valley were isolated by the Washington Mounted Volunteers and massacred wholesale, leaving at least forty dead.[68] Weakened from the exigencies of war, the Umatillas were exposed to revived Paiute depredations from the south.[69] After months of irregular combat and caravan attacks and counterattacks, Governor Stevens called for a second Walla Walla Council to discuss a ceasefire. The Walla Walla and Cayuse delegates sought a return of their lands, a request that Stevens flatly denied. This failure to compromise resulted in continued sporadic fighting and depredations, which ultimately weakened the *Natiitayt* to the point of military collapse. From 1856 to 1860, the mobilized US military intermittently rounded up Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla bands, hostile or not, and marched them to the proposed reserve along the Umatilla River. At the urging of the Indian Office, territorial administrators, and the Oregon and Washington settler community, Congress ratified the Walla Walla Treaty in 1859, formally organizing the Umatilla Indian Reservation. [70]

Finishing out the war and removing most of the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla bands to the agency completed the conquest phase of American intervention into the lives of the *Natiitayt*. Previously, the Indians had maintained a dominant position in their relationships with the foreign fur traders and missionaries who sought to tie them

[68] Ruby and Brown, *Cayuse Indians: Imperial Tribesmen*, 238-239.

[69] Robert Ruby and John Brown, *A Guide to the Indian Tribes of the Pacific Northwest* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1992), 251.

[70]O'Donnell, *Arrow*, 250. A.P. Dennison to J.W. Nesmith, 1, August, 1858, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs* (hereafter cited as *ARCIA*), 263-264.

to the market and convert them to Christianity. These encroachments paled in comparison to the settler colonial forces of American emigration, government regulation, and military intervention. The demographic and military imbalance caused by the rush of settlers and their access to US government protections in the 1840s and 1850s shifted the position of dominance away from the Indians. The tribes, however, managed to maintain many political, cultural, and economic structures and traditions throughout this traumatic period and expected to continue this trend of survival in the new reservation setting. Conversely, the nascent federal Indian reservation program, implemented by government agents, would soon come to stand for the control and assimilation of reservation residents. Within this constrictive though semipermeable space, government policies expanded into the economic, religious, and educational spheres of Indian life. The tribes confronted the American goals to systematically eradicate their indigeneity by applying an unfolding strategy of adaptive resistance. For the next few generations on the Umatilla reservation, two opposing agendas of control and defiance would compete for the identity of the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla.

CHAPTER III

"*WHAT THE WHITES HAVE TRIED TO SHOW ME*": MITIGATING AN EMERGING RESERVATION POLICY, 1860-1880

The Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla became subject to a fluctuating federal Indian policy and an incipient reservation program still taking shape by 1860. Commissioners Joel Palmer and Isaac Stevens intended that the reservation established by the Walla Walla Treaty of 1855 segregate treaty tribes from the encroachments of uncontrollable White settlers. In theory, the reserve would act as an impenetrable space, free from settler violence, in which government agents could cultivate "civilized" values in the native residents. To US officials in the Indian Office, this ostensibly benevolent program would serve the dual purposes of reducing frontier conflict and exposing their Indian wards to American principles of thrift and Christianity. To implement this nascent plan for cultural assimilation, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs dispatched agents, teachers, and missionaries to the reservation communities of the West. Through the 1850s, 1860s, and 1870s, the implementation of the imperfect reservation scheme evolved along with the program's meaning and goals. While government officials debated policy and agents in the field adjusted to local conditions, treaty Indians took advantage of the Indian Office's bureaucratic inconsistencies to maintain control over their native identity and lifeways.

The US government's decision to establish the Umatilla Indian Reservation figured into a larger question of interpreting the federal relationship with Indian nations in the first half of the nineteenth century. In those early years, Government officials made temporary adjustments to federal Indian policy as their land-hungry population expanded

and sought lands in the West. To avoid the immoral and expensive disadvantages of warring with Indian tribes, statesman Thomas Jefferson sought alternative options to conflict over White encroachments onto Indian land. Fortuitously for Jefferson, an opportunity to defer further frontier discord with Indians presented itself with the Louisiana Purchase in 1803. With the new borders of the republic situated beyond the Mississippi River, eastern native groups could be compelled to relocate across the river, ostensibly, to live free from settler incursions for a time.[1]

Though Jefferson did not carry out such a plan for "Indian colonization," succeeding administrations did exploit this option, in particular Presidents Andrew Jackson and Martin Van Buren.[2] The federal government initiated the removal of thousands of southeastern and "Old Northwest" Indians into what became known as Indian Territory in the 1830s and 1840s. Removal curtailed complications resulting from violent Indian-White interaction for only a short time.[3] In the 1840s, the migration of eastern Indians into the trans-Mississippi West was soon followed by a stream of emigrants from the Ohio Valley and Upper South heading for the Oregon Country and California. New conflicts emerged from the Plains tribes' dissatisfaction with the indifferent emigrant trains cutting swathes through their territories. These "pioneers" exploited and destroyed natural resources and spread diseases among groups like the

[1] Anthony F.C. Wallace, *Jefferson and the Indians: The Tragic Fate of the First Americans* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 274-275.

[2] Francis Paul Prucha, *The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indians* Vol. I (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), 326; Arrell Morgan Gibson, *The American Indian: Prehistory to the Present* (Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath and Company, 1980), 293.

[3] Anthony F.C. Wallace, *The Long Bitter Trail: Andrew Jackson and the Indians* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1993), 66-75.

Pawnee and Cheyenne.[4] Indian reprisals for these disruptions disturbed the Indian Office. Officials realized that such problems were not going to subside and that policy adjustments would be necessary.

To address these issues effectively, Indian Commissioner William Medill proposed a reservation policy designed to placate White settlers and protect Indians. Medill was keenly aware of the inexorable desire for western settlement after the US acquired the Oregon Territory in 1846 and the Mexican Cession in 1848. These vast tracts of land, much of which remained under aboriginal title, now fell under the jurisdiction of the US government. Medill swiftly concluded that this massive acquisition would require a suitable policy for managing the region's "savages." To contain the level of conflict between Indians and settlers in areas like the Oregon Country, Medill in 1848 advised Congress and President James Polk to establish a formal reserve system for the western Indians.[5] By securing a number of small reservations, located away from the well-trod American migration routes, Medill hoped to achieve a twofold plan of land transfer and cultural assimilation.

Segregation for supposed protection and assimilation became the "honorable" though ill-conceived goals of the Indian Office's reservation program. In describing the proposed process, Medill hoped to "colonize our Indian tribes beyond the reach, for some years, of our white population… within a small district of country."[6] In reality, legally or

[4] Elliott West, *The Contested Plains: Indians, Goldseekers, and the Rush to Colorado* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998), 88-89.

[5] Robert A. Trennert Jr., *Alternative to Extinction: Federal Indian Policy and the Beginnings of the Reservation System, 1848-1851* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1975), 29-30; Brian W. Dippie, *The Vanishing American: White Attitudes and U.S. Indian Policy* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1982), 73-76.

[6] William Medill to Secretary of War W.L. Marcy, 3 November 1848, *ARCIA*, 385-387.

illegally acquiring title to Indian lands and corralling a tribe or tribes onto a reserve opened the excess lands to settlement. Colonialism remained at the heart of this plan. Officially, this supposedly benevolent policy meant to separate those White settlers who introduced the most negative influences of American society into "hapless" Indian communities.[7] These vices included supplying of alcohol and the violence resulting from squatter interlopers. Once confined on the reservation, Medill and subsequent officials in the Indian Office intended to "civilize" and improve their Indian wards to the elevated status of American society. In 1848, Medill articulated this perspective:

> As the game decreases and become scarce, the adults will gradually be compelled to resort to agriculture and other kinds of labor to obtain a subsistence… [and] establish at the same time, a judicious and well devised system of manual labor schools for the education of the youth of both sexes in letters – the males in practical agriculture and the various necessary and useful mechanic arts, and the females in the different branches of housewifery, including spinning and weaving; and these schools… [conducted by] the excellent and active missionary societies of the different Christian denominations of the country.[8]

Medill plainly emphasized the cultivation of economic, educational, and religious values of American society in the reservation populations. Indian Office officials succeed who succeeded Medill also championed this assimilationist program, which they soon distilled in the term "Americanization." Many voices in Congress, including Senator Robert Hunter of Virginia, agreed on moral grounds but also because "feeding and making presents to the Indians, instead of making war with them, is not only more humane, but in the end more economical."[9] Once the Indian Office brought this process to completion,

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[7] L. Lea to Secretary of Interior A.H.H. Stuart, 27 November 1850, *ARCIA*, 4-5.

[8] William Medill to Marcy, 3 November 1848, *ARCIA*, 387.

[9] Senator Robert Hunter, "Indian Appropriations Bill," *Congressional Globe* 62: 978 (April 26, 1854) S978.

detribalized and assimilated Indians could blend into White society, no longer needing a protective reservation.[10] Implementation of this embryonic, experimental program of social engineering into the Pacific Northwest fell to treaty commissioners Joel Palmer and Isaac Stevens in the mid-1850s.

In the 1850s, an incipient reservation policy emanated from Washington D.C. into Indian Country through treaties negotiated by federal agents. Commissioner Joel Palmer, motivated to maintain peace between the settlers and Indians of western Oregon, and Commissioner Isaac Stevens, determined to secure a railroad lane to Puget Sound through Indian lands, launched a treaty council campaign in 1854. The commissioners complied with Congress and the Indian Office's instructions to include in the treaties provisions designed to promote acculturation.

At the Walla Walla Council in the summer of 1855, Palmer deferred to Stevens in outlining to the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla chiefs the terms of the treaty at hand. Stevens reiterated federal policy: "We want you to have schools and mills and shops and farms…to have teachers and millwrights and farmers and artisans. We want your people to learn to read and write, your men and boys to be farmers or millwrights or mechanics, or to be of some profession as a lawyer or a doctor." He continued, "We want your wives and daughters to learn to spin and to weave, and to make clothes and all the labors of the house."[11] While Cayuse and Walla Walla leaders like Peopeomoxmox and Young Chief did not disagree with these proposals, they did not explicitly endorse them. They were

[10] Gibson, *The American Indian,* 426-429; John Findlay, "An Elusive Institution: The Birth of Indian Reservations in Gold Rush California," *State and Reservation: New Perspectives on Federal Indian Policy*, ed. George Castile and Robert Bee (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1992), 13-16, 18.

[11] Isaac Ingalls Stevens and Darrell Scott, ed., *A True Copy of the Record of the Official Proceedings at the Council in the Walla Walla Valley 1855* (Fairfield, WA: Ye Galleon Press, 1985), 43.

primarily concerned with receiving payment for their ceded lands and protections from White interlopers. Stevens, intent on gaining Indian approval of the treaty and then moving on, cowed Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla leaders into agreeing to the final treaty offer.[12] The commissioners' provisions of "civilization" – schools, teachers, agents, and farm supervisors – were included in the definitive version of the Walla Walla Treaty, ratified in 1859. Eleven years after its pronouncement, Medill's reservation civilization program had found its way to the *Natiitayt*.

Though many scattered bands avoided removal to the reservation, those who did arrive encountered an institution still very much in the making. While the Umatilla agency was in the process of construction, agents A. J. Cain in the Walla Walla Valley, and G. H. Abbott, acting agent at The Dalles, together called for the collection of those Indians not previously escorted to the reserve by the military.[13] By 1860, with the agency nearly "completed," agent Abbot began meeting with those bands who remained away from the reservation. Abbot tried intimidating those "renegade" Umatillas and Walla Wallas by threatening to call the soldiers at Fort Walla Walla to remove them by force. However, he also emphasized the material benefits of staying on the reserve, including rations and annuities. He encouraged "Wenap Snoot, chief of the Umatillas," to visit the remaining Umatilla and Walla Walla bands on the Columbia River and "persuade them to remove to the reserve."[14] Through his anxious and assertive efforts, Abbott did manage to convince some families and bands to come to the reservation.

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[12] Ibid., 77,79.

[13] A. J. Cain to Oregon Superintendent of Indian Affairs E.R. Geary, *ARCIA*, 1860, 208; G.H. Abbot to Edward R. Geary, *ARCIA*, 1860, 219-220.

[14] G. H. Abbot to Edward R. Geary, 30 October 1860, Letterbook of the Umatilla Indian Agency, 1860-1880, Microfilm Roll 1(Hereafter cited as Letterbook).

Foreshadowing the Indian Office's ineptitude bordering on apathy, many of the proposed opportunities and benefits of reservation life failed to materialize at Umatilla. A striking example of these shortcomings occurred during the Umatilla agency's first winter in operation. Oral tradition, based on precepts of *tamanwit*, held that the *Natiitayt* must cease hunting by the third snow of the year, generally around November.[15] At the close of the fall hunting season in 1860, various Indian families and bands descended from the mountains to the valley floor, but this year they chose to make their way to the agency. Attracted by treaty promises that the agent would distribute "pants, coats, hats, shirts and shoes" to tribal members, many families arrived to access these goods. An extra set of clothes would help to offset the cold temperatures of the fast approaching eastern Oregon winter. Unfortunately, by December, Abbot did not have any of these articles to dispense.

Knowing that keeping this promise could be the key to holding these bands on the reserve, at least for a time, he admonished his superiors, "the Indians are very much dissatisfied at the failure to purchase these most necessary articles of clothing."[16] Though he hoped the Oregon Indian Superintendent might fund the purchase of 650 shirts, coats, hats, and pairs of pants as soon as possible, he despondently estimated that the funds would "not get to the agency earlier than February."[17] Bureaucratic and logistical complications hindered Abbot's eager desire to remove his Indian charges to the reserve.

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[15] Ron Pond and Daniel Hester, *Wiyaxayxt As Days Go By Wiyaakaa?awn: Our History, Our Land, and Our People, The Cayuse, Umatilla, and Walla Walla*, ed. Jennifer Karson (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2006), 131.

[16] G. H. Abbot to Edward R. Geary, 9 December 1860, Letterbook.

[17] Ibid.

The ill-timed, delayed delivery resulted from the centralized nature of the Indian Office. Provisions "purchased by the commissioner in the Eastern Markets" made their way to Portland where, depending on availability, scheduling, and river conditions, steamboats shipped the goods up the Columbia to Umatilla Landing for pickup.[18] Shipments rarely arrived on time, if ever. The agent's inability to provide his wards with the materials necessary to make a living within this new confining space epitomizes the tribes' early experiences with reservation colonialism. The Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla, however, adapted to the agent's irregular distribution of provisions by adjusting their hunting, fishing, and gathering cycle for sustenance and maintaining some autonomy. Though frustrated and even distressed with federal impositions at times, the *Natiitayt* exploited the spaces of government inconsistency to carry on familiar lifeways and sacred traditions. However, when advantageous, the tribes accommodated certain impositions to ensure their position as actors in this contested domain.

The Limits of Colonial Education

When J.M. Cornelison, a Presbyterian missionary to the Umatilla tribes at the turn of the century, reflected on his experience with learning his charges' native language, he recalled the storytelling customs of the Cayuse. He remembered when the "children were growing up, he often heard the little boys, crawling upon their father's knees," to ask, "Papa tell me about Coyote." The stories that followed, featuring the "mighty deeds and prowess and cunning of the great Coyote," entertained and intrigued the missionary, who

[18] G. H. Abbot to Edward R. Geary, 12 November 1860, Letterbook; D. W. Meinig, *The Great Columbia Plain: A Historical Geography, 1805-1910* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1968), 174-177, 212-214.

made a point to record the several tales of the Indians' *weyekin*.[19] Though Cornelison showed a sincere interest in "Papa's" legends, he failed to comprehend the stories' function in *Natiitayt* education. These *spilyay* stories conveyed to the children the appropriate social and moral behaviors necessary to function in and contribute to their community. Elders and parents instilled in the next generation such values as respect, trust, labor, caution, and the importance of providing for the extended family. Since time immemorial, Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla lodges were classrooms, and the surrounding landscape their laboratories.[20] The Indians sought to maintain this educational structure into the reservation period even as government forces attempted to transform indigenous systems of knowledge.

A non-secular tradition of educating Native Americans provided the foundation for early nineteenth century federal Indian education policy. European and American missionaries sought to convert "heathen savages" to Christianity and indoctrinate Indians in the arts of agriculture and literacy in the colonizer's language. Into the 1820s, 1830s, and 1840s, the US government supported missionary institutions to hasten Indian Christianization and detribalization.[21] Marcus Whitman's benefactor, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, appropriated government subsidies to help fund his Waiilatpu mission. The few educational inroads made by Whitman abruptly ended with the Cayuse War in 1847. The subsequent Plateau wars discouraged any serious attempts to reestablish another school among the *Natiitayt* for fifteen years. By

[19] J.M. Cornelison, *Weyekin Stories: Titwatit Weyekishnim* (San Francisco: E.L. Mackey, 1911) 5, 18, 22.

[20] A similar point is made in Keith H. Basso, *Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscapes and Language Among the Western Apache* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996).

[21] Jon Reyhner and Jeanne Eder, *American Indian Education: A History*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2004), 42-44.

1862, the Indian Office began the process of establishing a secular education program at Umatilla.

The uncoordinated implementation of the education system reinforced the initial reluctances of the Umatilla tribal leadership to consent to an agency school. In 1862, the recognized chiefs in council with the Oregon Indian Superintendent William Rector, admonished the government's failure to construct treaty-guaranteed reservation infrastructure. The chiefs "complained very bitterly" about the agent's failure to construct mills or the frame houses promised them by the treaty.[22] At this meeting, tribal leaders Howlish Wampo, Wenap Snoot, and Pierre implied that these shortcomings discouraged them from supporting a reservation school program.[23] Rector acknowledged, "If we expect to maintain friendly relations with these Indians, the department must make some reasonable show towards complying with the stipulations of their treaty."[24] The grievances apparently motivated Rector and Umatilla agent William Barnhart to track down the funds necessary to begin, in earnest, delivering on at least some of the treaty provisions. One year later, mills were finally being built. Barnhart believed that the revenue from these mills would help to fund the school: "All that we require to make these Indians happy and contented people is to complete the mills" and "establish the school on a permanent plan, with a competent teacher of their own choice."[25] Tribal leaders, intent on making their voices heard, capitalized on the school debate to press

[22] Oregon Superintendent of Indian Affairs William Rector to Commissioner William P. Dole, 1862, *ARCIA*, 259-260.

[23] Walla Walla chief Homily was off the reservation so the agent elected Pierre chief for a short time.

[24] Oregon Superintendent of Indian Affairs William Rector to Commissioner William P. Dole, 1862, *ARCIA*, 259-260.

[25] William Barnhart to Oregon Superintendent of Indian Affairs J.W. Perit Huntington, 1 August 1863, *ARCIA*, 65.

their demands on the agents and superintendent. Colonial policy dictated a school be built, but the Indians inserted themselves in its foundation.

Tribal leaders intervened in the agent's decision to hire a schoolteacher, a development in which they felt it important to participate. Problems with funding and planning postponed the construction of Barnhart's much needed reservation infrastructure, including a school that would not be completed until 1865. In a haphazard attempt to launch the Indian education program, Barnhart's sub-agent hired a teacher, with only a temporary building in which to hold class. Timothy W. Davenport, filling in for Barnhart during his absence in Washington, D.C. in 1862-1863, faced a surprisingly contentious administrative dispute early on in his tenure.[26] Under pressure from Superintendent Rector, Davenport appointed a man named Pinto whom Willamette Valley politicians had promised a steady government job as teacher at the Umatilla agency. Pinto, whom Davenport judged "fully competent" as a teacher, was not the choice of the Indians. The tribes endorsed the wife of the agency physician, Dr. John Teal. The Indians trusted the doctor, who showed some success as a healer, and preferred Teal's wife to serve as teacher. Upon learning of Davenport's appointment of Pinto, Teal communicated to Cayuse chief Howlish Wampo that he interpreted his wife's rejection as a sign, and would be leaving. Davenport soon discovered the Indians' frustration with his unilateral decision-making on education, a topic that greatly concerned tribal leadership.[27]

[26] Barnhart's mission to Washington DC may have actually been an attempt by the Oregon Indian Superintendent to remove Barnhart from the reservation for a time. Barnhart was accused of murdering the son of Umhowlish, a Cayuse war chief, and the Indian Office felt it to be in his best interest to leave while the details were sorted out and charges analyzed.

[27] T. W. Davenport, "Recollections of an Indian Agent," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 8 (March 1907): 2-3, 9-11(hereafter "Recollections").

The Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla took advantage of the agents' vacillations and asserted their demands for their children's education. To address the contentious issue of hiring the agency's first teacher, Davenport called a meeting with the tribes. Howlish Wampo, speaking for the *Natiitayt,* claimed "in a deliberate manner" that they "should have been consulted before making any change."[28] Davenport, upon observing that this was "a matter of grave concern," changed his tone and informed the council that he solicited the doctor to stay, but the teaching position would go to Pinto. As a result of the agent's half-hearted compromise and the Indians' dissatisfaction, Pinto's school year did not go well. Barnhart, upon his return to Umatilla, reported that the teacher's efforts had "amounted to nothing," laboring as he did without the support of the tribes. Barnhart soon relieved Pinto of his duties and asked the Indians who they wished teach their children.[29]

The Catholic Indians, a particularly vocal faction interested in education, demanded that a priest serve as their community's schoolteacher. In assessing this request, Barnhart considered the recent reemergence of Catholic missionary activity since at least 1861. Many Cayuse and Walla Wallas had converted to Catholicism in the late 1840s, when two Jesuit priests began proselytizing around the Umatilla and Walla Walla valleys. The Jesuits managed to baptize over 200 Indians before the Plateau Wars of the 1850s prohibited further normal relations.[30] By the time the Umatilla reservation was established, Catholic priests, including Father Toussaint Mesplie, resumed making their

[28] Davenport, "Recollections" 8 (March 1907), 10.

[29] William Barnhart to Oregon Superintendent of Indian Affairs J.W. Perit Huntington, 1 August 1863,*ARCIA*, 64.

[30] Robert H. Ruby and John A. Brown, *The Cayuse Indians: Imperial Tribesmen of Old Oregon* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1972), 80, 276.

rounds in the region to administer the sacrament to Catholic Indians. Cayuse chief Howlish Wampo and Walla Walla headman Eneas were particularly influential Catholic converts.[31] By 1863, the Catholic Indians began to "insist upon the return of among them their old … reverend father to take charge of the school here."[32] Barnhart felt the itinerant priest's presence addressed the Christianization dimension of the Indians' "civilization" and thus did not object to the Indians' desire for a Catholic schoolteacher.[33] After a Matthew Davenport served as interim teacher for a year, Belgian missionary Father Gustave Vermeersch took over instruction at the recently completed Umatilla day school in 1865.[34] Vermeersch administered and taught at the day school until 1873, and was succeeded by two more Catholic teachers. In a setting of constrained decision-making power, the Indians exploited the agent's wavering on bureaucratic appointments and pressed their demand for the hiring of a schoolteacher based on their proposed conditions.

Though tribal leaders took an active role in the schoolteacher question, not all Indians supported the colonial education policy. A combination of Indian Office mismanagement and divergent tribal priorities caused many Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla bands and families to withhold their support for American education. These tribal factions quickly grew frustrated with the Indian Office's protracted implementation of treaty obligations. For the first decade of its existence, the Umatilla agency suffered from delayed deliveries of annuities and discouraging holdups in the erection of

[31] Davenport, "Recollections," June 1907, 112, 128.

[32] William Barnhart to Oregon Superintendent of Indian Affairs J.W. Perit Huntington, 1 August 1863, *ARCIA*, 64.

[33] William Barnhart to Oregon Superintendent of Indian Affairs W. H. Rector, 13 August 1862, *ARCIA*, 272.

[34] William Barnhart to Oregon Superintendent of Indian Affairs J.W. Perit Huntington, 4 August 1866, *ARCIA*, 87-88.

reservation infrastructure. Agents begrudgingly allowed the Indians to leave the reservation boundaries to hunt, fish, and gather to accommodate the inconsistent ration distributions. Leaving the reservation for months at a time based on their seasonal subsistence cycle allowed parents to keep their children out of school. Through evasion, these families could educate the *Natiitayt* youth in the traditional methods of food collection and relate the cultural importance of this practice. Indeed, in defending the continuation of teaching survival and cultural relevance, Walla Walla chief Homily claimed that his "peoples' fathers were not without instruction. The Earth was their teacher." [35] Extended stays out of the agent's reach, as well as decisions not to return at all, demonstrated an implicit tribal disapproval of *suyapo* education designs. Though, out of necessity, agents and agency teachers conceded to their charges leaving the reservation, they still zealously endeavored to bring Indian children to school. They intended to implement this critical component of Americanization despite the limited resources and guidance available to them.

Since the early 1860s, government officials at Umatilla expressed frustration with the reservation conditions that allowed Indian children to avoid school. By 1862, Barnhart validated the difficulties of administering to his Indian charges as they were frequently "absent hunting and fishing, getting their winter supply of food."[36] Agent reports and correspondence confirm that the "Indians" left the reservation every year from 1866 to 1880, ostensibly for food collection purposes.[37] For those with a vested

[35]Thomas K. Cree Report, 15 November 1871, *ARCIA*, 109.

[36] T.W. Davenport to William H. Rector, 14 October 1862, Letterbook.

[37] In most Indian Office reports describing Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla activity, government officials simply refer to their charges as "Indians," providing no distinction as to which tribe or band they are specifically referring.

interest in Indian education, these retreats vexed goals of cultural assimilation and needed to be addressed. Oregon Indian Superintendent J.W. Huntington observed of the education system at Umatilla the Indians' ability to "roam at will over the country" made "instructing them in schools… impossible."[38] Umatilla officials did attempt some remedies. In 1866, and for a few years after, Father Vermeersch appealed to Barnhart for extra food rations, mostly sacks of flour, to entice students to stay at school and not join their families leaving the reservation. However, this remedy worked inconsistently at best. Barnhart could only deliver these conditional rations a few times a year; ration shortages were one of the primary reasons the Indians left in the first place. Until an improved system of ration distribution and a more established and functional school system developed, officials could not realistically expect the Indians to sacrifice food collection expeditions for leaving their children at the agency.

Low enrollment numbers of agency school students indicate the *Natiitayt* parents' apprehension to relinquish their children to assimilative education. These enrollment statistics derive from the agents' tally of school-age children living on the reservation for at least part of the year. Agent Barnhart and his successor Narcisse Cornoyer admitted the difficulties of collecting a reservation census, but attempted to compile estimates nonetheless. According to Barnhart, from 1864 to 1870 the reservation Indian population remained around 801 with an average school-age population of about 244.[39] However,

[38] I.W.P. Huntington to D.N. Cooley, 15 October 1866, *ARCIA*, 76-77.

[39] These averages come from the 1864, 1867, 1868, and 1870 reservation population figures provided by the Umatilla agent in each year's Annual Report to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. The agent delineated separate categories for tribe, men, women, boys, and girls. The numbers for the "school-age" children come from the boys and girls categories. I figured these averages based on the presumption that by designating sections for "boys" and "girls," the agent meant to distinguish the children from adults for the purposes of identifying those tribal members eligible for formal schooling. Agents and the Indian Office settled on the age of six as the earliest age to attend school.

school attendance during this period averaged around 22.[40] During the 1870s, the general population average rose to 834 while the average school-age population stayed around 242. [41] Similar to the previous decade, the school attendance remained at 22.[42] Though inconsistencies were prevalent in the collection of the Umatilla census figures, these numbers speak volumes about Indian evasion of the Indian Office's school system.

Agent attempts to round up Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla children and take them to school were hindered by various constraints. Agents even considering leaving the agency to collect school-age children off the reservation lacked the manpower necessary to bring them in. Barnhart and Cornoyer did have the ability to call on military units at Fort Walla Walla, but they typically reserved this option for suppressing violence and monitoring "renegade" Indian bands. Even if the agents had forcibly collected Indian children and taken them to the agency school, the institution was just a day school; class ended in the afternoon, and the teacher released the students back to their parents.[43] Finally, many Indian families and bands lived on the reservation but camped anywhere from ten to twenty-five miles away from the agency, usually near creeks or grazing land.[44] The teacher could not reasonably expect a young child to return home every day from school on a twenty-mile trek in the frigid eastern Oregon winter. Perhaps those families wanting to appear compliant with the agent's expectations camped within the

[40] This average derives from the 1866, 1868, and 1870 Annual Reports to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

[41] These averages derive from the 1873, 1875 ,1877, 1879, and 1880 Annual Reports to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

[42] 1872, 1873, 1874, 1876, 1878, 1879 Annual Reports to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

[43] Father Vermersch to W.H. Barnhart, 1 August 1866, *ARCIA*, 88 (Vermeersch was spelled in a variety of ways).

[44] M. Davenport to William H. Barnhart, 20 July 1864, *ARCIA*, 89,90; N.A. Cornoyer to T.B. Odeneal, 3 September 1872, *ARCIA*; N.A. Cornoyer to Edward P. Smith, 4 September 1873, *ARCIA*.

boundaries of the reservation, but just far enough away that they could claim the school was dangerously out of reach.

With no formal mandate to forcibly remove Indian children and keep them in school, agents relied on persuading tribal leaders to express the advantages of American education. Various bands and families acknowledged the agents' strenuous urging "upon the chiefs and head-men to assist me in my endeavors to get the Indians to send their children to school."[45] In 1871, Cornoyer reported:

> On taking charge of the agency I found but few Indian children attending school only about 10 or 12. I called all the principal Indians together and told them that they must send their children to school, and explained to them the benefits that would result from the education of their children. They told me that they were glad to see that I was taking an interest in their welfare and as soon as the weather would permit they would send their children to school.[46]

Couched in this lip service is a display of tribal priorities; the Indian leaders did appreciate the agent's gesture but would not risk sending their children to the agency in unfavorable weather conditions. After many more months of haranguing, Agent Cornoyer proudly noted "some of the chiefs and head-men have promised… to give what assistance they can" to encourage education.[47] Some families did follow the suggestions of their chiefs and enrolled their children in school.

Families who agreed to send their children to school had little control over the curricula that teachers implemented in class. Catholic priests serving as schoolteachers developed curricula based on a few primary goals that appeared similar to Marcus

[45] Umatilla Agency Monthly Report to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 6 December 1875, Letterbook.

[46] N.A. Cornoyer to A.B. Meacham, 2 June 1871, Monthly Narrative Reports, Box 1, Umatilla Indian Agency, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75, National Archives and Records Administration- Pacific Alaska Region (hereafter cited as NARA).

[47] Umatilla Agency Monthly Report to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 6 December 1875, Letterbook.

Whitman's twenty years earlier. English language instruction, including reading and writing, was paramount to assimilative education. To encourage the development of vocational skills, the principal teacher and agency farmer instructed the Indian boys in the ways of agriculture and animal husbandry. Culturally, families with large horse herds may have resisted the teachers' exclusively training boys in the arts of pastoralism; in *Natiitayt* society, primarily females managed a family's horses.[48] Aligning segregated female instruction with Victorian values of the "women's sphere," female teacher assistants instructed girls in sewing, knitting, "and all kinds of housework." In many cases, the girls fashioned clothes for the rest of the student body, likely a contingency project stemming from the need to recoup for the agent's lack of goods and clothing for tribal distribution. In this educational system, skills of the colonizing society meant to replace traditional skills like gathering, taught by native mothers and grandmothers.[49] However, parents felt relieved that since this was a day school, class only met "but four or five hours a day," after which students could then return home.

Principal teacher Vermeersch and subsequent teachers complained of the inadequacy of the day school system. They observed that students returning to their families at the end of the school day reverted to their native languages and "savage habits." Vermeersch, and later Fathers Bertrand Orth and Lois Conrardy, suggested year after year that funds be distributed to construct a boarding school to keep students on campus for longer periods for more intensive training. Cornoyer concurred by

[48] A.B. Meacham, *Wigwam and Warpath or the Royal Chief in Chains* (Boston: John P. Dale, 1875), 202-204. For references to female care of horse herds, see Pekka Hamalainan, *The Comanche Empire* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008), 244.

[49] Feather Lyn Sams-Huestis, "The Women Had Something to do Every Season: A Look at Gender Equality on the Umatilla Indian Reservation" (MA thesis, Washington State University, 2004), 48-49.

admonishing his superiors that in a boarding school, "the children would be constantly under the eyes of the teacher" and "away from the influences" of their tribal communities. The Oregon Indian Superintendent agreed with the Umatilla officials' rationale for a boarding school and appealed to the Indian Office to have one constructed. In the end, it took a significant fund raising effort by the Catholic Church to initiate the process of constructing a boarding school at Umatilla. Only with this donation did Congress and the Indian Office agree to match funds for the school. Nationally, in the late 1870s, Indian boarding schools became the panacea for the educational component of the Americanization program. The *Natiitayt* intended to insert their voice into the boarding school discussion just as they had with the day school.

Religious Vicissitudes

In the spring of 1877, Walla Walla chief Homily and Wanapum prophet Smohalla met with General Oliver O. Howard at the steamboat town of Wallula along the Columbia River. Smohalla desired to meet with Howard, or "Arm-cut-off" as Homily called him, to discuss the agent's demands that his Indian followers remove to the reservations. Umatilla Agent Cornoyer did indeed insist that Homily leave the river community and the "corrupting" influences of Smohalla's "Dreamer" cult.[50] Smohalla was under the impression that Howard ventured to Wallula to use force to round up Walla Walla, Nez Perce, Umatilla, and Wanapum "Dreamers" and confine them to their respective reservations. Howard reassured Smohalla and his followers that he "did not come to the Far West to make war" and collect the "lawless bands," but he did encourage

[50] N. A. Cornoyer to Ezra A. Hayt, 7 October 1879, Letterbook. The Dreamer religion is also known as the Seven Drums.

them to submit to the agent.[51] Homily faced a precarious position in the debate. He enjoyed the material benefits of the reservation but wished to "visit his home" on the Columbia River where he could still hear his "good friend" Smohalla's prophetic message. When Howard asked Homily how he felt, he responded "Homily and his *tillicums* (people) to go to the Umatilla Reserve."[52] Relieved, Cornoyer and Howard took Homily at his word and concluded the council. However, soon after Homily and his band returned to Umatilla, they left yet again to call on Smohalla. Homily's Walla Wallas understood that once Howard left, Cornoyer lost his ability to prohibit those leaving the reservation to practice Smohalla's Dreamer religion. Departing to the river disrupted missionary Christianization efforts and complicated Catholic Indians' relationship with their mobile cousins. The agents soon came to realize how the powerful forces of religion, indigenous and Christian, could divide and unite the reservation community.

Smohalla's Dreamer religion provided a source of stability and confidence for those Indian families and bands seeking stability in a rapidly changing world. As a child, Smohalla experienced similar rites of passage as many Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla boys did. In his vision quest, Smohalla reportedly acquired a *weyekin* in the form of a Crow. This *weyekin* provided special songs and powers including the ability to predict future events.[53] As an adult, Smohalla began to understand his power after a thirst and starvation-induced trance triggered a revelation. He claimed that the proper way to

[51] Oliver O. Howard, *Famous Indian Chiefs I Have Known* (New York: The Century, 1908), 335, 332. Howard lost his right arm in a Civil War battle.

[52] Ibid., 336.

[53] Robert Ruby and John A Brown, *Dreamer Prophets of the Columbia Plateau: Smohalla and Skolaskin* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1989), 20.

worship the "Great Spirit" had been revealed to him.[54] Smohalla outlined the principles of the Washani creed, which actually featured many tenets of *tamanwit*. Washani ceremonialism was expressed through the various practices of the *washat* ritual. According to the *washat*, the *Natiitayt* honored the Creator before gathering the traditional "first foods," provided by the Earth Mother. Once collected, they engaged in a sacred food preparation and serving ritual in the longhouse in which the men sat in rows of seven and drummed while the women brought out water, fish, game, and roots and berries in a particular order. Smohalla determined that the *washat* be repeated every Sunday. During the extended ceremony, adherents often fell into trances in which they received visions; outsiders observing this phenomenon believed the participants experienced very vivid and powerful dreams and applied the misnomer "Dreamers" to Washani followers in general.[55]

Within Smohalla's articulation of the Washani creed was a rejection of *suyapo* culture and preparation for the return of *Natiitayt* ancestors.[56] Contemporaries and later anthropologists have identified several Christian influences in Smohalla's religion. Ideas of the afterlife, which attest that upon death a person must cleanse themselves of any transgressions in order to meet their ancestors in the "Good Land," may have been shaped by Christian notions of purgatory. Also, the weekly Sunday meeting and food preparation and presentation resembled the Christian Sabbath and the ceremony of Holy

[54] Ibid., 25.

[55] Ruby and Brown, *Dreamer Prophets*, 43, 45-48.

[56] Clifford E. Trafzer and Margery Ann Beach, "Smohalla, the Washani, and Religion as a Factor in Northwestern Indian History," *American Indian Quarterly* 9 (Summer 1985): 311-312.

Communion.[57] The syncretism of Christian ceremonial practices and structures, particularly Catholic, became evident in many Native American belief systems and movements since contact.[58] The veil of Christian influence did not take away from the religious movement's effectiveness or allure. For those weary Plateau Indians frustrated with American impositions – war and the reservation system – Smohalla preached a unique and appealing message.

For two decades, Walla Walla, Umatilla, and to a lesser extent, Cayuse, followers of Washani left the Umatilla Reservation to practice the *washat*. In the 1860s and 1870s, Homily brought his band of roughly sixty-two people down to the big bend in the Columbia River to learn from Smohalla.[59] The two had apparently made peace with the fact that Homily cooperated with government officials and at times lived in a house on the reservation – conduct that Smohalla fundamentally condemned. Homily's encampment near Wallula offered a space of freedom for himself and "all his *tillicums*" to "laugh and play, shoot sage-hens, fish in the river." Escaping to the river proved necessary as he felt the "Umatilla Reserve makes Homili a slave." He explained to his friend General Howard that away from the reservation at Wallula, he could safely meet with:

> "Smohalla [*sic*] my friend, my priest. He dreams great dreams, and he tells all the Columbia Indians, miles and miles up and down the great river, about the Great Spirit; and often what's coming. He cures sick folks by good medicine and drumming. He's a great Indian- Homily's [*sic*] friend. Umatilla agent don't

[57] Ruby and Brown, *Dreamer Prophets*, 37.

[58] James Lewis, "Shamans and Prophets: Continuities and Discontinuities in Native American New Religions," *American Indian Quarterly* 12 (Summer 1998): 221,224-225.

[59] Ruby and Brown, *Dreamer Prophets*, 66.

> want my friend, says Smohalla makes trouble. Not so, he makes my heart glad!"[60]

Homily, a devout Dreamer, out of necessity became adept at exploiting the deficiencies within the reservation system designed to contain him. Some Umatillas who also avoided the reservation actually became prophets similar to Smohalla. Wilatsi, Luls, and Waltsac all served as practitioners of Washani, proselytizing around Umatilla villages off the reservation.[61] The work of these Dreamer prophets and their ability to induce followers to leave the reservation drew the ire of frustrated Indian agents lacking the means to round them up.

During the first years of the agency's existence, government officials lacked a coherent plan for the Christianization of the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla. Unsure of their religious responsibility towards their charges, agents Abbot and Barnhart remained aloof in addressing this aspect of the Indians' "civilization." This is not to say the agents did not understand or endorse the Indian Office advocating a Christian conversion philosophy. However, this advocacy lacked a formal framework or plan for implementation that the superintendents and agents in the field could readily put into action. Referring to the Walla Walla Treaty provided the agents no references or stipulations regarding Christianity for the Indians.[62] Drawing from the little directive they had, Abbott and Barnhart still wished that the tribes, especially the "renegades"

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[60] Howard, *Indian Chiefs*, 326.

[61] Andrew H. Fisher, "They Mean to Be Indian Always: The Origins of Columbia River Indian Identity, 1860-1885," *Western Historical Quarterly* 32 (Winter, 2001): 489; Theodore Stern, *Men and Cultures: Selected Papers of the Fifth International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences Philadelphia, September 1-9, 1956*, ed. Anthony F.C. Wallace (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1960), 349-350.

[62] "Treaty with the Wallawalla, Cayuse, etc., 1855," *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, http://digital.library.okstate.edu/kappler/Vol2/treaties/wal0694.htm (accessed November 11, 2012).

practicing the Dreamer cult off the reservation, be exposed to some form of Christianity,. Both men expressed a gratification for the ministrations of the Catholic priest, Father Toussaint Mesplie, who frequently visited the reservation Indians to perform church services.[63] Barnhart gladly complied with those Catholic Indians, the majority of which were Cayuse, who wished for a priest to work among them. Without the Indian Office ordering Barnhart otherwise, he contacted an eager Father Gustave Vermeersch to come to the Umatilla agency in 1865. This inaugurated a tradition of institutional Catholicism that would soon be formalized by post-Civil War federal legislation.

The consolidation of Catholic primacy at Umatilla occurred only with significant Indian participation. In the 1860s, Fathers Mesplie and Vermeersch encountered many Cayuses and Walla Wallas eager for baptism. Vermeersch noted in 1867 that "as many as 82 of them, adults and children have been baptized."[64] Though baptized and fully participating in the Sunday church services, these Catholic families still maintained certain aspects of tribal customs, particularly their native language. Though Waiilatpu, the language of the Cayuse, began to fade from use, Nez Perce was increasingly spoken as a common language among the reservation tribes. This being the case, the Indians compelled Vermeersch to bend his approach to preaching to tribal conventions. He soon began to learn his charge's Nez Perce language, and after a few years could repeat "the Lord's Prayer in the Indian tongue."[65] Though he exposed the younger generations to English, he had to acquiesce to the adults' desire to practice the religion but also speak

[63] T. W. Davenport, "Recollections" (June 1907): 112.

[64] Gustave Vermeersch to William H. Barnhart, 25 June 1867, *ARCIA*, 84.

[65] Thomas K. Cree Report, 15 November 1871, *ARCIA*, 99.

their language.[66] A Walla Walla tribal leader noted years later that in the "Catholic church, there was strong group of elderly women who sang and prayed in the Lower Nez Perce language. Some of the songs came to them in the old way, through their dreams."[67] Agents and priests made concessions such as this during the early, nascent phases of implementing assimilation policy. However, Indians would find it more challenging to exploit such exigencies once the federal government launched President Grant's Peace Policy.

Reformers and federal officials implemented the Peace Policy to address the administrative and conflict-ridden problems entrenched in Indian affairs. The conclusion of the Civil War and subsequent prohibition of slavery allowed many reformers to turn their attention towards the government's handling of the "Indian Question." Considered a broken system, the Indian Office suffered from funding deficiencies and policy inconsistencies – indeed problems present at Umatilla. President Grant proposed that Christian organizations, a presumably moral and incorruptible lot, manage the Indian Service to achieve a reliable and more purpose-driven administration of Indian affairs.[68] Grant gave administrative preference to the Quakers, though in doing so, he marginalized eager denominations like the Catholics. According to the Peace Policy, the government would appoint a Christian church to monitor the operations of an assigned Indian reservation. Originally, the Board of Indian Commissioners (BIC), the agency in charge of allocating the religious organizations to each reserve, assigned the Methodists to

[66] Gustave Vermeersch to William H. Barnhart, 1 August 1866, *ARCIA*, 88.

[67] Pond and Hester, *As Days Go By*, 128-129.

[68] Francis Paul Prucha, *American Indian Policy in Crisis: Christian Reformers and the Indian, 1865-1900* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1976), 31-33.

Umatilla. However, after visiting the agency in 1871 and familiarizing himself with the work of Father Vermeersch, BIC secretary Vincent Colyer, urged Grant to assign Umatilla to the Catholics.[69] With this appointment, the Catholic priests could proselytize among the Umatilla Indians with little or no religious competition. This assignment galvanized the clergy to spread Catholic Christianity and denounce the "pagan" religious practices of the non-Christian Indians.

Debates over indigenous polygamy, tribal religious traditions, and Protestant interloping on the reservation internally polarized the *Natiitayt*. The agent, as the representative of Indian Office policy, and the Catholic priests worked in tandem to convey the immorality of polygamy among the Indians. The tribes had practiced polygamy since at least the arrival of the horse, though likely earlier. Wealthy males in Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla society often had multiple wives who contributed to the economic system of the extended family, a sign of prestige within the community.[70] Conversely, Fathers Vermeersch and Cornardy's condemnation of polygamy followed an enduring Catholic missionary tradition that extolled Christian marriage arrangements based on one man and one woman.[71] Some Catholic Indians such as Eneas' "family of the Walla Wallas" whose "girls were chaste and orderly members of the Catholic denomination" embraced the priests' monogamous evocations.[72] By the late 1860s, the

[69] Peter J. Rahill, *The Catholic Indian Missions and Grant's Peace Policy, 1870-1884* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1953), 35-37.

[70] Theodore Stern, "Cayuse, Walla Walla, Umatilla," *Handbook of the North American Indians*, vol. 12, Plateau, rev. ed (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1998), 402.

[71] Here I draw on the Spanish friars' perceptions of Christian marriage and their exhortations that Indians adopt monogamy as expressed in Juliana Barr, *Peace Came in the Form of a Woman: Indians and Spaniards in the Texas Borderlands* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 120, 154-155.

[72] Davenport, "Recollections," June 1907, 128.

Indian Office was overtly censuring polygamy on reservations throughout the West. In 1868, Commissioner Nathaniel Taylor derided indigenous plural marriage, asserting "let polygamy be punished."[73]

At Umatilla, a heated debate ensued when Agent Cornoyer called the tribes together to explain a directive issued from the Indian Office that prohibited polygamy. Cornoyer clearly meant to single out Homily, with "two or three wives," and Wenap Snoot with "five to six wives."[74] After brief discussion, most headmen present agreed to follow the agent's order to reject polygamy and solicit their people to do so as well. It is unclear why these lesser tribal leaders complied with the Indian Office's mandate. They may have supported the rule for the purposes of compelling the principal chiefs to give up their wives, thus reducing their prestige and bringing a balance to tribal leadership. However, they likely felt threatened by the agent's proposed consequences for failing to comply. Wenap Snoot acquiesced and agreed to give up his wives, but Homily vehemently disagreed. He claimed "that the Government has no right to regulate his family affairs." Cornoyer threatened to withhold his annual appropriations but Homily remained resolute.[75] Two years later, Cornoyer still complained that "the Pagan Indians practice polygamy."[76] Although declining in prevalence, plural marriage remained a facet of *Natiitayt* culture for at least another decade.

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[73] Commissioner Nathaniel Taylor to President Andrew Johnson, 7 January 1868, *ARCIA*, 44.

[74] Commissioner Edward P. Smith to Narcisse Cornoyer, 12 July 1875, Letters Received From the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1871-1907, Box 4, NARA.

[75] Umatilla Agency Monthly Report to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 7 August 1875, Letterbook.

[76] Narcisse Cornoyer to Ezra A Hayt, 23 September 1878, Letterbook.

Due to Catholic domination, Protestant and Dreamer religions were practiced little if at all within the boundaries of the Umatilla reservation. Presbyterian missionaries like Marcus Whitman had avoided the lands of the Cayuse since 1847 and instead gravitated towards the Nez Perce mission at Lapwai. In 1877, however, Methodist minister R. C. Oglesby of Pendleton approached Cornoyer for "permission to preach to the Indians." Cornoyer consented, but aware of the complex religious atmosphere at Umatilla, he added a caveat to his authorization. Oglesby could "preach to such Protestant Indians as choose to hear him, but know it is my duty to remove him from the reservation whenever he interferes with the Catholic Indians."[77] Some families of Whitman converts, "certainly not more than six," continued to practice Presbyterianism and remained "very much opposed to the Catholic religion."[78] Presbyterian Indians conceded to attending church with the Catholics but remained "of Mr. Whitman's religion, and went to this [Catholic] church, until some day they could have one of their own."[79] Not until 1882 would Protestantism make a visible, permanent return to the reservation.

The prevailing Catholic element compelled reservation Dreamers to practice their faith in isolated pockets, hidden away from the agency. Cayuse Dreamers, less inclined to leave the Umatilla Valley for a pilgrimage to the Columbia River to practice the *washat*, gathered near Thorn Hollow, over twelve miles away from the agency. Together with their Nez Perce cousins, the non-Catholic Cayuse and Nez Perce engaged in the Washani

[77] Narcisse Cornoyer to John Q. Smith in Monthly Report, May 1877, Letterbook.

[78] A.B. Meacham to Francis A Walker, *ARCIA*, 25 October 1871, 297-298.

[79] Felix Brunot to Francis A. Walker, 15 November 1871, *ARCIA*, 98.

faith. This is interesting because most of the Catholic Indians on the reservation were Cayuse. Though formal sanctions against native religions were not yet codified into law, social mechanisms of "interference and discrimination," expressed by Catholics, discouraged the practice of the Dreamer religion.[80] Hence, most Dreamers, Walla Wallas and Umatillas in particular, slipped outside the reservation boundaries to observe the *washat*. Removing from the reserve also allowed them to exercise traditional spiritual rites such as sweat lodge purification, receive healing by the *tewat*, and obtaining a *weyekin*.

By 1880, several forces were competing for Indian souls both on and off the Umatilla reservation. Administrators and practitioners of Catholicism consolidated authority and ensured that their religion achieved primacy among their charges. Catholic Indians however, embraced church expectations and rituals largely on their own terms. Walla Walla religious fragmentation, as evinced by headman Eneas' Christianity and chief Homily's devotion to the Dreamers, displayed the spiritual fissures forming along tribal lines. Devout Walla Walla and Umatilla Dreamers evaded the agent, priest, and Catholic Indians' censorious gaze by leaving the reservation to practice Washani. US military activities would greatly curtail their ability to remain away from the reservation by the end of the decade. Settlers and government officials alarmed by the resistance campaigns of the Nez Perce in 1877 and Shoshone-Bannocks in 1878 demanded the removal of all "renegade" Indians to their assigned agencies. Many of these renegades were Walla Walla and Umatilla Dreamers whose religion, after removal, would be subject to the reservation's Catholic Peace Policy administration. After 1880, an

[80] Ruby and Brown, *Dreamer Prophets*, 53, 67. Many of the Nez Perce participants were of Chief Joseph's nontreaty band that moved about from their home in the Wallowa Valley.

intensified contest for religious conversion and cultural assimilation would ensue, producing new challenges and opportunities for the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla to retain and reconsider *Natiitayt* identity.

Digging Stick and Steel Plow: Reservation Economics

In August of 1871, Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla headmen met with federal officials to discuss government proposals to abolish the Umatilla reservation. As early as 1864, Oregon speculators admonished the federal government to extinguish the reserve and relocate the Indians to nearby reservations, thus opening their rich wheat lands to white settlement. Superintendent Meacham and BIC President Felix Brunot counseled the chiefs that relocating and taking up farming would benefit their people. They warned that "perhaps now while they can get fish and berries … their game is almost gone" and because of river steamboat traffic, "soon you will have no salmon." Their solution was to "remove to some other reservation…and take lands in severalty" there.[81]

Howlish Wampo, Homily, Wenap Snoot, and Pierre all provided strong cases against abandoning the reservation and the economic subsistence strategies they forged on these dwindling homelands. A frustrated but tenacious Howlish Wampo asserted, "We like this country and don't want to dispose of our reservation. I look at this land, this earth; it is like my mother, as if she was giving me milk, for from it I draw the food on which I live and grow." Invoking principles of *tamanwit*, Howlish Wampo continued to assert his people's desire to stay on the reservation and extend their means of subsistence and trade. Pierre agreed on spiritual and economic grounds, claiming "When you

[81] Ely S. Parker to Narcissus Conoyer, 31 May 1871, in Thomas K. Cree Report, 15 November 1871, *ARCIA*, 103.; Alfred B. Meacham, 7 August 1871, in Thomas K. Cree Report, 15 November 1871, *ARCIA*, 99-100.

[government officials] say 'I want to buy your land,' I say I do not wish to sell…I will work and make my money…. The land is the same to me as my body."[82] Similar statements from other headmen filled the commission clerk's council minutes. After six days of haranguing the *Natiitayt* leaders with warnings and subtle threats to give in, Brunot and Meacham conceded to an unyielding tribal coalition and gave up. Though the Indians' inspired yet pragmatic arbitrations had secured their reservation, their economic system based on these lands was not so secure. Agents doggedly pressed Indians to become farmers while increased White settlement threatened access to native food gathering sites. To survive, the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla incorporated settler trade, government consignments, and wage labor into their shifting economy.

Land cessions and agricultural incentives contained in the Walla Walla Treaty fit into a larger theme of American dispossession and assimilation. Back in 1855, when Commissioner of Indian Affairs George Manypenny directed Isaac Stevens and Joel Palmer to meet with the tribes of Oregon and Washington to negotiate land cessions, Manypenny ordered that "the moneys to be paid might,…be applied for the establishment of farms, the purchase of implements of agriculture, or any other objects of benefit to the Indians."[83] Stevens and Palmer obliged and incorporated this initiative into all of their Northwest treaties, including Walla Walla. The Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla delegates at the Walla Walla Council had heard *suyapo* recommendations that Indians adopt sedentary agriculture since their encounters with the Hudson Bay Company and Marcus Whitman. American politicians assumed that Indians as independent yeoman

[82] Howlish Wampo, 8 August 1871, in Thomas K. Cree Report, 15 November 1871, *ARCIA*, 105.; Pierre, 9, August, 1871, in Thomas K. Cree Report, 15 November 1871, *ARCIA*, 109.

[83] George W. Manypenny to Secretary of Interior R. McClelland, 26 November 1855, *ARCIA*, 12.

farmers would cast aside their tribal affinities and work private lands individually, rendering their formerly collectivized land holdings available to White settlement.[84] Therefore, throughout the nineteenth century, treaty makers inserted Indian agriculture inducements into land cession treaties. This rationale guided Stevens and Palmer's designs for their territories' Indians.

Government officials articulated the economic dimension of Americanization with more clarity than the educational or religious aspects of the assimilation project. The Walla Walla Treaty provided agents of the Umatilla reservation with a schematic for agricultural instruction. Specifically, the treaty called for articles intended to "advance them in civilization,…for buildings, opening and fencing farms, breaking land, purchasing teams, wagons, agricultural implements and seeds, for clothing, provision and tools," and "providing mechanics and farmers."[85] Soon after taking charge in 1860, agent Abbott began acquiring agricultural equipment, recruiting employees, and preparing reservation land. Despite insufficient funding and difficulties in retaining competent employees, Abbott managed to produce optimistic reports of Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla's susceptibility to farming. Though the agent likely may have inflated the number of acres planted by Indian farmers (he reported 500 acres in 1861), many families did try putting crops in the ground. In 1862, he stated that many of the "most provident Indian" families "evinced a desire to work for themselves and put in crops on their own

[84] Patrick Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native," *Journal of Genocide Research* 8 December 2006): 399-400; Wallace, *Jefferson and the Indians*, 77-79; Robert Berkhofer, *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present* (New York: Vintage Books, 1978), 138-140.

[85] "Treaty," *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, http://digital.library.okstate.edu/kappler/Vol2/treaties/wal0694.htm (accessed November 12, 2012).

account."[86] While the agent's urging Indians to farm may have compelled some families to pick up the plow, others made this decision based on the lack of economic opportunity on the reservation.

The Indians understood the importance of a diverse subsistence economy and therefore incorporated farming into their shifting subsistence cycle. From 1862 to 1880, agents consistently remarked on the native food collection and production rotation. This began on the reservation in the spring of 1862 after an abnormally harsh winter postponed the food collection season. Sufficient harvests, however, frequently fell victim to extended droughts and the notorious grasshopper plagues. This left the Indians little choice but to supplement a meager harvest with salmon, camas, and deer. Indian farmers recalled from their connections with Marcus Whitman the benefits of planting foods like "wheat, barley, oats, peas, corn, potatoes, and other vegetables" early in the year to allow for a timely fall harvest.[87] Agent Barnhart described the Indians' perpetuation of this arrangement in 1868: "after their spring crops were planted most of them repaired to the mountains for roots and fish, as is their usual custom." Seven years later, Cornoyer reported the same trend: "the Indians having finished their harvesting have nearly all with my permission gone to the mountains to hunt fish and dig roots."[88] Agents loathed the Indians' treaty-guaranteed ability to leave the reservation because it diminished their control and supervision of the tribes. Cornoyer introduced a pass system by 1874, but few

[86] G.H. Abbott to William H. Rector, 10 September 1861, *ARCIA*, 165; William Barnhart to William H. Rector, 5 August 1862, *ARCIA*, 269.

[87] Ibid., 269.

[88] William Barnhart to Superintendent J.W.P. Huntington, 6 July 1868, Monthly Narrative Reports 1867-1875, Box 1, NARA; Narcisse Cornoyer to Commissioner Edward P. Smith, 3 September 1875, Letterbook.

honored it. Barnhart enviously observed the 1865 development at the nearby Warm Springs reservation in which federal officials coerced the Warm Springs and Wasco tribes to relinquish their off-reservation fishing rights.[89] Fortunately for the *Natiitayt,* Barnhart never managed to introduce such restrictive legislation at Umatilla. Maintaining the seasonal subsistence cycle alleviated the very real problems associated with relying purely on farming.

Some families engaged a willingness to try farming while others opposed the practice on spiritual grounds. Families of prominent headmen Howlish Wampo, Tenale Temane, Pierre, and Young Chief remained on reservation lands to farm for longer periods of the year.[90] Despite the agency's employment of a farming supervisor, the Indians labored initially without sufficient agricultural training. Agent Davenport recalled of the Indian farmers: "oh, they do not plow, only dig with them a little. Did you ever see an Indian plow? If not, it would amuse you."[91] When the Indian farmers did manage to produce a significant crop, the agents attributed their agricultural success to the exceptional growing capabilities of the land, rather than their labor. Meacham noted that the Umatilla Indians "at the Oregon State Fair, 1868, some of them were awarded first prizes for vegetables," on account of the crop "Land being of excellent quality" and "climate favorable."[92]

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[89] "Treaty with the Middle Oregon Tribes, 1865," *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, http://digital.library.okstate.edu/kappler/Vol2/treaties/mid0908.htm (accessed November 12, 2012).

[90] Howlish Wampo, 8 August 1871, in Thomas K. Cree Report, 15 November 1871, *ARCIA*, 105; Tenale Temane, 8 August 1871, 105; Pierre, 9 August 1871, 109; Young Chief (Wat-che-te-mane), 12 August 1871, 114.

[91] Davenport, "Recollections," March 1907, 8.

[92] Meacham, *Wigwam and Warpath*,182.

Such agricultural successes were not celebrated or even approved of by Dreamers who lived off the reservation for much of the year. The first foods gathering ceremonies, based on Smohalla's profession of the *washat*, did not require the cultivation of land. When a government official inquired about whether he and his followers would take up farming, the prophet famously responded, "You ask me to plow the ground? Shall I take a knife and tear my mother's bosom?... You ask me to cut grass and make hay and sell it,… but how dare I cut off my mother's hair?"[93] When off the reservation, Homily and others followed Smohalla's creed. When under the direct supervision of the agent, however, Homily would placate the government official by praising the benefits of farming, but never made any sincere attempts to take up the practice. Homily substituted his aversion to agriculture with the sustenance provided by the first foods of the *washat* and a robust trade in stock raising.[94]

The *Natiitayt* legacy of a prominent, prosperous pre-reservation horse culture carried into the 1860s and 1870s. According to Davenport, "nearly every Indian family had two or three horses," but individuals like "Tin-tin-met-sah another Cayuse headman, had 3,000 head of ponies."[95] These families effectively raised and grazed their massive herds around the reservation despite the threat of White interlopers who frequently stole Indian horses and encroached on their grazing lands. Such a wealth in horses allowed many families to trade to neighboring Indian communities or to settlers, often for cash. Still, though market exchanges based on cash were nothing new to the Cayuse, Walla

[93] James Mooney, *The Ghost-dance Religion and the Sioux Outbreak of* 1890 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1896), 721.

[94] Howard, *Famous Indian Chiefs*, 322-323; Meacham, *Wigwam and Warpath*, 49.

[95] Davenport, "Recollections," March 1907, 12-13.

Walla, and Umatilla, some stock-wealthy individuals displayed a general ambivalence to hard money during this period. In 1867, Meacham observed several horse races between settlers and miners and Cayuse Indians along the Umatilla River. Horseracing played a significant role in *Natiitayt* culture and their successful contests against *suyapos* compelled a host of speculators to challenge their cayuse and pinto steeds. In one race, a "sporting" Joe Crabb convinced other White spectators to bet on his prize winning horse against Howlish Wampo's pinto. The stakeholder collected "hundreds, in twenty-dollar gold-pieces" and wagered horses from the speculators and participants.[96] After a devastating loss to Howlish Wampo's pony, Joe Crabb and his patrons' funds and horses were awarded to the Cayuse chief. Howlish Wampo, feeling sorry for the *suyapo*, "gave back to Crabb the saddlehorse he had won from him, and also money to travel on." When other enterprising horse racers inquired about purchasing his horse, Howlish Wampo "refused an offer of five thousand dollars for his renowned courser," concluding "I don't need money." [97]

Agent Barnhart believed the horse wealth held by the "small minority" of prosperous families to be around $175,000 in 1863.[98] By 1880, the agent estimated all three tribes' stock trading profit at a value of $50,000 a year.[99] These valuations of Umatilla Indian assets derive from the Indian Office's desire to expose Indians to the capitalist market economy. Officials hoped agricultural surplus exchange would

[96] Meacham, *Wigwam and Warpath*, 191.

[97] Ibid., 198.

[98] William Barnhart to J.W. Perit Huntington, 1 August 1863, *ARCIA*, 64.

[99] N.A. Cornoyer to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 10 August 1880, *ARCIA*, 144.

accomplish this, but could not complain if stock raising and trading achieved the desired result.

By the mid-1870s, Indian families with few material assets looked for alternative resources to supplement their hunting, fishing, and gathering economy and found opportunities in wage labor. The Indian Service and the US Army offered the only practical wage labor jobs available at the time. Maintenance of the poorly constructed agency buildings and mills required constant attention, more than classified employees could handle alone. In 1875, special-agent T.W. Taliaferro requested of his superiors funds to employ an Indian "axe man" to saw logs for the inoperational sawmill in a two-week contract.[100] This set a precedent for subsequent agents to take advantage of hiring Indian employees at the agency. After 1876, Cornoyer employed up to two Indian sawyers seasonally and even began instructing them in the operations of the mill works. During their short-term employment, they earned a salary of two dollars per day, which may have subsidized a meager farming harvest or insufficient fishing or hunting season.[101]

Many young *Natiitayt* men of fighting age embraced the economic opportunities afforded by mustering as scouts in the US Army. An outbreak of hostilities between a neighboring Shoshone-Bannock coalition and Eastern Oregon settlers in 1878 necessitated the intervention of the US Army. Due to the wartime exigencies resulting from the local-tribal nature of this conflict, General Oliver Howard appealed to Cornoyer for Indian auxiliaries. Warriors and scouts from all three tribes allied with the army

[100]T.W. Taliaferro to Edward P. Smith, 6 September 1875, Letterbook.

[101] N.A. Cornoyer to E.A. Hayt, 2 May,1878, Letterbook; N.A. Cornoyer to J.Q. Smith, April,1876, Letterbook.

against the Shoshones and Bannocks for the purpose of acquiring war spoils – captives and a valuable "number of horses."[102] As this conflict spilled into 1879, Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla scouts served for longer terms "to receive soldiers' pay and clothing, and be armed at the expense of the government" as regular enlistments would. This economic venture also provided opportunities for the Indian men to participate in the *Natiitayt* warrior tradition and for the tribes to express their sovereignty by allying with the Americans on their own terms.[103]

Natiitayt women maintained many traditional subsistence practices while adjusting to changing economic systems on the reservation. As in the pre-reservation era, women contributed directly to the tribal economy, from "drying and storing meat" to "picking the berries, digging the roots."[104] Though conventions of economic gender roles persisted into the 1860s and 1870s, many women adapted their responsibilities to new conditions. In the early 1860s, a witness reported seeing an Indian farming operation in which a man's "two wives led the horses" for their plow, a "rather trying" process for the women "that walked on the plowed ground."[105] The family's women committed themselves to making farming a viable practice for producing what foods they could under such stressful conditions. Observers noticed that in maintaining Indian livestock,

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[102]Colonel William Parsons and W.S. Shiach, *An Illustrated History of Umatilla County and of Morrow County* (Ogden, UT: W.H. Lever, 1902), 217-218. Some groups of Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla men did join with the Columbia River Indians to participate in the Shoshone-Bannock depredations. These young men likely did so for similar economic reasons as those who sought war spoils and regular pay from their alliance with the US Army.

[103] Thomas W. Dunlay, *Wolves for the Blue Soldiers: Indian Scouts and Auxiliaries with the United States Army, 1860-1890* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982), 44, 88, 123; "Indian Pow-Wow Council to Consider Recent Treaty," *Willamette Farmer,* 13 June 1879, page 4.

[104] Davenport, "Recollections," June 1907, 120; For similar practices see Jacki Thompson Rand, *Kiowa Humanity and the Invasion of the State* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2008) 16-17.

[105] Davenport, Recollections, June, 1907, 117.

"the women are chief managers," of the tribes' horses, the primary source of marketable wealth on the reservation. In this highly regarded position, women directed the care and movement of the massive, valuable horse herds, often with the help of "servant" men under their direction. Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla women and men proved adept at adapting familiar modes of subsistence and trade to rapidly changing economic conditions. [106]

In 1855, federal officials assumed that the economic transformation of the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla would take no more than twenty years, or one generation, after removal to the reservation. Tribal leaders, many of whom supported the treaty commissioners' agriculture-centered platform of subsistence and prosperity, welcomed this plan. Implementation however, quickly succumbed to the burdens of bureaucratic inefficiencies that diminished agency credibility. Observing such shortcomings as insufficient farming implements and inconsistent ration distribution, Indians returned to their traditional cycle of hunting, fishing, and gathering to feed their families. The seasonal subsistence round remained central to the *Natiitayt* economy even as agricultural operations matured and wage labor jobs became available; such colonial institutions at best only supplemented the average Umatilla Indian's economic needs. After 1880, further deteriorations in reservation conditions would compel the Indians to make difficult decisions regarding subsistence strategies and participation in the market. Railroads would import a flood of settlers into the region, causing the nearby communities of Walla Walla and Pendleton to boom in population, thus intensifying the competition for surrounding resources. Buoyed by strong traditions and an ability to

[106] Meacham, *Wigwam and Warpath*, 202, 204; Lillian A. Ackerman, *A Necessary Balance: Gender and Power among Indians of the Columbia Plateau* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2003), 152-156.

mitigate outside pressures, the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla tribes would deftly approach the oncoming changes.

Conclusion

In a tension-filled council with General Howard in 1878, Howlish Wampo said of the recent conflict with the Shoshones: "We are here to stop all our troubles, for myself I hate bad feelings. I live on reservation and hate this bad feeling."[107] The Shoshones and Bannocks acted out their grievances against the American settlers whose arrogant grazing routines destroyed the Indians' camas gathering grounds near the southern Blue Mountains. The bad feeling chief Howlish Wampo expressed was only partly in reaction to Shoshone-Bannock depredations. Similar *suyapo* encroachments around the Umatilla reservation frustrated Howlish Wampo and his people. The incipient reservation system of 1860, founded with seemingly benevolent designs to uplift the government's Indian wards, took well over a decade to become a functioning system capable of realizing such ambitious assimilationist goals. In addition to the farm-crippling droughts and blights and the Indian Office's unevenly distributed treaty rations, the tribes also contended with malicious, unrestrained settlers and traders. The agent gave excuses for his inability to stop settler intrusions and instead focused on administering to the religion-oriented day school and struggling farm program. The Indians dealt with settler encroachments on their own while adjusting to the government's institutional impositions. Throughout this period, especially into the 1870s, tribal leaders and families managed to moderate

[107] Umatilla Reservation Peace Council Minutes, 28 August 1878, Box 29, Oregon Military Department Records, Oregon State Archives.

assimilative policies designed to remake their people into Americans. Their ability to accommodate would be seriously challenged in the next two decades to come.

CHAPTER IV

"*ADAPTING THEMSELVES TO THE NEW ORDER OF THINGS*": INTERVENTIONS AND READJUSTMENTS, 1880-1890

The 1880s proved to be a period of profound change for those enduring in Indian Country. An organized and determined force of Indian policy reformers influenced Congress to implement legislation designed to strengthen the assimilation project. This ambitious program, coupled with the increased settlement of Whites around the Umatilla reservation, presented a threatening situation to the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla tribes. Government proposals for the construction of a reservation boarding school and plans for allotment in severalty concerned tribal leaders. The equally determined chiefs and headmen turned their concern into action in councils with their federal counterparts. The Indian leaders compelled officials to incorporate their demands for the operation of the school, the structure of allotment, and laws governing Indian religion and culture. Asserting this resolute yet responsive position meant confronting internal divisions such as the Catholic and Protestant divergence, and employing strategic adaptations to and manipulations of outsider interventions. By taking a firm stance, the tribes hoped to maintain both their autonomy and their cultural traditions in the face of reinforced colonial impositions.

As the US entered into the pivotal decade of the 1880s, reformers, politicians, settlers, and anthropologists began to coordinate a more comprehensive plan for the nation's Indian wards as the Peace Policy deteriorated. President Grant's Peace Policy, a product of post-Civil War Reconstruction idealism, faced serious practical problems that diminished the program's effectiveness. Government reformers chastised the Grant

administration on counts of corruption in the Indian Office and the paralyzing effects of interdenominational bureaucratic infighting resulting from divergent understandings of church authority and goals. Such criticism was not unfounded. Throughout the 1870s, unscrupulous White businessmen took advantage of the government contracts intended to supply the reservations with rations and materials.[1] The Bureau of Indian Commissioners, the agency designed to regulate such fraudulent activity, lacked the necessary authority to curb this prevalent problem in the Indian Office. Various church bodies clashed over agency assignments and sparred over the question of whether more than one denomination could establish a presence on a given reservation. Nationally, Catholics continually protested Protestant favoritism within the BIC, which revealed a pattern of discord within the program.[2] Perhaps the program's most glaring failure was its inability to establish peaceful relations between settlers, soldiers, and Indians in the West. These complications moderated support for Grant's plan, which faded out of consideration by the end of the 1870s.

Several illuminating events in 1879 prompted reformers to shift their tactics and redouble their efforts in the coming decade. Eastern exposure to accounts of US military violence against the Nez Perce, Northern Cheyenne, Shoshone-Bannocks, and Ponca tribes inspired a renewed interest in policy reform. Indian victims of these conflicts toured the East Coast and Washington, D.C. to state their case for policy reform to those, they were told, who wielded the real decision making power. At this time, Westerners

[1] Francis Paul Prucha, *The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indian*s Vol. I (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), 586.

[2] Ibid., 522-525; Francis Paul Prucha, *American Indian Policy in Crisis: Christian Reformers and the Indian, 1865-1900* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1976), 78.

lacked the Congressional representation that Eastern interests enjoyed, so tribal delegates needed to go directly to the source.[3] Standing Bear, a Ponca chief released from jail after attempting to escape from Indian Territory with his band, admonished captivated White audiences about the evils of the present reservation policy. Standing Bear, the exiled Nez Perce Chief Joseph, and even a delegation of leaders from the Umatilla reservation all visited Washington in 1879 to express their frustration with the current problems in Indian administration. [4]

Politicians and reformers considered relevant media reports claiming that while war, relocation, and deprivation were products of benighted policy, such crises could be reconciled by the government's "recognition of the Indian as a person with rights, inalienable as yours and mine, to life, to justice, to property, this is the first, the absolute essential." With this in mind, reformers began to organize several social policy associations to inform and influence Congressional legislation.[5] These organizations, formed over the next few years, applied their solutions to the "Indian Question" to the Native American visitors' grievances. Motivated by previously formed opinions, they interpreted the Indian delegations' message to mean that their people ached to be set free from the constricting reservation and the Indian Offices' paternalistic control. To remedy this, advocates like Helen Hunt Jackson, Henry Dawes, Alfred B. Meacham, and Herbert

[3] Frederick Hoxie, *A Final Promise: The Campaign to Assimilate the Indians, 1880-1920* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), 108-109.

[4] Hoxie, *Final Promise*, 6-9; Alvin Josephy, *The Nez Perce Indians and the Opening of the Northwest* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965), 639-640; Robert Ruby and John Brown, *Half Sun on the Columbia: A Biography of Chief Moses* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1965), 147-150.

[5] H.A. Stimson, "The Indian Question," *The American Missionary* 33 (Dec. 1879): 399-400.

Welsh called for a hastening of the assimilation process, Indian citizenship, and the dissolution of the reservations.[6]

At the shores of Lake Mohonk and in the halls of Congress, concerned parties refined these ostensibly benevolent objectives. In the early 1880s, members of the nation's Protestant elite began holding the Lake Mohonk Conference in New York to discuss Indian policy issues and reinforce their reform-driven lobby to Congress.[7] At this gathering, reformers from various organizations considered the social theories of specialists from various fields. They studied the "scientific" postulations of pioneering anthropologist Lewis Henry Morgan who determined that civilization required a human desire for private property. They adopted Indian Commissioner Thomas Morgan's plan for civic education in the Indian school curriculum.[8] They unwaveringly supported Massachusetts Senator Henry Dawes' plan for the allotment of Indian lands, which would provide farmland to native families and break up the obstructive reservation system.[9]

Congress appropriated millions in federal funding to the off-reservation boarding schools fathered by Captain Richard Henry Pratt, a reformer who shared Commissioner Morgan's enthusiasm for assimilationist education.[10] These schools stressed the values of individual land ownership and notions of private property that became the celebrated foundations of Dawes' extensive allotment in severalty bill of 1887. From his editorship

[6] Hoxie, *Final Promise*, 10-11.

[7] Robert Utley, *The Indian Frontier, 1846-1890* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1984), 197-200, 204-205; Prucha, *Policy in Crisis*, 145-149.

[8] Hoxie, *Final Promise*, 17-20; Francis Paul Prucha, ed., *Americanizing the American Indians: Writings by the "Friends of the Indian" 1880-1900* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973), 257-259.

[9] Hoxie, *Final Promise*, 72-73; Prucha, *Great Father*, Vol. II, 665-669.

[10] David Wallace Adams, *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1995), 26-27.

of the reform publication *The Council Fire*, former Oregon Indian Superintendent Alfred B. Meacham heartily approved of the principle of allotment in severalty as a mechanism to protect Indian wards. Meacham's support likely stemmed from his earlier observations of scheming White settlers assembling around the Umatilla reservation in the late 1870s.[11] These settlers advocated for allotment and the breaking up of reservations as well, though for more immediate and self-serving reasons than those of the high-minded reformers in the East.

By 1880, settlers intent on exploiting the rich wheat land of Umatilla County organized several agricultural communities around the reservation's border. Almost in tandem, ranchers and farmers began acquiring grazing and agricultural lands around the Wildhorse and McKay Creeks and the Umatilla River valley. However, due to the cattle ranchers' inefficient grazing practices and their competition with farmers and sheep ranchers, the grazing land in these areas soon began to dwindle. These ranchers then looked to the reservation for rich, supposedly underutilized land (ignoring the thousands of Indian horses that already grazed there). By 1878, the Umatilla agent estimated that settlers were grazing 10,000 head of cattle and 3,000 horses on reservation lands.[12] In agriculture, farmers bought up lands in the vicinity and launched massive wheat farming operations that resulted in the construction of mills, storehouses, and trade centers like Pendleton, Adams, and Pilot Rock.[13] The growth of these agricultural towns invited more

[11] Prucha, *Policy in Crisis*, 164-165; Edward Sterl Phinney, "Alfred B. Meacham, Promoter of Indian Reform" (PhD diss.,University of Oregon, 1963), 249-252.

[12] J. Orin Oliphant, "Encroachments of Cattlemen on Indian Reservations in the Pacific Northwest, 1870-1890," *Agricultural History* 1 (1950): 42-45.

[13] C.A. Barrett, "Early Farming in Umatilla County," *The Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society* 4 (1915): 344-349.

settlers to these fertile lands, thus increasing the competition for farmland. Again, these eager settlers cast their eyes on what they perceived was a virgin, unused piece of ground: the Indian reservation. It was these settlers that clamored for the federal government to dissolve or at least open up the Umatilla reserve to White settlement.

Amid the expansion of the farming and ranching industries, the city of Pendleton developed into a sizable regional trade center by 1882. This community of "about seven hundred inhabitants" in 1882, grew to "about two thousand" by 1885.[14] Recognizing that the city's exponential growth would require more land to expand, citizens and their representatives called for the annexation of reservation lands. With the support of Commissioner of Indian Affairs Hiram Price and the approval of Umatilla tribal leaders, Congress voted to dispose of 640 acres of Umatilla reservation land to the city of Pendleton in August of 1882.[15] Fortunately for the tribes, according to scholar James Kennedy, the Umatilla leaders apparently did not consider this land particularly valuable, nor did they think that selling would constitute a great loss.[16] The settlers' land acquisition, however, represented a larger shift in the authority and goals of the Indians' neighbors. The machinations of the encroaching ranchers, land-hungry farmers, and annexationist Pendletonians indicate that the settler colonial project on the ground was intersecting with the assimilationist policies of the reformers and the federal government.

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[14] Colonel William Parsons and W.S. Shiach, *An Illustrated History of Umatilla County and of Morrow County* (Ogden, UT: W.H. Lever, 1902), 173-174.

[15] Charles Kappler, "Acts of Forty-Seventh Congress – First Session, 1882," Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties, http://digital.library.okstate.edu/Kappler/Vol1/HTML_files/SES0209A.html (accessed January 22, 2011); Ron Pond and Daniel Hester, *Wiyaxayxt As Days Go By Wiyaakaa?awn: Our History, Our Land, and Our People, The Cayuse, Umatilla, and Walla Walla*, ed. Jennifer Karson (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2006), 102-103.

[16] James Kennedy, "The Umatilla Indian Reservation, 1855-1975: Factors Contributing to a Diminished Land Resource Base" (PhD diss., Oregon State University, 1977), 82-83.

This intersection of ideologies and objectives revolved principally around Indian land. In 1881, Oregon's booster agricultural newspaper, the *Willamette Farmer*, noted the rich lands of the Umatilla reservation and the "white settlers adjacent…who would like to claim these lands for settlement."[17] The settlers' desire to access reservation land would become possible with the Indian Offices' plans for land allotment. Interior Secretary Carl Shurz believed that land ownership was "the most essential step in the solution of the Indian problem." Allotment would "inspire the Indians with a feeling of assurance as to the permanency of their ownership of their lands they occupy and cultivate."[18] The concept of individualism remained at the heart of private land ownership, a value that reformers hoped to instill in the older allottees and in the younger school age children. In the schools, Indian Service teachers formed their curriculum around the benefits of individual economic self-sufficiency, a standard of "civilization." Missionaries operating on the Indian reservations continued to stress the importance of developing an individual relationship with the Christian God.[19] Agents hoped the Indians at Umatilla would observe and internalize the individualistic ideals of acquisitiveness and consumption exhibited by their White neighbors. The colonial practices of allotment, trade, boarding schools, and an expansive missionary presence all contributed to the efforts to detribalize the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla Indians. Despite this intensified mission to assimilate the Umatilla Indians and remake them into American citizens, the tribes

[17] "Eastern Oregon: A Territory of Great Fertility, as Large as New England Open to Immigration," *Willamette Farmer*, 4 February 1881.

[18] Prucha, *Americanizing the American Indians*, 84-85.

[19] Prucha, *Policy in Crisis*, 150-153.

tenaciously endeavored to control the developments around them and approach these changes on their own terms.

Religious Restrictions and Expansions

Charlie Saplish found himself in a precarious position. "Whirlwind" as he was known to both Whites and Indians, Saplish was a *tewat* or "medicine doctor" in the *Natiitayt* community who also served in the US Army as a loyal scout. In his service as a scout, he became much more familiar with American soldiers and their society's values and, in the process, learned more about their system of acculturation. He realized that federal officials expected him and his people to give up "superstitious" customs like the *washat* and stop seeing "medicine men" like himself. Recognizing the influence and power of federal government based on his experience as a scout, he strategically asserted his dissatisfaction with the Indian Offices' new rules against indigenous religions and cultural practices. In an 1886 council, he told Agent Coffey that while "of course the government is the head," the Indians should be able to "keep our own way in regard to the medicine men, dances and the like." He asserted that the Indian Office should "allow people to have their own way," but assured the officials that he "love[s] all the big men in Washington and mean[s] nothing wrong."[20] Saplish clearly desired to protect native spiritual customs but adjusted his protest to appear responsive to this federal audience. Feigning conciliation was a necessary tactic during the Indian Offices' 1880s campaign against "heathenish" and "savage" customs that interfered with proper assimilation. With this in mind, the government proposed a set of "Indian offenses," as they became known,

[20] Umatilla Agency Council, 4 August 1886, Council Minutes and Proceedings, 1879-1918, Folder 1886, Box 1, Umatilla Indian Agency, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75, National Archives and Records Administration- Pacific Alaska Region. Seattle, WA.

which were punishable crimes within the reservation system. Though this law code was supported by several members of the recently reawakened Presbyterian Church, others resisted the laws with force. Some tribal members approached Christianity, a tool of assimilation emphasized by the federal government, with a sense of syncretism and religious pluralism. These practicing Christians engaged in aspects of indigenous spiritual customs and ceremonies while remaining faithful adherents. These adjustments and accommodations to religious impositions, renewals, and improvisations display the changing contours of the Umatilla reservation's spiritual landscape during the 1880s.

Developments in religious policy and practice emerged from above and from within the Umatilla Indian community. Since the arrival of Father Adolph Vermeersch in 1864, the federal administration of the Umatilla Indian Reservation allied itself with the non-secular designs of the Catholic Church. Reinforced by Grant's Peace Policy, those Catholic administrators at Umatilla took control of the religious transformation of the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla tribes. Interestingly, they engaged in this process with little interference from the Constitutional separation of church and state. Catholic agents and teachers stressed the proselytization and conversion of Indians while explicitly shunning "pagan" indigenous spiritual practices.

Until the early 1880s, this initiative, though proceeding with the blessing of their superiors in the Indian Office and Department of Interior, was implemented with little direction from above. The consolidation of a more organized "civilization" policy of reformer lobbyists and the nation-wide pacification of Indian groups onto reservations by 1880 corrected any previous lack of direction. In late 1882, Interior Secretary Henry Teller expressed to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Hiram Price his opinion that the "old

heathenish dances, such as the sun-dance, [and] scalp dance… ought, in my judgment, to be discontinued." More than that, he wrote, "Some system of [monogamous] marriage should be adopted, and the Indian compelled to conform to it." Finally, he added, "the medicine men…the anti-progressive party" should be compelled to "abandon this deception and discontinue their practices."[21] Teller concluded by instructing Price to establish Indian community tribunals that could root out these evils and establish penalties that would discourage such behavior in the future. Price agreed and soon after announced his plan for a Court of Indian Offenses to the agents in the Indian Service.[22]

From the outset, the Court of Indian Offenses on the Umatilla reservation encountered resistance from various parties. In 1882, agent Richard H. Fay received the directive from the commissioner of Indian affairs that called for the organization of Indian tribunals, laws, and law enforcement on his reservation. Fay then met with tribal leaders for the purposes of "establishing a code of laws for the government of the tribes," but this proposal soon "led to much of the opposition."[23] As if recalling the foreign legal impositions introduced by agent Elijah White in 1843, tribal leaders contested the agent's act of imposing laws "for" their people. Fay realized that the "chiefs looked upon it as an infringement of their authority" and readjusted his approach. He made some suggestions for tribal laws that he believed would "preserve order among their people" and would be adjudicated by an Indian judge of their choosing.[24] Likely concerned first and foremost

[21] Prucha, *Americanizing the American Indian*, 296-297, 299.

[22] William Hagan, *Indian Police and Judges: Experiments in Acculturation and Control* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1966), 107-109.

[23] R. H. Fay to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 14 August 1882, *ARCIA*, 143.

[24] Ibid., 143.

with encroachments of Whites and the disturbing liquor trade, and mollified by Secretary Teller's insistence that preexisting plural marriages shall not be interfered with, tribal leaders compromised with Fay and his legal code. This decision, which "met with the approval of the Indians," established an Umatilla Court of Indian Offenses and a legal code that outlawed new polygamous marriages, alcohol consumption, and "heathenish rites and customs," among other activities.[25] Sources are unclear as to which headmen were present at this council, but it is plausible that those inclined towards Christianity more explicitly advocated for the laws. Chosen as one of the first and eventually longest serving judges was Umatilla tribal member Philip Minthorn, a hard line Protestant of the Whitman school. Though not a recognized chief, Minthorn was a leader in the reservation's growing Presbyterian congregation and likely sought this appointment to bolster his position in the Christian community. Minthorn and eventually two other Indian judges heard numerous cases involving contested laws and infractions throughout the decade.[26]

Of all of the cultural or religious practices condemned by the Indian Office, the Indian court ruled on polygamy cases more than any other. In 1885, Minthorn, along with judges Peo Peo two-ash and Howlish Wet-que-net, heard several cases regarding Indian men taking multiple wives. In the "courtroom," tribal member James Som-Kin pleaded not guilty to the charge of "Plural Marriage" to "his presumed second wife." After hearing testimony for both the prosecution and defense, the judges found Som-kin guilty and handed down a sentence of twenty dollars and a requirement that he "put away" his

[25] E. L. Stevens to E. J. Sommerville, 9 June 1885, Letters Received from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs 1871-1904, Folder 1883, Box 4, NARA.

[26] Philip Minthorn is also known as Cash Cash. "An Indian Miracle of Missions," *Home Mission Monthly* 21 (August 1907): 241.

additional wife.[27] That same year, an Indian named "George" pled not guilty to a charge of polygamy but still received a guilty ruling, in this case with a sentence of ten dollars.[28] Unfortunately, sources explaining the defendants' position are scant. However, it is clear that for those who continued to practice polygamy, this court represented an affront to tribal culture and a colonial perversion of justice.

Such contempt for this law reached a fever pitch in the spring of 1888 after an Indian woman named Minnie was arrested for the "offense of living and cohabiting thereon with an Indian other than her husband" or polyandrous adultery.[29] Upon her arrest, Minnie was confined to the agency jail while she awaited trial with the Indian tribunal. However, in a deliberately overt act of defiance to what they perceived was an alien and imposed law, Minnie's friends and family members, led by a man named Clapox, entered the jail "with the force of arms" and broke her out.[30] Though the "liberators" were soon arrested themselves, Clapox continued to challenge not only the law on plural marriage but also the Court of Indian Offenses itself. Clapox appealed his case to the U.S. District Court on the grounds that the Indian Court was not a Congressionally created court system and was therefore not a legal entity (so his compatriots should not go to jail for breaking Minnie out because the law should not have existed in the first place). From the District Court, Federal Judge Matthew Deady determined that:

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[27]E. J. Sommerville Report, 15 May 1885, Damage Claims of Indians, Cases Tried Before Indian Judges 1881-1885, Box 1, NARA.

[28] Ibid.

[29] L.S.B. Sawyer, *Reports of Cases Decided in the Circuit and District Courts of the United States for the Ninth Circuit* (San Francisco: Bancroft-Whitney, 1890), 350.

[30] Walter Echo-Hawk, *In the Courts of the Conqueror: The 10 Worst Indian Law Cases ever Decided* (Golden, CO: Fulcrum Publishing, 2010), 202-203; Sawyer, *Ninth Circuit*, 350.

> Though "these 'courts of Indian offenses' are not the constitutional courts provided for in …the constitution, which Congress only has the power to 'ordain and establish,' but mere educational and disciplinary instrumentalities by which the government of the United states is endeavoring to improve and elevate the condition of these dependent tribes, to whom it sustains the relation of guardian. In fact, the reservation itself is in the nature of a school, and the Indians are gathered there under the charge of an agent for the purpose of acquiring the habits, ideas, and aspirations, which distinguish the civilized man from the uncivilized man….There is no doubt of the power of the United States to make these rules.[31]

This paternalistic and assimilationist ruling secured the future of the Court of Indian Offenses at Umatilla. Minthorn and his fellow judges continued to hear cases of "Indian Offenses" but the resistance to these laws spread to other tribal leaders who began voicing their frustrations to federal officials.

In a council with agent Bartholomew Coffey in December 1887, chiefs and headmen expressed their varied attitudes towards the Indian Offenses code. Cayuse chief Showaway explained that though he was familiar with the benevolent intentions of the Catholics at the agency, he opposed the prohibitions on medicine men, even though sources show none had been arrested by that point. On principal, he claimed, "I also want the medicine men kept as they are as the greater number of the Indians love it and want it retained" as "in the old way."[32] Young Chief concurred, claiming, "I want to keep the Indian ways as they used to be." Homily, Ye tin-ya-witz, and Saplish all agreed with the opinions of their fellow tribal leaders. To appear amiable, they also sought to reassure Coffey and the "big men in Washington" that they have "nothing wrong in our hearts"

[31] Sawyer, *Ninth Circuit*, 352.

[32] Proceedings of Council of Umatilla Indians, 12 December 1887, Council Minutes and Proceedings, 1879-1918, Folder 1887, Box 1, NARA.

toward the government.[33] In response to the headmen who disapproved of the law, Small Hawk advocated that the other leaders fall in line with the law and avoid forming factions. Along these same lines, Minthorn, as would be expected given his position, asserted, "As for these old Indian customs I do not want them." He continued, "I have heard the law read… and I mean to abide by it." Minthorn was joined by Long Hair whose membership in the Catholic Church compelled him to condemn these "bad habits."[34]

As was common on other reservations at this time, agent Coffey divided these opposing camps into progressives and traditionalists, but given the leaders' common goals, Coffey's model becomes insufficient.[35] Embedded in these diverging attitudes toward the prohibition of indigenous spiritual customs is a shared desire to maintain stability within the tribal community. Those who disagreed with the law felt that their traditions and ceremonies would sustain and advance the unifying nature of their culture. The Indian Court proponents ascribed to the belief that shedding these obstructive practices and following a Christian path would unite and propel the Indians to a stronger tribal autonomy.[36] As related members of extended families and as fellow tribesmen experiencing this period of transition together, these factions endeavored to keep their community together. The divergent methods of fulfilling this common objective were

[33] Ibid.

[34] Ibid.

[35] B. Coffey to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 15 August 1888, *ARCIA*, 213.

[36] For similar descriptions of tribal factionalism and the breakdown of the progressive-traditional paradigm see Malinda Lowery, *Lumbee Indians in the Jim Crow South: Race, Identity, and the Making of Nation* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), and David Rich Lewis and William Wash, "Reservation Leadership and the Progressive-Traditional Dichotomy: William Wash and the Northern Utes, 1865-1928," *Ethnohistory* 38 (Spring 1991); Rebecca Kugel, *To Be the Main Leaders of Our People: A History of Minnesota Ojibwe Politics, 1825-1898* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1998).

consistently contested by *Natiitayt* individuals and Christian Indians through the next few decades.

In 1882, Minthorn and others helped establish the first Presbyterian Church among the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla since Marcus Whitman's mission of 1847. Until June of 1882, "the Christian fires were kept burning around many a family altar" of Whitman converts who either practiced Presbyterian Protestantism at home or reluctantly at the existing Catholic Church.[37] Important figures like Sarah Minthorn (or Ipna-tsolatalkt, a step-mother of Philip), headman Pootsi, and chief Wenap Snoot, welcomed Reverend G.L. Deffenbaugh of the Idaho Presbytery to reorganize the Presbyterian church at Umatilla. With support from the Presbyterian Synod, the Tutuilla Presbyterian Church was founded on the reservation. Accompanying Deffenbaugh were two Presbyterian ministers, William Wheeler and Robert Williams, who were Nez Perce tribal members.[38] Wheeler and Williams underwent conversion and training under the efforts of the McBeth sisters' mission at nearby Lapwai. The service of these Nez Perce church leaders initiated a trend in which only Nez Perce Indian clergy served at Tutuilla for the rest of the decade and on into the 1890s.[39] Elders later recalled that at Tutuilla, "all of the sermons [were] delivered in the Indian language" of "Lower Nez Perce,"

[37] "With the Indians in Oregon," *The Westminster* 33 (January 1908): 19; J.M. Cornelison, *Weyekin Stories: Titwatit Weyekishnim* (San Francisco: E.L. Mackey, 1911), 28-29.

[38] Stuart Dick, "Tutuilla Presbyterian Church," *Pioneer Trails* 32 (Spring 2008): 3-4.

[39] Bonnie Sue Lewis, *Creating Christian Indians: Native Clergy in the Presbyterian Church* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2003), 37, 185-186; Steven L. Grafe, *Peoples of the Plateau: The Indian Photographs of Lee Moorhouse, 1898-1915* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2005), 124-140.

which was appealing to Christian Indians.[40] As this was an all-Indian institution in its first years, many native adherents approached certain tenets of Christianity with a particular *Natiitayt* cultural and spiritual worldview. These religious pluralists could follow the Bible's instruction to worship one God, for instance, while at the same time choosing to engage in polygamy, an indigenous marriage arrangement.

The practice of polygamy among some Presbyterian Indians displayed the variations and adapted interpretations of Christian worship. Sarah Minthorn had followed the teachings of Marcus Whitman since she was 15 years old.[41] At some point before the founding of Tutuilla and the arrival of the first Nez Perce minister, Archie Lawyer, Sarah had married Yellow Hawk, a Cayuse war chief. However, Yellow Hawk then married three more women according to Cayuse custom. The Nez Perce ministers vociferously forbid polygamy, which put Sarah in a difficult position as a devout Presbyterian Christian and Cayuse wife.[42] While historical records of their union or separation are unavailable, evidence does indicate that Sarah remained a member of the Tutuilla congregation until her death in 1908, despite her involvement in a plural marriage.[43] Sarah intended to continue practicing Christianity while honoring her traditional marriage status, an expression of adaptation to colonial religion.

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[40] Ron Pond and Daniel Hester, *Wiyaxayxt As Days Go By Wiyaakaa?awn: Our History, Our Land, and Our People, The Cayuse, Umatilla, and Walla Walla*, ed. Jennifer Karson (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2006),129-130; Lewis, *Creating Christian Indians*, 46.

[41] Robert Blade, "Pioneer Presbyterian Congregations," *American Presbyterians* 67 (Spring/Summer 1989), 40; "With the Indians in Oregon," *The Westminster* 33 (January 1908): 19.

[42] Grafe, *Peoples of the Plateau*, 84; Dick, "Tutuilla Presbyterian Church," 5.

[43] "With the Indians in Oregon," *The Westminster* 33 (January 1908): 19; "An Indian Miracle of Missions," *Home Mission Monthly* 21 (August 1907): 240. The Westminster article describes Sarah Minthorn as "a step-mother of Philip Minthorn," which could indicate that she was, according to custom, one of his mothers. The status of step-mother is a western concept which would not necessarily have translated into the indigenous family system of mothers and children.

Kinship ties and religious preferences could complicate notions of loyalty to one's faith, as in the case of the Patawa family. Headman Patawa, an Umatilla elder allied with Wenap Snoot, strongly advocated for Protestantism as an alternative to Catholicism on the reservation. He supported "a Protestant man teaching" at the boarding school, "not a french man or priest."[44] These religious convictions aligned with Minthorn's and facilitated his appointment as "prosecuting attorney" for the Indian Court. Patawa's son Allen eventually grew up to become an Umatilla chief and respected elder and leader in the Tutuilla Presbyterian Church. [45] These distinctions of the Patawa family exhibit a dedication to Presbyterianism. Concomitantly, Patawa the elder's service as an attorney for the courts indicates a willingness to suppress indigenous ceremonies. However, when the Patawas camped with their relatives off of the reservation down on the Columbia River, they engaged in the *washat*, a principal feature of the Dreamer religion. This experience was described by Allen Patawa and recorded by Lessie Cornelison, the wife of agent Lee Moorhouse.

Allen recalled visiting Umatilla family members on the Washington side of the Columbia as a young man. Upon Patawa's arrival, Cornelison reported, "the Indians greeted the newcomers cordially. They were pleased to see Allen, the son of a beloved relative."[46] He was participating in what Cornelison called the "winter solstice," which was actually the Winter Spirit Dance. First, "Presents, horses, blankets, saddles" were distributed in a give-away in which "Allen received a blanket." Then began the *washat*.

[44] Minutes of the Council, 4 October 1882, Council Minutes and Proceedings, 1879-1918, Folder 1882, Box 1, NARA.

[45]J.M. Cornelison, *The Missionary View of the World* 28 (1915): 529-530; "State News," *Willamette Farmer*, 28 July 1882.

[46] Lessie Cornelison, "Allen Patawa," Typescript copy, Umatilla County Library, Pendleton, Oregon.

Cornelison explained that participants provided "dried salmon, dried eels, bear meat, boiled roots…Kamash and kouse," which were served by the women "without any confusion." For Allen, the ritualistic presentation and blessing of these foods surely resembled taking the Christian sacrament of the Lords Supper from the Presbyterian ministers at Tutuilla.[47] Once served, "There was practically no conversation at the first part of the supper" but when finished, they "became expansive, told humorous stories, and indulged in friendly banter."[48] Allen participated in the ceremony with a reluctance to commit to the Dreamer's beliefs, likely due to his reservation upbringing and Christian leanings. Instances of religious syncretism were apparent, though it is unclear as to whether Allen pursued the connection. However, the fact that these Dreamers were family allowed him to remain open to practicing the *washat* and Spirit Dance without condemning it as a pagan activity.

Through the reintroduction of Presbyterianism and the modified demonstration of traditional cultural and spiritual practices, Umatilla Indians contested the colonial norms of religious expression during the 1880s. Presbyterian Indians practiced Christianity while observing tenets of the indigenous spirituality of their ancestors, despite the objections of their white and Nez Perce ministers. Tribal members adapting to this form of Christianity employed a religious syncretism to preserve some semblance of their culture and native identity. In a more overt preservation of tribal cultural and social

[47] A growing literature on religious syncretism engages these connections in an ethnohistorical context. For examples, see Kenneth Morrison, *The Solidarity of Kin: Ethnohistory, Religious Studies, and the Algonkian-French Religious Encounter* (Albany: State University of New York Press: 2002); David Lindenfeld and Miles Richardson, ed., *Beyond Conversion & Syncretism: Indigenous Encounters with Missionary Christianity, 1800-2000* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2012); Daniel Richter, *Facing East From Indian Country: A Native History of Early America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001).

[48] Ibid.

systems, other Indians resisted colonial laws that prohibited their dances, ceremonies, and marriage conventions. Tribal leaders spoke out against the banning of medicine men and the legal assault on "the old way." In these same conversations, other leaders, more inclined towards a strict observation of Christianity, accepted and executed laws against "heathenish customs." Within this cauldron of resistance, syncretism, and colonialism lay a common theme expressed by the tribal factions and leaders: religious control. Headmen and their families sought to control their own affairs within the constrained space of federal and ecumenical authority. In the coming decades, the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla tribes would continue to exploit the constricted spaces of religious regulation and invent new ways to adapt and reinvent spiritual identity.

Contested Educations

In an 1881 communication to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Roland Trowbridge, Umatilla chief Wenap Snoot expressed his frustration with the Catholic control of Indian education at Umatilla. For years, the authority of the Catholic Indian agents and schoolteachers vexed those reservation Indians who considered themselves Protestants. Wenap Snoot, speaking for the Protestant Indians, claimed that the new agent, Richard Fay, himself a Catholic, was "entirely under the control of the priest," Father Louis Conrardy.[49] Wenap Snoot continued, "all the money that has accumulated from the lease of lands for herding purposes is in the hands of Mr Fay and he says he intends to use all of it for the purpose of building up Catholic Schools & Church." While he did not object to the projects of the Catholic Church, Wenap Snoot felt that the

[49] Wenap Snoot to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 29 July 1881, William Cameron McKay Papers 1839-1892, Microfilm, Roll 1, 1948, Special Collections and University Libraries, University of Oregon, Eugene.

"Protestant portion of the Indians are left without any means of Educating our children." As an alternative, he showed great interest in an offer from Captain Melville Wilkinson to send "10 of our children to place in [the] Government Indian School at Forest Grove" near Portland. The chief hoped this institution would be a space where Umatilla students could "receive religious instructions untrammeled by the Catholic Church."[50]

Wenap Snoot's admonition represents a break from earlier aversions to colonial education and displays his support for the formal instruction of *Natiitayt* children. He acknowledged the expanding educational mandate for Indian Country but did not resign himself to Indian Office coercion. Wenap Snoot intended to stay involved in the development of the Indian school program. These interventions produced several questions for Indians and education. Tribal leaders considered how Indian children should be educated and how the schools should operate and where. How much influence would students, parents, or leaders have in the process? These queries drove the debates over boarding schools and the implementation of "civilization" curriculum. Though religious divisions over Indian boarding schools did persist within the community, tribal leaders asserted as much control as possible over their children's education, both on and off the reservation.

The nascent boarding school education program that Wenap Snoot and other tribal leaders reluctantly supported had become a lightning rod in Indian education by 1880. Reservation agents and day school administrators compiled extensive requests for the installation of manual training schools where students could be separated from their

[50] Ibid.

native communities.[51] Federal officials acknowledged these appeals but considered a boarding school program only after witnessing the innovative Indian training operation conducted by Captain Richard Henry Pratt in the late 1870s. In his capacity as an officer in the US Army, Pratt worked with male Plains Indian captives in a detainment center at Fort Marion, Florida. In a social experiment designed to pacify and "civilize" his prisoner subjects, Pratt instituted a regimen of military discipline, educational instruction, Christianity, and manual labor.[52] From this experience, Pratt became convinced that his success in rehabilitating the Indian detainees came from the Indians' separation from their tribes and the "total institution" approach to their reform. Soon after, Pratt persuaded Congress to support the establishment of a boarding school for Native American children who he believed were "born a blank," and could "grow to possess a civilized language and habit" if in the right environment.[53] Though no Umatilla youths would attend for over a decade, Pratt founded the Carlisle Indian School in 1879. Carlisle served as the model institution that all other government Indian boarding school administrators sought to replicate in structure, layout, and curriculum.[54] In addition to several other off-reservation boarding schools opening across the nation, dozens of on-

[51] For the agents and school administrator's requests for a boarding school at Umatilla, consult *ARCIA* reports from 1871, p.315, 1872, p.364, 1873, p.319, 1874, p.323, 1875, p.354, 1876, p.125, 1877, p.178, 1878, p.123, 1879, p.134, 1880, p.145.

[52] Jon Reyher and Jeanne Eder, *American Indian Education: A History* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2004), 133-34, Richard Henry Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom: Four Decades with the American Indian, 1867-1904* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1964), 155-160.

[53] Prucha, *Americanizing the American Indians*, 268-269.

[54] Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, 213-214, 218-221.

reservation boarding schools were established throughout Indian Country in the 1880s, Umatilla included.[55]

Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla leaders and spokesmen remained intimately involved in the foundation of an on-reservation boarding school at Umatilla. Just as Wenap Snoot and Homily had influenced the operation of and Indian participation in the day school, they, along with an emerging generation of tribal leaders, involved themselves in the boarding school discussion. In an 1879 visit to Washington, D.C., Cayuses Young Chief and Hiachenie, Umatillas Wenap Snoot and Umapine, and Homily of the Walla Wallas, heard an Indian Office and Interior Department proposition for their people to take allotments on the reservation.[56] Showing some interest, the tribal leaders brought this proposal back to the tribes who, in council a year later, displayed a willingness to accept allotments with the caveat that the Indian Office "erect and furnish a manual-labor and boarding school for their children and to board them."[57] The council's desire for a reservation boarding school was likely led by the Catholic Indians who, due to the Oregon Archbishop Charles Seghers' presence at the council, supported the program along religious lines. However, this shift to support the new education program also indicates an awareness of changing assimilationist strategies from above and an indigenous desire to guide and control federal policies on the ground.

An 1882 council of tribal leaders and government officials illuminates the extent of Indian support of and divergent visions for education on the reservation. With the

[55] Reyher and Eder, *American Indian Education*, 150-151.

[56] Ruby and Brown, *Half Sun on the Columbia*, 147, 149, 154.

[57] N.A. Cornoyer to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 10 August 1880, *ARCIA*, 146., Brill Eugene Lee, "Educational History of the United States Government Indian Schools on the Umatilla Indian Reservation, 1855-1926" (MS thesis, Eastern Oregon College, 1966), 59-60.

legislation, funding, and tribal approval for the establishment of an on-reservation boarding school secured, the agent and Indian Office initiated the construction process in 1882. Late that year, a government inspector met with tribal leaders to explain how the revenue from the Pendleton land cession and latent allotment bill would fund the school construction project. The chiefs and headmen, however, used this opportunity to present their ideas for the school's composition and operation. They began by endorsing the idea of education as a tool to ensure tribal prosperity. The council leaders agreed with Cayuse Tia-cote-shom-kim (Sumkin), who believed that "the children when educated will get along well," especially "when they can write."[58] Eneas, a Walla Walla headman, reinforced this outlook by asserting they should "aid in educating our children so that in future they can compete with the whites."[59] From this point of concurrence, the leaders' opinions then diverged on religious grounds.

Two camps emerged in the boarding school discussion, Catholic Indians who tacitly supported the Catholic operation of the school system, and Protestant Indians who disagreed with that church's control. In general, the Catholics favored "a large school taught by the sisters." They claimed, "we must have a Catholic" because "the priest…taught school" so their children "could read the bible."[60] The Protestant minority protested. Patawa, an Umatilla leader, felt that "for 20 years the priest," in the capacity of

[58] Minutes of Council held Oct. 4, 1882, Council Minutes and Proceedings, 1879-1918, Folder 1882, Box 1, NARA. Agent Fay reported that three teams of Indians helped harvest the lumber needed for constructing the school in 1882 "free of charge," indicating a significant tribal support for the school project.

[59] Ibid.

[60] Ibid. In the council the Catholic Indians seemed to withhold their comments for the most part. Sumkin noted this saying, "we Catholics have not said anything" to represent their denominational position.

teacher, "taught the children" who have shown to "know nothing."[61] Though the inspector tried to convince the dissenting Protestant Indians that the school is "paid for by the Govt" and "no church is running it," they were convinced that the tradition of local Catholic domination would ensure Catholic control of the school system. Umatilla sub-chief Peo persistently asked the inspector if the school's new teachers would be Catholics because "if the priest teaches" then "we want a school of our own." Wenap Snoot strongly favored this option: "For 20 years the children don't read and write" and last year they "wanted [a] separate school" but the "priest…wanted my people to send their children but they refused now want 2 schools so Indians can have a choice."[62] To this the inspector replied that there were not enough government funds to support two schools, but assured them the boarding school would be "unsectarian" and "may have Catholic or Protestant teachers." The Protestant Indians were not persuaded, and perhaps rightly so. With the Umatilla boarding school's completion in 1883, the controversial Agent Richard Fay accepted resident priest Father Louis Conrardy as industrial instructor and members of the Sisters of Mercy association as teachers.[63] Fay apparently failed to notice the denominational distinction, but was soon removed from his position anyway. His successors, Edward Sommerville and Bartholomew Coffey, however, could no longer deny the Catholic bent of the professedly secular government school.

The Protestant faction's continuing agitation eventually compelled the Indian Office to make an honest effort to secularize the operation of the Umatilla boarding

[61] Ibid.

[62] Ibid.

[63] William Bischoff, S.J., *The Jesuits in Old Oregon, 1840-1940* (Caldwell, ID: Caxton Printers, 1945), 208-209; Lee, "Educational History," 64-65.

school. After three years of essentially unrestricted Catholic administration of the boarding school, Father Conrardy inadvertently presented the dissenters with an opportunity to express their grievances with the parochial school management.[64] In 1886, Conrardy, as the educational patriarch, took it upon himself to launch a school-sanctioned farming program in which male Indian students would manage their own plot of land. He hoped to promote agricultural self-reliance to keep the boys from becoming "good for nothing like many of their elders."[65] Conrardy would supervise the Indian boys' farming operations and would even survey the plots himself. When Conrardy began staking out farmlands, Cayuse leader Showaway, a Catholic himself, took notice and demanded a council, as he believed the priest was seizing Indian lands without permission.

In this 1886 council, the Catholics tacitly joined in the Protestant Indians' frustration with Conrardy's unilateral actions. Wenap Snoot admonished agent Coffey that Conrardy can preach but "not for taking up land for children."[66] Homily suspected that the priest's plan was actually a scheme to acquire the profits from the Indian boys' labor and tribal land. Coffey delivered to Washington the council minutes' conclusions that stated the Indians' position "is decidedly averse to the action of Father Conrardy in the taking up land for the children."[67] This episode precipitated further retreats from the Catholic presence at the boarding school. Almost as a gesture to the non-Catholic parents of the boarding school students, Coffey ensured that "the cross had been removed" from

[64] B. Coffey to Oregon Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 10 August 1886, *ARCIA*, 220-221.

[65] Umatilla Agency Council, 4 August 1886, Council Minutes and Proceedings, 1879-1918, Folder 1886, Box 1, NARA.

[66] Ibid.

[67] Ibid.

the school, literally and symbolically.[68] Sensing such developments as a sign and acknowledging the tribal factions' influence on the secularization of the government boarding school, Conrardy, and by extension the Sisters of Mercy teachers, left Umatilla in 1887.[69] However, leaders like Long Hair, Towl Ka-kim-i-ne, and to a certain extent, Showaway, who all appreciated the Catholic administration, would welcome the Jesuits interested in founding a parochial school at Umatilla few years later.

Catholic or not, Indian Service teachers at both the Umatilla boarding school and at Forest Grove exposed Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla children to "total" institutional education. The childrens' institutionalization was guided by mandates from the Indian Office. In an 1885 description of the on-reservation boarding school program, federal Indian School Superintendent John Oberly asserted that the "Indian boy and girl pupil" must be "removed from the perverting environments of the Indian camp" and put "under the influence of the methods of civilized life."[70] At Umatilla, despite changes in the administrators and teachers' secular conduct of the school, a regimen of instruction, surveillance, and "civilization" sought to actualize Oberly's directive. As at other schools, the Indian Office discouraged the wearing of native clothing by issuing "clean garments of civilized men" to the students.[71] Upon receiving this physical marker of

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[68] Thomas Neate, S.J., "Indian Missionaries," *The Indian Sentinel* 2 (October 1920): 185. Robert Ruby and John Brown assert in *Indians of the Pacific Northwest: A History* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988) that the Catholic Church excommunicated Agent Bartholomew Coffey for his removal of the school cross.

[69] Joseph Cataldo, S.J., "The Umatilla Mission," *The Indian Sentinel* 2 (October 1920): 176; Interestingly, two of these positions were replaced by Indians. Miss Sabina Page, a "mixed blood," was school superintendent, and Moses Minthorn, a Cayuse, was a teacher. Agent Coffey made sure these were temporary replacements as he did felt their own Indian "people do not sufficiently respect them."

[70] John H. Oberly to Hon. J. D. C. Atkins, 1 November 1885, *ARCIA*, CXII-CXIII.

[71] Agent reports to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for the years 1884 to 1886 mention the distribution of clothes to the boarders in *ARCIA*; Adams, *Education for Extinction*, 30-31.

American identity, the Indian boys and girls boarded at the school for roughly ten months, from a floating start date in September to late June.

In this environment, children encountered the continued colonial tradition of gendered instruction, though on a larger scale than the now-defunct day school provided. The industrial teacher instructed the boys in agricultural training on a sixty-five acre school farm, fully equipped with barbed wire fences and a barn.[72] Training for the girls consisted of "plain and fancy sewing, knitting, and all kinds of household work," a curriculum that hoped they would live and raise a family in a house where these skills would be of use.[73] Religious instruction occurred at Sunday school and continued up to the secular schism of 1887 when Conrardy's Catholic enterprise left the school. Though the year-round boarding school schedule intended to inculcate these American values in the students through constant reinforcement, the school was still on the reservation, situated among the pupils' native community. With a greater frequency than at off-reservation schools, the children could see their parents and reconnect with their indigenous traditions.

The on-reservation boarding school arrangement offered other advantages. It allowed those families who continued to engage in the seasonal subsistence cycle and practice traditional spiritual customs to include their children in these traditions. As with the day school, boarding school administrators eschewed families of Indian students retaining their children over the summer season and late into the year for the "fall hunt."

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[72] E.J. Sommerville to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 15 August 1885, *ARCIA*, 170; B. Coffey to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 10 August 1886, *ARCIA*, 220.

[73] E.J. Sommerville to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 7 August 1884, *ARCIA*, 149; Margaret D. Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race: Settler Colonialism, Maternalism, and the Removal of Indigenous Children in the American West and Australia, 1880-1940* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), 127-128.

This affected enrollment, which averaged around 61 students during the year and fewer in the fall months. School personnel complained that "enrollment is lighter as a consequence of" the disruptive food gathering cycle, a tradition they intended to replace with farming and industry.[74] Nevertheless, *Natiitayt* children could slip away from the reservation with their families to not only gather food but to also engage the age-particular rite of obtaining a *weyekin*. In this interlude away from agency authority, a parent and a *tewat* could facilitate a child's quest for their tutelary spirit. However, if successful, a boy or girl would not be able to access this power until years later, an occasion in which the recipient would fall into a trance and embrace the *weyekin*.[75] Ideally, this would happen in the presence of family at a ceremony like the Winter Spirit Dance and not while detained at school. Anthropologist Theodore Stern retells a story of an Umatilla "boy, home from boarding school, who… fell into a trance" and the "power had been granted him."[76] Being away from home at an off-reservation school would surely stifle the experience of such an important rite of passage. Indeed, at the Forest Grove School, such traditions were explicitly prohibited, and Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla parents who allowed their children to attend had little control over this rule.

The distressing decision to send their children to Forest Grove resulted from tribal leaders' frustrations with the scheming of the agency's Catholic regime. The Catholic agent, Richard Fay, and Father Conrardy, opposed the interference of other

[74]Enrollment figures are averaged from ARCIA reports from 1884-1889, except 1887, which did not include enrollment data. Quarterly Report of Indian Schools, 3 September 1889, Quarterly School Records 1889-1921, Folder Umatilla Boarding School, 1889, Box 1, NARA.

[75] Theodore Stern, *Men and Cultures: Selected Papers of the Fifth International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences, Philadelphia, September 1-9, 1956*, ed. Anthony F.C. Wallace (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1960), 347-348.

[76] Ibid., 348.

denominations in their work with the Umatilla tribes. In 1881, this opposition degenerated into obstruction when Fay attempted to suppress a letter from Captain Melville Wilkinson to the tribes regarding sending their children to his off-reservation boarding school.[77] Wilkinson was actively recruiting more Indian students for Forest Grove Indian School, an institution he intended to be the western counterpart to Pratt's Carlisle School in Pennsylvania. Wenap Snoot, Peo, and other Protestant leaders discovered Fay's cover-up and immediately, in addition to petitioning for a change of agent, sought out Wilkinson to assure him that "the children are ready to go and we are anxious to send them."[78] In that year, "ten children, boys and girls, of the Umatilla Indians" arrived and would be followed by at least ten more by 1885.[79] The chiefs reconciled sending these children to the school 240 miles away; as Cayuse leader Umhowlish stated; he did "not feel that he was doing wrong or sorry that he sent them down" to Wilkinson.[80] Other Protestant parents reluctantly agreed to allow their children to attend Forest Grove if for no other reason than it was an alternative to the Catholic-dominated reservation school. For Wilkinson, the distance that separated the Umatilla agency from the school ensured that the boarders remained at Forest Grove with few trips home.

[77] Ruby and Brown, *Indians of the Pacific Northwest*, 237.

[78] Wenap Snoot to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 29 July 1881, William Cameron McKay Papers 1839-1892, Microfilm, Roll 1.

[79] Cary C. Collins, "The Broken Crucible of Assimilation: Forest Grove Indian School and the Origins of Off-Reservation Boarding-School Education in the West," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 101 (2000): 484.

[80] W. C. McKay to M.C. Wilkinson, 31 October 1881, William Cameron McKay Papers 1839-1892, Microfilm, Roll 1, 1948, Special Collections and University Libraries, University of Oregon, Eugene.

Wilkinson and his successor Henry Minthorn (no relation to the Minthorn family at Umatilla), believed strongly that the students' "entire removal from family and reservation influences are the points of highest hope" for their "civilization." The administrators stressed instruction in the English language and demanded "No Indian talk."[81] To discourage the use of native languages, students belonging to the same tribe, Umatilla included, were separated in the dorms and classrooms. Teachers exposed the children to similar gendered, assimilationist training that they received at the Umatilla school, though with a prolonged intensity. The superintendents intended the students to stay for at least three years, though Minthorn later pushed for five.[82] In 1885, Minthorn's administration relocated the school from Forest Grove to a site five miles north of Salem, Oregon (the school would be renamed "Chemawa"), thus increasing the distance between the school and the agency. Even with this distance, however, Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla parents stayed involved. By 1889, though almost certainly sooner, parents were haranguing the Umatilla agent to compel the superintendent to allow their children to come home for summer break and holidays. Just as they were successful in ensuring their children received a non-Catholic education, these same *Natiitayt* parents and leaders ensured that their children returned home.[83]

In this decade of contracting autonomy and narrowing ability to continue traditional educational systems, tribal leaders and parents used every opportunity to

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[81] M.C. Wilkinson to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 4 October 1881, *ARCIA*, 257-258.

[82] Patrick Michael McKeehan, "The History of the Chemawa Indian School" (PhD diss., University of Washington, 1981), 102-103.

[83] Lee Moorhouse to Supt. Indian Boarding School Salem, Or, 11 June 1889, Letters Sent to Other Parties 1889-1911, Misc: Jun 1889-Jun 1893, Box 1, NARA; Lee Moorhouse to Supt. Indian School, Chemawa Or., 29 June 1889, Letters Sent to Other Parties 1889-1911, Misc: Jun 1889-Jun 1893, Box 1, NARA; Lee Moorhouse to Supt. Indian Boarding School, Chemawa Or., 5 Aug 1889, Letters Sent to Other Parties 1889-1911, Misc: Jun 1889-Jun 1893, Box 1, NARA.

influence their children's education. These interventions emerged from a tribal desire to control, as much as possible, how outsiders educated *Natiitayt* youth. This ideal became complicated when internal divisions expressed contrary views of what form of education students received. Objecting along religious lines, the Protestant Indian families chose to avoid subjecting their children to a Catholic dominated boarding school program. This dissension represents an implicit critique of the agency system altogether, taking authority away from the agent and sectarian powerbrokers by circumventing their plan and authority and utilizing an alternative option of their choosing. In the Catholic dominated system of the agency and boarding school, however, self-described Catholic Indian leaders could use their denominational position to try and influence the education program to their specifications. Though the goals shifted from an earlier aversion to White education altogether to creating conditions in which Indian children could compete with their neighbors, tribal leaders never drifted from their desire to control the circumstances of this change. In the decades after 1890, it would be the products of these schools, the Indian students, who would reinvent their tribal identity to adjust to new colonial impositions within the contours of a firmly grounded sense of tradition.

Farm to Market: The Changing Economy

Agent Moorhouse seemed to have it all figured out. In his 1889 report to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Umatilla agent Lee Moorhouse wrote of his Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla charges:

> If these Indians had received their land in severalty years ago…so that necessity would have driven them to the utilization of the fertility of this soil, they would now be enjoying a competency that would have placed them in circumstances of perfect independence and beyond the possibility

> of want and distress of being… helpless pensioners on the bounty of "Uncle Sam." Abundance of fish are found in the streams, which at certain seasons of the year the Indians secure in great numbers. The mountains furnish plenty of game…I am convinced that this reservation possesses more natural advantages than any other.[84]

In this statement, Moorhouse simultaneously disparaged the Indians' dependence on federal support while acknowledging their traditional collection and consumption of natural foods. The ancient *Natiitayt* food gathering cycle in the streams and mountains had always sustained the Indians and secured their economic independence. Yet, to Moorhouse, the Indians' version of independence was not the correct one. He felt they needed to cultivate their own plot of land, raise crops, and sell the produce on the open market to be truly self-reliant. Both perspectives of economy and subsistence carried cultural values that clashed more frequently with further colonial interventions and local interactions. Through the 1880s, the Umatilla tribes moderated determined impositions from government and corporate institutions, including pressures to accept allotment and reservation railroad construction. Locally, they supplemented the constrained access to off-reservation food gathering grounds by engaging in the wage labor economy of agriculture, law enforcement, teamsters, and the service industry. Tribal leaders and individual Indians endeavored to control the changing economic conditions on and around the reservation and made adjustments when necessary. At the heart of making any concessions or accommodations was a desire to keep their indigenous community intact and to continue the life-sustaining seasonal round.

The federal government's most invasive and insistent economic intervention during this decade centered on Native American farming. As the Interior Department, Indian Office, and Indian advocacy organizations' focus on Indian agriculture was

[84] Lee Moorhouse to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 9 July 1889, *ARCIA*, 275-276.

developing into official policy, the Umatilla tribes were still coming to terms with the practice of farming. Some Indians did make an earnest effort to launch their own farming operations while others remained indifferent to the enterprise. Agent Fay in 1881 believed that those Indians who did continue to farm on their own established plot of land were motivated by "making their own living…that they must no longer depend on the government."[85] This overly optimistic report ignored at least some of the exigencies of living within the reservation amid encroachments by White ranchers. Many Indians who relied on the trade of their horse stock now had to compete with Whites grazing on their lands. This increased competition forced the Indians to reduce their horse herds, and supplement this loss with wheat farming. In addition to harvesting wheat, they had to cut and put up hay to maintain what was left of their culturally and economically crucial horse stock. [86]

Additionally, others felt it necessary to further expand their farming operations because of obstructions to off-reservation gathering. In June 1880, "a party of Indians" left Umatilla to gather roots at Camas Prairie about 40 miles south of the agency.[87] Upon reaching the gathering grounds they encountered "two or three white men" who "ordered them off, and attacked some squaws." They threatened the party and "cut open their sacks and spilled the camas" that the Indians had collected. To avoid further harassment, the group returned to the agency to compel the agent to take action against these violent *suyapos*. The agent, who wanted the Indians to discontinue gathering and to focus on

[85] R.H. Fay to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 31 August 1881, *ARCIA*, 150.

[86] R.H. Fay to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 14 August 1882, *ARCIA*, 144.

[87] N.A. Cornoyer to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 10 August 1880, *ARCIA*, 147.

farming instead, did not intervene on the grounds that "there was very little damage done…and the alarm was a great deal more of a scare than the reality."[88] These associated forces of settler colonialism intended to control off reservation lands and confine the Indians within the boundaries of the reserve. Within this context of encroachment and control of surrounding resources, many Indians became farmers and sought allotments in order to personally control their own lands and livelihoods on the reservation.[89]

Through the 1880s, the implementation of the allotment in severalty program at Umatilla proceeded in fits and starts. An ostensibly top-down policy devised by Congress and the Indian Office, allotment among the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla was shaped, at least in part, by the Indians themselves. Though the concept of allotment in severalty of Indian lands had been discussed in government circles since the beginning of the nineteenth century, it had become a realistic option with the consolidation of the reservation system. In 1880, Texas Senator Richard Coke introduced an allotment bill that failed to pass, but the seeds for allotment were sown and some Indian groups saw this as an opportunity. Historian Emily Greenwald has noted the Omaha tribe's desire for the allotment of their Nebraska reservation as a protection against further removals. In 1882, Congress voted to allot the Omaha reserve.[90] While these pieces of legislation were in progress, Oregon Senator James Slater extended this opportunity to the Umatilla tribes.

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[88] Ibid.

[89] A similar attack occurred near the Antelope Valley when a hunting party of Umatillas were fired upon by White renegades. This event, which took place only eight months before the Camas Prairie harassment, only added to the Indians frustrations with their inability to collect food for the winter. *ARCIA*, 1880, 145.

[90] Emily Greenwald, *Reconfiguring the Reservation: The Nez Perces, Jicarilla Apaches, and the Dawes Act* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2002), 26-28.

After discussing the potential for allotment in Washington, D.C. in 1879, tribal leaders returned to the reservation to announce the government's position and to hear their peoples' feelings on this enterprise. Many were motivated to take land in severalty to stop cattlemen interlopers because, an agent later surmised, "when every Indian owns his own lands and knows exactly his rights, he will know how to maintain them."[91] The Indians felt that those who did take the suggested 160-acre allotment parcel should have access to 40 acres of timberland not attached to their plot, as wood for fences and firewood were located primarily in the mountains. They demanded that Indians of "old age, sickness," unable to draw any financial benefit from agricultural pursuits from their land, must be allowed to lease their allotments for cash profit. Finally, they wished to be compensated for the surplus lands in cash, not goods because they felt they could "buy and sell judiciously" on their own.[92] The agent tallied these stipulations and sent them to his superiors who included them, in one form or another, in the Umatilla Allotment Act of 1885.[93] Despite the Indians consent to allotment based on their demands, as a tribal unit they still dragged their feet on adopting Congress's severalty bill.

It would take three separate meetings for the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla tribal leaders to finally approve the Allotment Act. The act required that meetings be held by federal commissioners who would explain the legislation to the tribes to seek their approval. The first meeting in May of 1885, stalled out after ten weeks of Indian deliberation, causing the head commissioner, former Senator Slater, to suspend the

[91] B. Coffey to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 15 August 1887, *ARCIA*, 191.

[92] N.A. Cornoyer to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 10 August 1880, *ARCIA*, 146-147.

[93] Charles Kappler, *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, Vol. I (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1904), 224-228.

conference until June.[94] An entrenched lack of confidence in the commissioners and the agitations of outside interests - White ranchers and concerned mixed-bloods - resulted in another round of failed negotiations. Over a year later in October 1886, a new round of commissioners met with tribal leaders who, after a week of deliberation, approved the bill, being "satisfied with all the arrangements with few exceptions."[95] The lack of a full time interpreter would have made the tribal leaders suspicious of the commissioners' communications but Homily apparently understood enough English to grasp the officials' sidebar conversations, which he inspected for duplicity. Though "surprised and disgusted" at discovering Homily's deception, one commissioner, William Parsons of Pendleton, was still pleased to have secured the Allotment Act.[96] However, due to the delayed survey of reservation lands, amendments to the act in 1888, and complications with allotting Columbia River Indian newcomers, allotment did not commence until 1891. The Umatilla Allotment Act contributed to the formation of Senator Henry Dawes' General Allotment Act of 1887. Tribes that fell under this national legislation approached allotment with similar motivations, reluctance, and strategies as had the Umatillas.[97]

While deliberating on whether to accept allotment, the tribes were also reevaluating their relationship with the cash and wage labor system. The Indians' consideration of this economic phenomenon grew from their experiences with the

[94] Kennedy, "The Umatilla Indian Reservation, 1855-1975," 89-90.

[95] B. Coffey to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 15 August 1887, *ARCIA*, 191.

[96] Parsons, *Illustrated History of Umatilla County*, 225.

[97] Approaches to allotment are discussed in Nicole Tonkovich, *The Allotment Plot: Alice C. Fletcher, E. Jane Gay, and Nez Perce Survivance* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2012); Frederick Hoxie, *A Final Promise: The Campaign to Assimilate the Indians, 1880-1920* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984); Emily Greenwald, *Reconfiguring the Reservation: The Nez Perces, Jicarilla Apaches, and the Dawes Act* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2002), 26-28.

agriculture-based market economy. In 1880, Umatilla Agent Cornoyer articulated his hope for Indian agriculture: that his charges produce valuable crops and would "have a good market for their surplus produce."[98] The agent and the Indian Office believed that once Indians achieved economic self-sufficiency through farming, they could begin to sell excess crops for cash. For those tribal members who did manage farming operations, trade for cash became a primary economic aim. Agents consistently attributed this attraction to cash to the fact that many of the farmers were actually "mixed-bloods" who were "principally raised and educated among the whites." They reported that the mixed-bloods, who drew on their personal exposure to "civilization" from their White fathers, could act as models for other reservation full bloods.[99] While it is true that many of the mixed-bloods did make up a significant percentage of those who took up land for farming and lived in frame houses, they were not necessarily considered a separate group. Since a majority were of Walla Walla descent, Homily asserted in 1882, "those half breeds are my people" and treated them as such.[100]

The mixed-bloods and the other Indian farmers grew thousands of "bushels of corn, barley, and oats…cereals of all kinds, melons, squash, pumpkins, potatoes" for consumption, storage, and trade.[101] They and their trading partners placed a premium on wheat, which grew excellently in the Umatilla Valley. Annual reports from the agent

[98] Narcisse Cornoyer to Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs Leon E.J. Brooks, 9 March 1880, Letterbook of the Umatilla Indian Agency, 1860-1880, Microfilm Roll 1.

[99] E. J. Sommerville to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 7 August 1884, *ARCIA*, 147; E. J. Sommerville to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 15 August 1885, *ARCIA*, 169.

[100] Minutes of the Council, 4 October 1882, Council Minutes and Proceedings, 1879-1918, Folder 1882, Box 1, NARA.

[101] E. J. Sommerville to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 7 August 1884, *ARCIA*, 147.

claim that the Indians harvested 40,000 bushels of wheat in 1884, 130,000 in 1885, and 350,000 in 1889.[102] At 69 cents a bushel in 1888, the Indian farmers stood make a respectable profit. In some cases native women participated in the sale of wheat independently of Indian men. In 1889, Agent Lee Moorhouse helped "an Indian woman by the name of Killy-Kat" facilitate a sale of "60 sacks of wheat" to a F. E. Parker & Co. of Adams, Oregon. He noted she was "very anxious to get the money" from the transaction.[103] For the reservation Indians, surplus farming for commercial trade coincided with the practice of performing wage labor that, together, served as a survival strategy in the changing local economy. Certainly not all of the tribes' roughly 920 tribal members possessed the materials to farm for cash, but those who did saw a large increase in trade when the railroad came to the reservation.

Indians seeking access to wage labor embraced the arrival of the Oregon Railroad and Navigation Company. As stipulated in the Walla Walla Treaty, the federal government had the authority to construct roads through the reservation as necessary, with the consultation with the tribes.[104] To provide faster service from Boise and La Grande through Pendleton and The Dalles, the ORNC sought to lay rail from the Umatilla Valley up through the Blue Mountains. In 1881, the ORNC acquired approval from the Interior Department and then met with a Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla

[102] *ARCIA*, 1884, 147; 1885, 169; 1889, 276.

[103] Lee Moorhouse to Mess. F. E. Parker, & Co., 6 November 1889, Letters Sent to Other Parties, 1889-1911, Box 1, June 1889 to June 1893, NARA; Stevens to E. J. Sommerville, 9 June,1885, Letters Received from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs 1871-1904, Folder 1883, Box 4, NARA.

[104] Charles Kappler, *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, Vol. II (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1904), 697.

council to gain approval from their Indian hosts.[105] In a surprisingly congenial meeting, the tribes agreed to allow the ORNC to build their railroad through reservation lands. In return, the railroad company agreed to pay $25 an acre for all land needed, to transport timber from the sawmill at Gibbon down to Mission, to pay for damages resulting from the potential loss of livestock, and provide free passages for Indians down to the fisheries on the Columbia River.[106] The company would also employ Indian workers in the construction project. In 1882, the "aboriginal contractors" were paid by the ORNC at "the rate of $20 per acre" and "were complimented for fulfilling their contract in a satisfactory manner." In addition to clearing land for the railroad path in 1882, Indian workers also participated in the construction of the tracks as well.[107] This infusion of wages brought season-long financial support to the construction workers. According to historians Kurt Peters and Jeffrey Shepherd, Native American railroad work, as it related to the Laguna Pueblos of New Mexico and Hualapai of Arizona, provided an "income that helped them survive the vicissitudes of a market economy."[108] When the railroad was completed through Umatilla in 1884 and regular service began, a lack of fences in some areas along the tracks allowed horses and cattle to wander onto the tracks and get hit by the train. In reactions of frustration or opportunism, the Indian owners of this lost stock sought compensation for their animals at an overvalued cash price, which the railroad company

[105] R. H. Fay to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 31 August 1881, *ARCIA*, 151.

[106] Kennedy, "The Umatilla Indian Reservation," 84-85; Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs to R.H. Fay, 24 May 1881, Letters Received from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs 1871-1904, Folder 1881, Box 2, NARA.

[107] R. H. Fay to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 31 August 1881, *ARCIA*, 151; E. J. Sommerville to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 7 August 1884, *ARCIA*, 148.

[108] Kurt M. Peters, "Continuing Identity: Laguna Pueblo Railroaders in Richmond, California," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 22 (1998): 187; Jeffrey Shepherd, *We Are An Indian Nation: A History of the Hualapai People* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2010), 70-71.

was, with some reluctance, obligated to provide.[109] Tribal leaders negotiated the establishment of the railroad on their reservation with the welfare of their people in mind, and many Indian workers benefitted from their leaders' determination.

Other opportunities for engaging in wage labor came from agency positions and work in nearby towns off the reservation. The Cayuse and Umatilla participation as US Army scouts in the Bannock War, along with the need to address a series of murders on the reservation in 1880, prompted the creation of a reservation police force. Joining several other reservations that had organized tribal law enforcement outfits around this time, Umatilla formed a police force that consisted of "one captain and ten privates" in January 1881.[110] By 1883, the captain received eight dollars per month while the privates made five. In this capacity, the police arrested primarily White whiskey traders and detained Indians found under the influence of alcohol. The police operated primarily within the reservation boundaries, though their responsibilities often took them beyond the border. The dangerous nature of the position compelled the agent to request a pay increase for all Indian police officers and a "subsistence allowance" to cover their inability to produce food while working. By 1890, pay was increased to twelve dollars for the captain and ten for privates.[111] Some the privates like "William… one of the very best

[109] Robert H. Ruby and John A. Brown, *The Cayuse Indians: Imperial Tribesmen of Old Oregon* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1972), 295.

[110] N.A. Cornoyer to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 10 August 1880, *ARCIA*, 146-147; R. H. Fay to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 31 August 1881, *ARCIA*, 150.

[111] Commissioner Hiram Price to R. H. Fay, 12 January 1883, Letters Received from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs 1871-1904, Folder 1883, Box 2, NARA; E. J. Sommerville to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 10, August, 1883, *ARCIA*, 133; Lee Moorhouse to Commissioner of Indian Affairs 14 April, 1890, Letters Sent to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs 1880-1912, Box 3, NARA.

Indians here," were "well known to the merchants and other persons in Pendleton," indicating their regular commerce with businesses in the city.[112]

When such work was available, some Indians worked for the Indian Service as teamsters, hauling freight from the Columbia River ports to the agency. Other Indians worked in Pendleton in private sector service positions. Both Indian men and women commuted to the city to work in the homes of Pendleton families. Men were hired to work as gardeners and women washed clothes. Contemporaries recalled the work ethic of tribal member "Queen Edna," who "goes about her business of washing clothes for Pendleton housekeepers with a good will and industry."[113] Social reformers who believed that Native Americans ought to engage in accumulating cash and acquire material goods with their profits would have appreciated the wage labor work of the Umatilla Indians. However, though it is unclear just how much money Indian workers received from these service jobs, it is likely that their wages were supplementary at best. Scholars Martha Knack and Alice Littlefield have advanced the idea that Indians adapted wage labor to familiar norms by claiming "kin groups and communities deployed labor power in a complex and shifting round of seasonal activities" that maintained cultural-economic

[112] E. J. Sommerville to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 7 August 1884, *ARCIA*, 148-149.

[113] Lee Moorhouse to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 14 April 1890, Letters Sent to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs 1880-1912, Box 3, NARA; Keith F. May, *Pendleton: A Short History of a Real Western Town* (Pendleton, OR: Drigh Sighed Publications, 2005), 15; Parsons, *Illustrated History of Umatilla County*, 227.

structures.[114] Indeed, at Umatilla, Indian workers saw these positions as temporary or seasonal and participated in their industries with this understanding of impermanence.[115]

In the changing reservation economy of the 1880s, tribal leaders and members endeavored to maintain control of their lands and modes of production and consumption. Achieving such control was threatened by increased encroachments by cattlemen, settler threats of violence, and concerted interventions by the federal government. However, when approached by the allotment commissioners and the railroad company men, tribal leaders asserted their demands. The confounded officials were compelled to adjust their colonial impositions to the Indians' claims. For many Indians who lived in houses and engaged in farming, "as soon as the summer commences every one of them will move into tents or Wa-kee-ups" to "move around from place to place…after their farming is done."[116] They were joined by those who engaged in seasonal or part time wage labor work. A majority of Indian police officers, laundresses, and railroad construction workers only labored for stints of a few months to a year of two to earn cash as needed.[117] The rest of the time, they were honoring their traditional subsistence cycle by hunting, fishing, and gathering. Confronted with economic vicissitudes largely out of their control, the tribes employed a resilient defiance when approaching railroads and allotment, and a

[114] Martha Knack and Alice Littlefield, "Native American Labor: Retrieving History, Rethinking Theory," *Native Americans and Wage Labor: Ethnohistorical Perspectives*, ed. Alice Littlefield and Martha Knack (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996), 10-11.

[115] For more on Indians and wage labor in the late nineteenth century, see Knack and Littlefield, *Native Americans and Wage Labor*, and for a perceptive overview of Indian employees in the Indian Service, see Cathleen Cahill, *Federal Fathers and Mothers: A Social History of the United States Indian Service, 1869-1933* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011).

[116] B. Coffey to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 15 August 1888, *ARCIA*, 214.

[117] There were at least three different police captains from 1883 to 1888, and at least six different privates between 1883 and 1889. Railroad workers on the reservation only worked on the two phases of the construction project in 1882 and 1884.

modified accommodation of farming or working for cash. This dual program represented a single, though complicated, strategy of survival amid changing economic conditions. As this transition continued after 1890 and on into the twentieth century, Indian perceptions of work, land use, and wage labor would readjust to shifting opportunities and constraints around the Umatilla reservation.

Conclusion

The reservation world of the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla endured a battery of interventions during the decade of the 1880s. Some of these changes, like allotment and boarding schools, came from above. The conflated settler colonial and assimilationist goals for these programs encountered the determination and obstinacy of Umatilla tribal leaders. Homily, Wenap Snoot, Young Chief, and others realized the federal government, with the support of Indian reformers, was committed to installing these institutions. However, they left their mark on the discussions considering with what to do with their lands and how their peoples' children would be educated. As they debated these issues, Indian leaders and their tribes and families became divided and proceeded in their own way. Some families sent their children to Protestant-oriented boarding schools, while others favored the Catholic-dominated school. Some headmen sought to maintain cultural and spiritual traditions while others combined these customs with their practice of Christianity. Many embraced farming while others favored wage labor jobs. The common thread tying these opposing viewpoints together is the *Natiitayt* desire to maximize their control over the changing world around them, at the reservation, tribal, family, or individual levels. This often meant adapting to or manipulating new challenges and

conditions to maintain their already limited autonomy. The tribes would receive no break from further changes and would have to employ this survival skill in their confrontations with the exigencies of the turn of the century.

CHAPTER V

"*WE HAVE LEARNED AND ADOPTED BETTER WAYS*": REFINING STRATEGIES FOR INDIGENOUS SURVIVAL, 1890-1910

Jennie Peo, daughter of Umatilla chief Peo and granddaughter of Wenap Snoot, came of age in a drastically different environment than had her elders. In the early 1890s, Jennie attended the Chemawa Indian School in Salem, Oregon. In addition to experiencing the school's emphasis on English language instruction, Indian Service teachers also exposed her to the gendered vocational training of assimilation curriculum.[1] Jennie thrived at Chemawa, and upon her return to the reservation was considered by White observers "a refined and educated lady." William Parsons of Pendleton knew Jennie and was sad to report on what he perceived was her "fall from civilization to savagery" when she married a "worthless blanket Indian" and reverted to wearing "aboriginal dress."[2] To Jennie, fully returning to her people presented an opportunity to contribute to the welfare of the tribal community using the education she had received at Chemawa. Parsons admitted that due to her English language training, "She is the best interpreter on the reservation." In the capacity of interpreter, Jennie could act as a broker between the tribes and government officials. Additionally, by 1894, interpreters could earn up to $150 dollars a year for their services.[3] In many ways, Jennie's actions parallel

[1] Cary C. Collins, "The Broken Crucible of Assimilation: Forest Grove Indian School and the Origins of Off-Reservation Boarding-School Education in the West," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 101 (2000): 482-483.

[2] Colonel William Parsons and W.S. Shiach, *An Illustrated History of Umatilla County and of Morrow County* (Ogden, UT: W.H. Lever, 1902), 224.

[3] George Harper to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 24 May 1894, Umatilla Indian Agency, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75, Letters Sent to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs 1889-1896, Box 3, National Archives and Records Administration- Pacific Alaska Region. Seattle, WA.

the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla tribes' approaches to colonial impositions from 1890 to 1910. During this period, federal officials launched the allotment program at Umatilla and facilitated the opening of two new boarding schools on the reservation. Tribal leadership tried to mitigate the harsh realities of allotment while *Natiitayt* students and families endeavored to influence Indian education in the boarding schools. The tribes adjusted to a renewed federal attempt to suppress their spiritual and cultural practices by holding their dance celebrations on the American Fourth of July. Just like Jennie, the tribes confronted the changes brought about by colonialism by making adjustments and accommodations through a strategy of adaptive resistance. Motivated by "an anxious desire of self-preservation" the Umatilla tribes endeavored to resist or remake external interventions to fit indigenous priorities.

Implementing allotment and hastening assimilation to promote citizenship served as the crux of federal Indian policy during these pivotal decades. Western politicians in Congress, concerned with launching the allotment program, defended their desire to open reservations to non-Indian settlement by coopting social reformers' plans for assimilation. Congressmen from states like Montana, Washington, Idaho, and Oregon reiterated the reformer's campaign to remake Indians into citizens through the land allotment process.[4] However, these politicians were primarily motivated by the prospect of valuable Indian lands that would become available after the assigning of allotments. Settlers, farmers, ranchers, and railroad interests harangued their senators and representatives to allot the reservations and open the surplus lands for sale. To appear sensitive to the welfare of their states' Indian wards, those like Joseph Dolph of Oregon

[4] Frederick Hoxie, *A Final Promise: The Campaign to Assimilate the Indians, 1880-1920* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), 150, 156.

asserted in Congress, "The sooner the Indians are absorbed in the body politic the better…we shall never be able to solve the Indian problem until that is done."[5] Absorption would occur when reservations were diminished and Indians worked and lived on their allotments next to industrious White neighbors. In theory, as this presumably halcyon arrangement proceeded, Indians would become landowning citizens of the US and would shed their hindering membership to their former tribe. This logic fueled Congress and the Indian Offices' eventual allotment operations after the passage of the Dawes Act of 1887.

As allotment assignments proceeded throughout Indian Country – Nez Perce in 1889, Umatilla in 1891, Yakama in 1892, Siletz in 1894 – the ability to secure Indian citizenship and encourage individualism became more feasible. The law placed twenty five-year trust titles on allotments, after which a landholder would then own his or her plot outright. In most cases, those taking allotments would become citizens of the US whether they held on to their land or not.[6] Citizenship, reformers hoped, would release both the Indian from government paternalism and the government from wardship responsibility. Reformer Philip Garrett of the Indian Rights Association asserted that if the tribal "common tenure of land" and all of the governmental legislation running Indian lives could be "obliterated," then they could become a "component part of the great mass

[5] Ibid., 150. 158.

[6] Nicole Tonkovich, *The Allotment Plot: Alice C. Fletcher, E. Jane Gay, and Nez Perce Survivance* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2012), 11; Charles Wilkinson, *The People Are Dancing Again: A History of the Siletz Tribe of Western Oregon* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2010), 221; Clifford Trafzer and Robert McCoy, *Forgotten Voices: Death Records of the Yakima, 1888-1964* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2009), 11; James Kennedy, "The Umatilla Indian Reservation, 1855-1975: Factors Contributing to a Diminished Land Resource Base" (PhD diss., Oregon State University, 1977), 88-89.

of American citizenship."[7] Indians would become more inclined to work their individual lands, produce for the market, pay taxes, and participate in the democratic process as equals. Citizen Indians could protect themselves from unscrupulous Whites by employing the American legal system to which they would then have access. In practice however, exercising citizenship, maintaining allotments, and interacting with the local White population would not come as easily as the principled reformers and politicians would have hoped.[8] The reformers' all too idealistic vision for the Indian's transformation was being implemented at a time when American society was reassessing its perception of Native Americans.

The dominant society perceived Indians as a superseded and romanticized race, marginalized from significance after 1890. This national trend became evident in the Pacific Northwest as the region's Indian peoples, while certainly present, were imbued with a mythologized persona. A declining native population at the turn of the century reinforced the notion of the "vanishing Indian" that assumed they would sooner than later fade into the general population and cease to exist as a separate people. For many, this meant Indians would no longer be a threat to settlement, especially after the Wounded Knee Massacre in South Dakota in 1890.[9] This popular notion produced a nostalgia for the frontier that showman Buffalo Bill Cody packaged into his international Wild West Show. Drawing on the general assumption that Indians would no longer be around to play the role of colorful opponent to westward expansion, Cody used Indians to recreate

[7] Francis Paul Prucha, ed., *Americanizing the American Indians: Writings by the "Friends of the Indian" 1880-1900* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973), 62.

[8] Hoxie, *Final Promise*, 211-213.

[9] Brian Dippie, *The Vanishing Indian: White Attitudes and U.S. Indian Policy* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1982), 200-201.

battles between tribes and the US Army, a very popular enterprise at the turn of the century.[10] In other iterations of the "vanishing Indian" myth, indigenous artifacts and costumes became marketable goods for collectors, while tribal leaders like Chief Joseph of the Nez Perce and Moses of the Columbia Sinkiuse were rebranded as heroes of their dying race rather than leaders of the resistance.[11] This romanticized and marginalized image of the Native American made its way to the Umatilla reservation. The local Whites adopted this construct despite the fact that their business and social interactions with Indians actually increased here after 1891.

Such interactions were a direct result of the trappings of allotment and the opening of the reservation to White ownership and Indian land leasing. A significant demographic shift in the area was exacerbated by the regular service of the Union Pacific railroad that imported settlers and capital while exporting Umatilla County crops and beef. During this period, the populations of nearby Pendleton, Pilot Rock, Adams, and Athena outpaced those of the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla at a rate of about seven to one.[12] Eager agriculturalists and real estate interests from these areas and elsewhere looked to capitalize on the divestment of valuable surplus lands of the reserve considered unused by the native residents. Government officials officially opened designated reservation lands up for public auction in April 1891 when, in the matter of a few weeks,

[10] Philip Deloria, *Indians in Unexpected Places* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004), 50, 57-58.

[11] Mary Dodds Schlick, *Columbia River Basketry: Gift of the Ancestors, Gift of the Earth* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1994), 93-94; Alvin Josephy, *The Nez Perce Indians and the Opening of the Northwest* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965), 636, 638-639; Robert Ruby and John Brown, *Half Sun on the Columbia: A Biography of Chief Moses* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1965), 149-150.

[12] Parsons, *An Illustrated History of Umatilla County*,173-174, 192, 195, 197, 198.

entrepreneurs purchased over 62,000 acres of land.[13] These tracts were found primarily around the fertile drainages of Wildhorse and McKay creeks. Whites who soon moved in to establish farms in these prime growing areas grew even more enticed by the prospects of legislation that would allow Indians to lease their own allotment land for agricultural purposes. Leasing for tribal members, ostensibly an added economic benefit to Indians, contained its own series of problems. Still, leasing contracts brought the Indians into further contact with their white neighbors, who cared more about access to land than the Indians' economic security or their transformation into proper American citizens. To local Whites, matters of Indian welfare and uplift were the federal government's concern.

In addition to the world altering allotment program, Congress and the Indian Office expanded upon nascent educational and cultural policies to hasten the Americanization of the nation's Indian wards. The transformative success of Richard Pratt's Carlisle Indian school encouraged the expansion of off-reservation boarding school programs after the 1880s. The federal government constructed or remodeled more schools and enrolled thousands more native students during this period. Students were to gain a better understanding of American citizenship as they prepared to soon take allotments for farming on their home reservations.[14] The government's recent retreat from non-secular education was actually reversed when various funding initiatives were instituted to subsidize parochial schools on reservations. [15] In addition to this overt advocacy of Christianization among Indians, the federal government also began to greatly

[13] Kennedy, "Factors Contributing to a Diminished Land Resource Base," 100-103.

[14] David Wallace Adams, *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1995), 57-58.

[15] Ibid., 66.

restrict tribal cultural practices and spirituality. National laws and directives attempted to further suppress the "savage" dances and traditions officials believed inhibited progress in assimilation. At Umatilla, these national initiatives encountered a community well trained in mitigating outsider impositions. As they had for the past thirty years, the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla tribes approached this new wave of interventions and restrictions with the desire to retain their own sense of cultural identity. From subtle resistance to strategic accommodation, the tribes met allotment procedures, boarding school programs, and religious restriction policies on *Natiitayt* terms.

Allotment, Labor, and Indigenous Priorities

Chiefs No Shirt of the Walla Walla, Umapine of the Umatilla, and Towitoy of the Cayuse all sought to take care of their land and people as best they could within the reservation's new economic order. Gravely concerned about the problems associated with allotment in 1907, No Shirt and Umapine called for an impartial inspector to adjudicate on the Indians' problems with land and revenue loss. In a council with inspecting officer Davis, No Shirt expressed that he "learned that many of the old folks were troubled" about their land, which is "what led me to make these affidavits" describing their difficulties with allotment.[16] Umapine agreed, stating that the "Reservation here and allotments is as they were affairs of mine and I don't wish to see any of the Indians troubled over this money."[17] In response, the inspector affirmed his receptivity to the

[16] Minutes of Report of Council Called By Mr. Davis At the Umatilla Indian Agency On March 4th, 1907, Council Minutes & Proceedings 1879-1918, Folder 1907, Box 1, NARA. Council Minutes do not reveal Davis' first name.

[17] Ibid.

tribes' concerns based on the chiefs' sincere and zealous admonitions. No Shirt then gathered all of the tribal members who had grievances against the agent's handling of allotment funds and distributions to allow them to express their frustrations with a unified voice.[18] This indicates the chiefs' willingness to learn to work within the colonial system of federal bureaucracy in order to protect the welfare of their people and families. The economic vicissitudes emerging from allotment and leasing compelled the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla to make further concessions to the changing reservation economy. In the process, they creatively restructured their relationships with wage labor, material culture, and the market. To survive, the tribes actively adjusted their skills to pursue economic opportunities that could sustain their indigenous community and lifeways.

Securing the Umatilla reservation land base proved critical to maintaining the tribes' sovereignty and economic operation. Unfortunately, as settlers encroached upon the reserve and successfully agitated for its opening, the tribes had fewer options available with which to achieve such protection. This prompted them to eventually accept allotment in severalty. Many Indians hoped allotment would allow their community to retain as much tribal land as possible. Even with their coerced decision made, the tribes slowed the implementation of allotment procedures in order to control the transition. They resisted the allotment assignment and distribution process by prolonging councils, delaying surveys, and extending off-reservation food gathering trips.

In May of 1891, two unnamed government allotting agents arrived at Umatilla to hold council with the Indians and explain their choices for accepting allotment under either the Umatilla Allotment Act of 1885 or under the Dawes General Allotment Act of 1887. The tribes took their time in making their decision, deliberation over which ended

[18] Ibid.

up "consuming several days," until they eventually chose the Umatilla Act.[19] When it seemed the surveyors and allotment agents could then get started on the process, their work was interrupted. Agent Moorhouse grumbled, "The chiefs, however, have been resorting to every device they can conceive to delay the work."[20] He believed that the recognized chiefs were concerned about allotted tribal members gaining citizenship and thus jettisoning their loyalty to the traditional tribal leaders. It seems, however, that they were holding off a seemingly unstoppable change in conditions to better consider the implications allotment would have for their people and lands through a reinterpretation of *tamanwit*. Allotment agents also needed an up to date tribal census to assess the necessary land assignments for all tribal members. However, Indians on seasonal hunting and gathering excursions made it difficult for officials to obtain an accurate census count, so expected summer long allotment process dragged on for a year and a half.[21] The tide of allotment eventually rushed completely over the Umatilla reservation, but the Indians chose to make the best of this situation by either making farming work or earning income from leasing their individual lands.

Since the Allotment Act councils of the late 1880s, the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla stressed their desire to lease their lands once allotted. Beginning with leasing options for the elderly or infirm, the tribes petitioned for the ability of individual landholders to lease their allotment farmlands. Moorhouse reported in 1890, "the Indians

[19] Lee Moorhouse to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 21 July 1891, *ARCIA*, 378.

[20] Ibid.; Lee Moorhouse to Honorable Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 26 May 1891, Letters Sent to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs 1880-1912, Box 3, Letters to Commissioner from June 15 1889 to August 28 1891, NARA.

[21] John Crawford to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 28 September 1892, ARCIA, 419; James Kennedy, "The Umatilla Indian Reservation, 1855-1975: Factors Contributing to a Diminished Land Resource Base" (PhD diss., Oregon State University, 1977), 107-108.

all insist that they be allowed the right to lease their lands or hire white labor when necessary." This is one request that enjoyed widespread support from tribal leadership on down to the rank and file tribal members.[22] At the family level, the tribes understood that leasing provided an opportunity for allotted elders and children to earn an income from lands that would lay fallow due to an inability to perform the requisite labor. Those more inclined to actually farm but who could not afford the necessary implements to do so hoped to accumulate a leasing revenue to save up to purchase this equipment.[23] Just as allotment distributions were beginning at Umatilla, Congress was amending the Dawes Act to expand the ability of allottees to lease their lands. Congress applied this legislation to the Umatilla allotment system. It is unclear whether the Umatilla tribes had a direct influence on those politicians responsible for the amendment, but they certainly joined other tribes in the cause to establish a leasing law.[24]

In 1892, 893 allotments were assigned, and by 1894, the agent estimated that "fully 90 per cent of all agricultural lands was farmed by White men" on leased lands.[25] According to the law, the agent would moderate all formal lease contracts and send them to the Indian Office for approval. However, many of the allottees' leases were informally negotiated and thus unregulated. With the rush of leases in the first decade, the tenant-renter relationship became inexplicably complicated, and in many cases, the White

[22] Lee Moorhouse to Honorable Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 14 February 1890, Letters Sent to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs 1880-1912, Box 3, Letters to Commissioner from June 15 1889 to August 28, 1891, NARA.

[23] Theodore Stern and James Boggs, "White and Indian Farmers on the Umatilla Indian Reservation," *Northwest Anthropological Research Notes* 5 (Spring 1971): 44, 60-61.

[24] Francis Paul Prucha, *The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indians* Vol. II (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), 671-672.

[25] George Harper to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1 October 1894, *ARCIA*, 268.

lessees took advantage of the Indian landowner. Tenants would often not pay at all or would pay the rent to the agent who would fail to pass this payment along to the frustrated Indian landlord.[26] As representatives of their people, tribal leaders used what means they had to address this problem, be it visiting Washington, D.C. to enlighten Congress of the situation or to call councils with federal officials at Umatilla. When tribal leaders were successful in their pursuit to secure compensation for their allottees, Indian Office and Congressional officials compelled tenants and agents to distribute payment. This increased involvement in the cash economy changed how tribal members interacted with each other and their White neighbors.

The process of adjusting to the market and wage labor economy that began in earnest in the 1880s continued through the turn of the century. However, with the advent of allotment rentals and the prolific, democratized accumulation of land lease income, the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla Indians dealt in cash more and more. Allotment holders – especially elders who could not work or travel or parents with allotted children– began to express their growing need to acquire cash from rentals. Cayuse interpreter Joseph Craig described in 1907 how the "old people" came to rely on this influx of cash from their rentals. He mentioned a "certain old woman" who "was in need of her money very much, that it was now col[d] and she wanted to get the money so she could go and buy warm clothing and things to eat."[27] He explained the dire situation for elders and the infirm who did not live near timberlands and could not "go and cut wood for ourselves." These elders were then "obliged to buy wood from others" to burn and stay warm in

[26] Kennedy, "Factors Contributing to a Diminished Land Resource Base," 121-122.

[27] Minutes of Report of Council Called By Mr. Davis At the Umatilla Indian Agency On March 4th, 1907, Council Minutes & Proceedings 1879-1918, Folder 1907, Box 1, NARA.

winter.[28] Unfortunately, as this reliance on lease money began to set in, problems with payments increased apace. At first, tribal members complained about not receiving rent money from their tenants in informal lease contracts. Even when the Indian Office intervened to administer the contracts and ensure payment to the allottees, the Indian agent often failed to responsibly deliver the funds.[29] As tribal leaders agitated for the "Great Father" to step in and assuage their frustrations with incompetent or scheming agents, a process that could take months or years, the average tribal member still needed money coming in. In wage labor jobs that were culturally reinforced or at least recently familiar to them, the Umatilla Indians earned money to feed their families and maintain tribal cohesion.

Up through the late 1890s and into the first few years of the 1900s, the Indians continued to hunt, gather, and fish in the mountains and rivers of their usual and accustomed places. As late as 1901, agent Charles Wilkins defended their ability to leave the reservation to gather their traditional foods.[30] However, local and regional interests complaining of recent depredations, likely conducted by several Nez Perce Indians, associated the crimes with the Umatilla tribes.[31] In reaction to the public outcry against unrestrained Indians operating off the reservation, the tribes began to engage in labor practices more palatable to non-Indian society. They adjusted by transferring their gathering skills to the market economy. Beginning in 1900, Indian families and bands

[28] Ibid.

[29] Ibid. This is the primary reason the council with Inspector Davis was called. Allottees and headmen expressed dozens of complaints about the agents' withholding of rent monies and his general irresponsibility.

[30] "Not the Umatilla Indians," *East Oregonian*, 26 April 1901, Evening Edition.

[31] Ibid.

from Umatilla began working as contracted seasonal laborers in the beet and hop industries in Oregon and Washington. The sugar beet industry of the Grande Ronde Valley required the use of Indian families to harvest beets in the fall. Drawing on their centuries-old root and berry gathering techniques, Indian women, and many men, collected beets for "75 cents per day" from local farmers. These growers believed that "the squaws as beet pullers" are "careful and steady workers" and seemed to display a natural ability for the work.[32] Employing these same skillsets, Indian families made their way to the Yakima Valley in Washington to engage in the hop harvest for various farming outfits. Working in extended family units, Indian men, women, and children picked the hops, collected them in boxes and bags, and received payment tickets per container.[33] While on the surface, it appears the *Natiitayt* were simply using their unique skills to "earn bread for their children," the Indians were actually reinterpreting and engaging the seasonal round according to principles of *tamanwit*.[34] They endeavored to maintain aspects of their culture through the transformation of their economy.

In this era of the "vanishing Indian," the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla participated in the rising industry of Western nostalgia for their own, principally economic, reasons. With the passing of the nostalgic "Indian Wars," the nation's Native

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[32] "Oregon Sugar Beets," *The Daily Journal*, 13 October 1903; "Japanese and Indians Supplement the White Workers," *Morning Oregonian*, 30 September, 1903; For an ancillary discussion of Indians in the sugar beet industry, consult Jim Norris, *North For the Harvest: Mexican Workers, Growers, and the Sugar Beet Industry* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2009).

[33] Minutes of Report of Council Called By Mr. Davis At the Umatilla Indian Agency On March 4th, 1907, Council Minutes & Proceedings 1879-1918, Folder 1907, Box 1, NARA; G. Thomas Edwards, "'The Early Morning of Yakima's Day of Greatness': The Yakima County Agricultural Boom of 1905-1911," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, 73 (April 1982): 82; For an in depth analysis of Northwest Coast Indians and Puget Sound hop picking, see Paige Raibmon, *Authentic Indians: Episodes of Encounter from the Late-Nineteenth Century Northwest Coast* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005).

[34] Ibid.

Americans seemed like pacified relics of the past that embodied the ruggedness of the Wild West. Umatilla reservation Indians contributed to this popular pastime by working as actors, cultural authorities, and manufacturers of the "noble savage" image. As the Indians engaged this impression, they also influenced how their tribes were represented in American culture, beginning with the Pendleton Woolen Mills. By 1900, the owners of the woolen mills began to produce "Indian" blankets, originally for Indian customers themselves, and then for the general public. To ensure the blankets exhibited an authentic "Indian" pattern, woolen mills manager Theron Fell worked with the Umatilla tribes to determine the right look.[35] In this capacity, the company saw the Indians as expert consultants and, in addition to using images of them in marketing brochures, had a few Umatillas working in the plant itself. An early twentieth century photo taken by former agent and photographer Lee Moorhouse displays a scene of two Indians, a woman and a man, operating two textile looms in the Pendleton Mills factory.[36] It is unclear how much the native employees, permanent or seasonal, received in payment for their work, but their participation in this industry did contribute to a more native-generated depiction of Indian regalia and culture.

Indian women also produced and traded articles of native manufacture during this time. For the purposes of gathering and decoration, *Natiitayt* women had weaved baskets from "rushes, wild hemp, corn husks, and worsted" for generations.[37] A valuable

[35] Robert Kapoun, *Language of the Robe: American Indian Trade Blankets* (Salt Lake City, Peregrine Smith Books, 1992), 122-124.

[36] "Looms in Pendleton woolen mills, Indians working mills," PH036-2528 and PH036-2530, Lee Moorhouse photographs, 1888-1925, Special Collections and University Archives, University of Oregon Libraries.

[37] Otis Mason and Frederick Coville, *Aboriginal American Basketry* (Washington DC, Government Printing Office, 1904), 439.

commodity, the Indians had traded these baskets for dried fish and other goods at places like The Dalles since before contact. However, as the capitalist market flooded the indigenous economy, the Indians lost much of the exchange with their native trade partners. For survival and to ensure that their skills and tradition as basket makers continued, these women began to produce for a growing market of museum collectors and American tourists interested in Native American material culture.[38] Indeed, Agent Charles Wilkins noted in 1899 that the women were "constantly employed doing bead work, making grass bags and baskets."[39] Mary Schlick, a scholar of basketry culture, has observed that "the basketmakers were happy to find a growing market for their work."[40] Lee Moorhouse displayed these baskets and other Indian "curios" at his shop in Pendleton. Some baskets at the time sold for between seven to thirty five dollars in the first decade of the twentieth century.[41] Though working within the contours of the "Vanishing Indian" notion, the basket makers could manufacture their culturally relevant product for a consumer that bent to their expertise.

Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla Indians also saw economic opportunities to represent themselves by participating in Buffalo Bill's Wild West show. Since 1883, the iconic Buffalo Bill Cody had recruited Native Americans from many tribal communities to serve as actors in his Wild West performances. Roused by Cody's retelling of the

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[38] Mary Dodds Schlick, *Columbia River Basketry: Gift of the Ancestors, Gift of the Earth* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1994), 92-94; For a discussion of native women and basket production and of the curio trade, see Jackie Thompson Rand, *Kiowa Humanity and the Invasion of the State* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2008).

[39] Charles Wilkins to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 17 August 1899, *ARCIA*, 321.

[40] Ibid., 93.

[41] Ibid., 94.

"winning of the West" in the wars with the Indians, American (and, later, European) audiences were captivated by his "safe" reenactments.[42] In 1899, while on a diplomatic trip to Washington, D.C., chiefs Showaway and Peo, along with Nez Perce Chief Joseph, were invited to participate in one of Cody's Wild West shows in New York City. The chiefs arrived at Madison Square Garden, and "Cody placed the Nez Perce and Umatilla Indians at the head of the procession" of Indian performers. Praised for their stoic appearance, the Oregon Indians were invited to perform in the show as regulars.[43] Though Showaway, Peo, and Joseph declined the offer, their participation influenced others to join. A few years later in 1905, Salem's *Daily Capital Journal* reported that "Six Indians from the Umatilla reservation have gone to Michigan to join a wild west show."[44] Much has been written on the reasons why Indians participated in these performances. In addition to securing the cash payment of what some sources claim was around $25 a month, many Native Americans sought to leave the reservation to gain a better understanding of American society.[45] In the process, they could gain a stronger sense of the capabilities of the US and its imposing society. They also attempted to have what historian Philip Deloria has described as a "claim of authority, performing not simply as wild Indians but as visiting dignitaries involved in cultural and political

[42] Philip Deloria, *Indians in Unexpected Places* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004), 58, 60, 52; Jeffrey Ostler, *The Plains Sioux and U.S. Colonialism from Lewis and Clark to Wounded Knee* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 144-145.

[43] Parsons, *An Illustrated History of Umatilla County*, 222, 224.

[44] "Miscellaneous," *Daily Capital Journal*, 10 June 1905, Last Edition.

[45] The cultural and economic implications of the Indians' participation in the Wild West Shows are discussed in L.G. Moses, *Wild West Shows and the Images of American Indians, 1883-1933* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press).

exchange."[46] Records are unclear of the Umatilla performers' personal experiences, but they likely participated in the performances for many of these same reasons.

Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla Indians worked for the Indian Service served as semi-skilled and unskilled laborers on the reservation with increasingly frequency after 1890. Laboring at the agency and school, tribal members engaged in various government jobs that allowed them to work for and among their people. In the Umatilla boarding school, *Natiitayt* men and women worked as cooks, seamstresses, and matrons. By 1900, as many as seven full blood and mixed-blood Indians were working at the school. Hattie Pambrun, who served off and on as the school seamstress, as well as the assistant laundress, and the assistant cook had all attended the Umatilla school as students. In these positions, they apparently used some of the skills acquired from their industrial education.[47] Drawing from similar training, several tribal members including Joseph Craig and Moses Minthorn, who could speak English, functioned as interpreters in tribal-government relations. When employed, Indian Service interpreters were paid hundreds of dollars a year.[48] In the law enforcement system, those individuals serving as Court of Indian Offenses judges began receiving financial compensation for their duties at $12 a month. Tribal members would have supported the decision to pay the judges a salary as

[46] Deloria, *Indians in Unexpected Places*, 69-71.

[47] Mollie V. Gaither to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 30 July 1900, *ARCIA*, 366; George Harper to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 31 January 1898, , Letters Sent to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs 1880-1912, Box 4 - 1896-1900 , NARA; Mollie Gaither to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 15 August 1899, Letters Sent to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs 1880-1912, Box 4 - 1896-1900, NARA.

[48]Lee Moorhouse to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 3 April 1891, Letters Sent to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs 1880-1912, Box 3 – 1889-1896, NARA; Lee Moorhouse to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 10 June 1891, Letters Sent to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs 1880-1912, Box 3 – 1889-1896, NARA.

the judges previously had acquired payment through the fines of the sentences they handed down.[49]

The tribal police force, formed in 1881, employed at least nine privates and one captain employed until at least 1907. Agents continually stressed to their superiors the benefits of retaining such a police force and even sought an increase in their pay.[50] Though the tribal police often carried out the bidding of the agent - arresting drinking Indians or tracking down those absconding from the reservation - the native policemen served for their own reasons and resisted when they disagreed with an agent's particular order. Scholars have identified such dissent against bellicose agents in other tribal police organizations during this period, specifically among the Blackfeet of Montana and Jicarilla Apaches of Arizona.[51] Indeed, at Umatilla in 1907, Captain Sumkin cited his credentials as police chief when describing his observations of the "crooked" agent Oliver Edwards' mishandling of Indian monies. Sumkin claimed, "I feel competent and qualified to criticize [sic] the Agent in these mistakes." He continued, "In the capacity of Chief of Police" he witnessed Edwards fail in "his duty to…look after the Reservation."[52] As a tribal leader of the Cayuse and of all reservation Indians, he used his paid government position to protect his people from abuse.

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[49] Lee Moorhouse to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 3 April 1891, Letters Sent to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs 1880-1912, Box 3 – 1889-1896, NARA; William Hagan, *Indian Police and Judges: Experiments in Acculturation and Control* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1966), 111-112.

[50] George Harper to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, N.D., Letters Sent to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs 1880-1912, Box 4 - 1896-1900, NARA.

[51] Hana Samek, *The Blackfoot Confederacy, 1880-1920: A Comparative Study of Canadian and U.S. Indian Policy* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1987), 157; Eileen Luna-Firebaugh, *Tribal Policing: Asserting Sovereignty, Seeking Justice* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2007), 24.

[52] Minutes of Report of Council Called By Mr. Davis At the Umatilla Indian Agency On March 4th, 1907, Council Minutes & Proceedings 1879-1918, Folder 1907, Box 1, NARA.

Participating in the wage labor economy provided the tribes with a variety of economic and culturally reinforcing opportunities. By working in wage labor jobs for private or government employers, the Indians laborers could expect to receive a relatively steady cash payment. More importantly, however, serving in these jobs allowed tribal members to stay near their families. Policemen offered protection while school employees watched over *Natiitayt* children. Seasonal employment also helped to supplement their subsistence cycle. Finally, basketmakers and Wild West show actors could, to an extent, more accurately represent Indian people and culture to a deeply interested general audience while making an income. Indians of the three tribes approached the wage labor economy on their own terms with indigenous priorities.

The tribes of the Umatilla reservation joined many other native communities in the struggle to assert tribal sovereignty amidst challenging pressures of allotment, social marginalization, and deteriorating reservation conditions at the turn of the century. Outnumbered by settlers, subjected to the allotment campaign, and left with few subsistence resources, it seemed as though the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla would fade out of existence. However, the tribes' ability to adapt to new economic conditions and to moderate allotment policy ensured community survival. When allotment came, they insisted that tribal elders and parents be able to lease allotment lands. When tourists became enamored with the culture of the "vanishing Indian," Indian women utilized their traditional weaving skills and sold baskets to American tourists and collectors. And when an opportunity to employ their gathering skills presented itself, Indian women and men earned money working in the hop and beet industries in Oregon and Washington - near their aboriginal homelands. With the funds raised from wage labor work and land leases,

the *Natiitayt* made necessary, practical purchases in and around the Umatilla Valley. With these same earnings, however, the Indians funded off reservation hunting, fishing, and gathering journeys and trips to visit friends and family down on the Columbia River and on nearby reservations. Understanding that allotment and the cash economy was here to stay, the tribes endeavored to make these institutional and market enterprises serve indigenous needs as much as possible.

Family and Student Agency in Education

White Eagle, a well-known, successful landowner on the reservation, intended to influence how his nephews were being educated at the Umatilla government school. When White Eagle discovered that his two nephews, officially his legal guardians, had been assigned training duties "in the kitchen, laundry or bakery," he marched up to the reservation boarding school to have a word with the school superintendent.[53] While White Eagle appreciated his nephews being "employed on the farm or with the stock," he wanted to make sure the teachers and administrators knew his opinions about the boys performing what he considered women's work. In a charged meeting with Superintendent Mollie Gaither, White Eagle expressed his concerns: "White Woman an Boss, I no wan' you make my poys (boys) work, wash dish, wash cloth, make bread!" Before allowing Gaither to respond, White Eagle threatened, "You no make different, I take my poys home!" He then left the school administrator, leapt onto his horse, and rode away.[54] This

[53] Gertrude Golden and Cecil Dryden, ed., *Red Moon Called Me: Memoirs of a Schoolteacher in the Government Indian Service* (San Antonio, TX: The Naylor Company, 1954), 42-44.

[54] Ibid., 43-44. Interestingly, autobiographer Gertrude Golden seems to have substituted the names of certain individuals in her chapter on the Umatilla Indian School. For instance, school superintendent Mollie V. Gaither was changed to Mary V. Goings, and agent Mr. Charles Wilkins was changed to Mr. Winton. She may have been covering the identity of these individuals for personal reasons.

scene displays a significant development in the Indians' relationship with education at the turn of the century. With fewer substantial educational decisions affecting the school program during this period, tribal leadership had fewer opportunities in which to intervene. Thus, the tribes' ability to influence Indian education shifted from tribal leaders to increasingly active Indian parents and students. Parents retained their authority to send their children to school and where and whether to pull them out or to keep them away. Students who resisted the school system surreptitiously engaged in prohibited cultural practices, manipulated school officials, or simply ran away. Not all native agency involved resistance; some parents and students supported education and made the most of this immovable institution.

The year 1890 proved pivotal in the consolidation of reservation education at Umatilla. Agent Lee Moorhouse had the former government boarding school building condemned a year earlier and had a larger, more durable brick structure constructed in its stead. Consisting of several multi-story buildings a mile from the agency, the new boarding school compound evoked a sense of daunting permanence. Moorhouse designed the boarding houses to accommodate 150 pupils and readied the dorms for the school year commencing in November.[55] In that same year, another boarding school opened on the reservation. After Father Conrardy and the Sisters of Mercy left the government school in 1887, parochial education among the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla took a short hiatus. That is, until the arrival of Jesuit Father Urban Grassi. Acknowledging the agency and school administration's resistant attitude towards Catholic-oriented

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[55] Lee Moorhouse to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 9, July, 1889, *ARCIA*, 276; Lee Moorhouse to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1, August, 1890, *ARCIA*, 209; Lee Moorhouse to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 21, July, 1891, *ARCIA*, 379.

education, Grassi campaigned for the construction of a Catholic boarding school at Umatilla.[56]

After moving the mission and selecting a site for the school at the foothills of the Blue Mountains, Grassi secured funding from the Catholic Church and the ubiquitous Mother Katharine Drexel. After a year and half of fundraising and construction, the school was completed and dedicated as the St. Andrews Mission School. With the filling of teaching positions by the Sisters of Mercy, the school opened its doors in February 1890.[57] It may appear that the establishment of two new schools - two more institutions of assimilation - would be more threatening to the Umatilla reservation Indians already overwhelmed with the presence of the state. While this may have been the case for some, many parents were relieved to have options when deciding where to send their children to school on the reservation. This was a timely development because, by 1891, the Indian Office had made Indian student school attendance compulsory.

Some Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla parents actually undermined the government education program by choosing to send their children to the Catholic school.[58] Cayuse tribal leader Paul Showaway took this option based on his evolving distaste for the secular government boarding school and agency. He admonished Catholic Church leaders to "help with all your power my poor Indians who are being persecuted by the government officials." He claimed that the school officials "endeavor to their

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[56] William Bischoff, S.J., *The Jesuits in Old Oregon, 1840-1940* (Caldwell, ID: Caxton Printers, 1945), 208-209.

[57] Robert Carriker, ed., *The Pacific Northwest Tribes Missions Collection of the Oregon Province Archives of the Society of Jesus* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1987), Reel 27, St. Andrew's Mission Indian School Correspondence to *Indian Sentinel*, 2 (October 1920), 7-12.

[58] David Wallace Adams, *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1995), 63-64.

utmost to make them [Indian students] slaves of the devil by the forfeiture of their souls. Thus they spare the body but kill the soul."[59] For those like Showaway who were motivated by religious associations, the opening of the Catholic school (which actually received federal and state subsidies after 1893) gave skeptical Indian parents an alternative school option.[60] When the St. Andrew's school first opened, only 15 students enrolled. One year later, enrollment increased to 90 students. At several points during the following decades, the Catholic school's attendance was actually higher than at the Umatilla government school.[61] These students, though still exposed to a colonial form of education, were spared from the government school that their parents believed was a subversive secular institution. It must be noted that the parents choosing to send their children to either school still were operating within the federal mandate of compulsory Indian education. Not all parents, however, respected this mandate as agents or even other tribal members hoped they would.[62]

For a variety of reasons, many parents either kept their children from school for an extended period or prevented the students from attending at all. Those parents who, on principle, "were opposed to the education of their children" and kept them from school appear to be in the minority.[63] The school superintendent complained in 1891 that "of the

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[59] Ibid., 1-2.

[60] Ibid., 23; Bischoff, *Jesuits in Old Oregon*, 209.

[61] Robert Carriker, ed., *The Pacific Northwest Tribes Missions Collection of the Oregon Province Archives of the Society of Jesus* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1987), Reel 27, St. Andrew's Mission Indian School Correspondence to *Indian Sentinel* 2 (October 1920), 18, 20.

[62] The so-called Browning Ruling of 1896 put an end to this practice. Commissioner of Indian Affairs Daniel Browning decreed that Indian parents would no longer have the freedom to select where their children would go to school.

[63] John Crawford to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 22 September 1893, *ARCIA*, 274.

number withdrawn [from school], 6 were taken away by parents dissatisfied with the school, 5 of these belonged to one family." Parents, like White Eagle, "object to our requiring their children to assist in doing the usual kitchen, laundry, and other work of the school."[64] Taking this stand became less tenable as school and agency officials, in the capacity of truancy officers, assumed the authority to track these children down and force them to go to school. Agent John Crawford reported in 1893 that the Indian children often "have to be hunted down like coyotes to get them into school."[65] These seizures occurred up to at least 1905 but remained a rare occurrence. A more common situation involved families keeping their children for extended periods of time but then eventually sending them to school. Concerned parents could avoid agency backlash when retaining their children, as legitimate reasons for retention were easily located. In nine of the twenty years between 1890 and 1910, contagious diseases like measles, mumps, and influenza broke out in the schools, allowing parents to pull their children out of the contaminated area.[66] Also, families participating in the seasonal round, which at this point could include hop picking or beet harvesting in addition to game hunting in the mountains, needed their children to contribute to the work. This tradition of students arriving after the fall food duties causing the school's late start continued through the 1900s. Though agents believed that "parents ought to be prohibited from taking children from school," they understood that they had little choice but to acquiesce to this custom.[67]

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[64] George Deffenbaugh to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 5 August 1891, *ARCIA*, 381.

[65] John Crawford to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 22 September 1893, *ARCIA*, 274.

[66] Mollie V. Gaither to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 23 September 1896, *ARCIA*, 279; Mollie V. Gaither to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 23 July 1898, *ARCIA*, 263; John McKoin Report, 18 August 1905, *ARCIA*, 328.

[67] George Deffenbaugh to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 5 August 1891, *ARCIA*, 381.

In these instances of overt resistance or justifiable evasion, many *Natiitayt* families asserted their disapproval of some or all aspects of the colonial education system. They hoped to keep their kinship networks intact in the face of institutional programs working to remake their children into individuals independent of their native families.

Equally as active as Indian parents in resisting or manipulating the school program were the students themselves. Before the establishment of the reservation boarding school and the maturation of the school administration's truancy policy, children could leave school and reunite with their families with relatively little interference. The construction of the new boarding school and concomitant calls for compulsory education made attendance mandatory and enforceable. For a variety of reasons – avoiding disease outbreaks, wishing to participate in cultural practices with family, intense dislike of instructors and administrators – many students in the 1890s and 1900s broke out of school and fled. School officials reported "runaways" in superintendent and agent correspondence for six years between 1891 and 1906.[68] In an extreme case of students running away from school, Agent Charles Wilkins reported four girls who absconded all the way to the Yakima Reservation in central Washington in 1903. The "runaway girls," likely trying to catch up with their families working in the

[68] George Deffenbaugh to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 5 August 1891, *ARCIA*, 381; George Deffenbaugh to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 8 September 1892, ARCIA, 421; George Deffenbaugh to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 26 July 1893, ARCIA, 276; Mollie V. Gaither to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 15 July 1894, ARCIA, 269; Charles Wilkins to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 29 August 1901, ARCIA, 352; Charles Wilkins to Jay Lynch, 14 April 1903, , Letters Sent to Other Parties 1889-1911, Box 1, NARA; Oliver Edwards to Samuel Jackson, 19 December 1906, , Letters Sent to Other Parties 1889-1911, Box 1, NARA.

Yakima hop fields or gathering near Mount Adams, were "hunted for" by the exasperated agent.[69]

Other students who were dissatisfied with the boarding school engaged in subtle and subversive acts of resistance. Games of chance such as horseracing and stick game were an important aspect of *Natiitayt* culture. Cultural practices like these, what administrators saw as "indigenous vices," were prohibited in the school. Yet a teacher after 1901 admitted, "The little boys at school would gamble to win each other's pie…as with their elders," but failed to halt the games.[70] The same teacher, Gertrude Golden, described some students' ability to play the teachers and administrators off each other, which undermined faculty cohesion and effectiveness. Golden recalled the scene of a sick child, Nat, who was asked by Superintendent Gaither to take his medicine. The boy refused Gaither, who said "Why Nat…you ah my boy, aren't you?" Then "The lad turned his face away. 'No,' he answered, 'I'm not your boy. I'm Miss Golden's boy.'"[71] Nat's move caused Gaither to distrust Golden, which made both of their jobs more difficult. Students' selective loyalties, real or manufactured, resulted in a noticeable friction that destabilized the staff's ability to work together. Some sick students left school and returned to their families to seek the healing medicine of the still practicing *tewats*.[72] Finally, in an unconfirmed, though still reported act of resistance, a teacher mentioned

[69] Charles Wilkins to Jay Lynch, 14 April 1903, Letters Sent to Other Parties 1889-1911, Box 1, NARA. I note this as an "extreme" case because the Yakima Valley is over 150 miles from Pendleton.

[70] Ron Pond and Daniel Hester, *Wiyaxayxt As Days Go By Wiyaakaa?awn: Our History, Our Land, and Our People, The Cayuse, Umatilla, and Walla Walla*, ed. Jennifer Karson (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2006), 30-31; Golden, *Red Moon Called Me*, 36.

[71] Ibid., 22.

[72] Ibid., 42.

that the school's "big, well-constructed barn burned to the ground…most likely set on fire by some of the boys."[73] These diverse responses to the enveloping boarding school program display a growing sense of agency among the students. Not all reactions led to resistance, however; many students and families endeavored to make the best of colonial education for the benefit of tribal prosperity and cultural identity.

Cultural parallels found within the school program and curriculum encouraged some families and students to support and actively participate in Indian education. Parents sending their children to the Catholic mission school understood that the St. Andrew's priests performed mass in both English and in Nez Perce.[74] To a family concerned about their children being misunderstood by their teachers, knowing that an official in the Catholic school spoke the Nez Perce language was appealing.[75] At both St. Andrew's and the government school, the Christmas holiday provided a chance for Indian parents to see their children. The Catholic priest at St. Andrew's reported in 1909 that "several Indians camped here for the whole week" from before Christmas day to the New Year's holiday.[76] Here, Indian parents watched their sons and daughters perform a holiday performance and then "gave a dinner and invited their non Catholic friends" to

[73] Ibid., 55.

[74] Robert Carriker, ed., *The Pacific Northwest Tribes Missions Collection of the Oregon Province Archives of the Society of Jesus* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1987), Reel 27, St. Andrew's Mission Indian School Correspondence to *Indian Sentinel* 2 (October 1920), 52, 57, 87, 130.

[75] Though language outreach was attractive enough for some parents to support sending their children to St. Andrews, other aspects of the Catholic teacher and administrators' approaches were less appealing, especially discipline. Oral histories claim that one student was actually detained outside "during the winter because she refused to give up her language." It is unclear, however, if this incident occurred after 1910. From Donald Sampson, *As Days Go By*, 249.

[76] Ibid., 235-237.

attend the celebration.[77] Parents whose children attended the government school witnessed Cayuse headman and prominent Presbyterian, Parsons "Motanic, dressed as Santa Claus, distributed the presents…to the children."[78] The timing of these school year gatherings fit well with the seasonal round under which the tribes operated. For over a century, the tribes and bands had assembled in the middle of winter for solstice celebrations, and the school schedule allowed for a modified version of this event to still occur.

While in school, the boys could engage in physical activities and sports like football, and later baseball.[79] Through the experience of participating in American sports, boys reconnected with *Natiitayt* traditions of physical contact competitions. In these contests, the boys could reproduce the "earnest demonstrations of personal power" and "absolute strength and stamina" that their recent ancestors had displayed in military and hunting engagements.[80] This connection is apparent in the Cayuse-Nez Perce Sketchbook, a "Signal" brand notebook found in a home owned by Captain Sumkin. In the notebook are several hand drawings illustrated by what anthropologist Theodore Stern presumed to be a native youth of school age at Umatilla. Sketched within pages of each other are images of period football teams from schools like Yale and La Grande High School and scenes of mounted Indian warriors wielding weapons against soldiers.

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[77] Ibid., 226-227.

[78] Golden, *Red Moon Called Me*, 44.

[79] Charles Wilkins to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 29 August 1901, ARCIA, 358.

[80] Roberta Conner and William Lang, *As Days Go By*, 29-30; Theodore Stern, "Cayuse, Walla Walla, Umatilla," *Handbook of the North American Indians*, vol. 12, Plateau, rev. ed (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1998), 405; Similar observations of Indian cultural relations to sports appear in Frank Salamone, *The Native American Identity in Sports: Creating and Preserving a Culture* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, Inc, 2013).

In this illustrator's mind, conceptions of the physical contact sport of football were conflated with notions of native warfare, skill, and physical contest.[81] While it is unclear whether this sports enthusiast drew these sketches at school, many boys at school who played sports gained a sense of joy and pride in this activity. For many boys, participation continued after of their school days as they began to play, with striking success, on a competitive traveling baseball team in the 1900s.[82] Due to sports, language, and school schedule, families and students who tacitly supported the boarding school program made the most of the familiar cultural connections offered by these assimilative institutions.

In some circles, tribal leaders and students themselves stressed the potential benefits of off-reservation boarding school education. In an authoritative speech on the reservation, Cayuse spokesman Joseph Craig advocated education at Umatilla, asserting that the Indians "recognize, slowly perhaps, that their old methods of life must be abandoned" to ensure "that their future is secured."[83] Craig promoted not the assimilation of his people into the dominant society, but the educational advancement of the younger generation of tribal members. He, like other education supporters such as Cayuse leader Young Chief, expressed the benefits of Indian education to the tribes. He claimed that this education would allow his people to better advocate for themselves when working within the unrelenting colonial system of bureaucracy, ward status, and land control.

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[81] Theodore Stern, Martin Schmitt, and Alphonse Halfmoon, "A Cayuse-Nez Perce Sketchbook," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 81 (Winter 1980): 344, 349-351.

[82] "Pendleton Against Dayton," *East Oregonian*, 7 May 1902; "Pendleton Vs. Everett," *East Oregonian*, 10 May 1902; "Invincibles Won," *East Oregonian*, 6 April 1903.

[83] Richard Lindstrom, "'Not From the Land but from the Flag Side': Native American Responses to the Wanamaker Expedition of 1913," *Journal of Social History* 30 (Autumn 1996): 221-222.

To Craig, the development of such capabilities began in the Umatilla school but needed the specialized training of the off-reservation boarding schools. Off-reservation schooling began with the first generation of Umatilla children attending the Forest Grove and Chemawa Schools through the 1880s. This began a multi-generational tradition of Umatilla parents sending their children to off-reservation schools that was reinforced within families. The school superintendent acknowledged the influence that former students had on their siblings: "the pupils themselves persuade many of their little brothers and sisters to come" to school.[84] With the off-reservation school tradition established, Agent Lee Moorhouse then highlighted the Indians' interest in other prominent institutions. He reported in 1891 that "several young men (full bloods) residing on this reservation, having learned of the excellent educational facilities of the Carlisle Training Institute, are very anxious to take a course of studies in the same."[85] This interest became a reality as dozens of Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla youths eventually attended Carlisle before it closed in 1918. Students from Umatilla also attended both the Haskell Institute in Lawrence, Kansas, and Hampton Institute in Hampton Roads, Virginia. Since enrollment in off-reservation schools was not mandatory, parents and guardians could send their children voluntarily. This is not to say that some students did not get homesick or run away, but many appreciated their time at school.[86] Tribal member Sam Sturgis, who attended Haskell in 1906, proudly reported to the Umatilla agent of his "good improvement in the grades" he received there. The agent

[84] Mollie V. Gaither to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 30 July 1900, *ARCIA*, 365.

[85] Lee Moorhouse to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 9 March 1891, Letters Sent to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs 1880-1912, Box 3- 1889-1896, NARA. Parentheses in document text.

[86] Brenda Child, *Boarding School Seasons: American Indian Families, 1900-1940* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 15, 46-47.

applauded Sturgis as a "pupil who is ambitious to obtain an education." While away at school, however, Sturgis and several other Umatilla students continued to check in on the welfare of their families and the status of their allotment holdings.[87] Sturgis, like Jennie Peo, embraced the boarding school education but kept the interests of family and tribe central to the purposes of his education.

The Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla Indians reacted to the expanding assimilative education project in myriad ways at the turn of the century. As boarding school operations became well-established and routinized during this period, tribal leadership found itself with less ability to influence school curriculum or faculty selections. Parental responses to this shift ranged from keeping children from school to incorporating aspects of the school program and schedule into *Natiitayt* lifeways. Students themselves displayed agency through resistance measures of evasion, disruption, and manipulation or by adapting to what they saw were the most beneficial aspects to boarding school education. Reformers, missionaries, Congress, and the Indian Office had hoped that assimilation education would break down conceptions of tribalism and inculcate values of independence, citizenship, and individualism. However, after decades of exposure to this colonial program, the sense of tribal community remained intact. Those in the Joseph Craig and Young Chief camps supported Indian education for tribal purposes. They felt that if Indian children received an American education, their generation could effectively confront government and settler designs for their homelands and peoples. Be it through overt resistance or accommodation, the Cayuse, Walla Walla,

[87] Oliver Edwards to Sam Sturgis, 2 March1906, Letters Sent to Other Parties 1889-1911, Box 1, NARA; Oliver Edwards to Sam Sturgis, 8 March 1906, Letters Sent to Other Parties 1889-1911, Box 1, NARA.

and Umatilla tribes approached colonial education with the maintenance of tribal identity at the forefront of their minds.

Religion: Suppression and Resurgence

In the 1890s and 1900s, the federal government strengthened its hold on indigenous spiritual traditions nationally while supporting the expansion of Protestant and Catholic Christianity on Indian reservations. The Indian Office handed down reinforced guidelines for suppressing "heathenish" customs that the Umatilla reservation Court of Indian Offenses was charged to carry out. The federal government provided financial support for the St. Andrews Catholic mission and allowed religious instruction in the government school. However, as the federal government introduced these assimilationist policies, many Indians began to reassert their desire to engage in cultural and spiritual celebrations. Several developments on the reservation precipitated this robust renaissance of indigenous spiritual practice, cultural performance, and religious pluralism. Arrivals of Columbia River Indians to the reservation reintroduced an unrestrained practice of traditions, including various dances and the Dreamer religion. Tribal members wanting to practice dances in public reached out to the American sense of patriotism and held their celebrations on the Fourth of July. Unsanctioned spiritual practices and violent expressions of culture, however, tested the state's willingness to actively regulate Native American religious activity. This messy, improvised process resulted in cultural and political compromises that broadened the space for spiritual expression.

Motivated by a heightened concern to suppress indigenous customs, family structures, and spiritual practices, the Indian Office handed down a reinforced code of

Indian Offenses. The Indian Office introduced these laws amidst the heightened political tensions emanating from the 1890 Wounded Knee massacre in South Dakota. In this incident, US authorities were put on alert by the "disturbing" activities of the Lakota Ghost Dance, a millenarian movement led by the Paiute prophet Wovoka. When the US Army was called on to stop this suspicious dancing that local Whites believed would lead to an uprising, hundreds of Lakota Sioux were killed.[88] In the Indian Office, Commissioner of Indian Affairs Thomas Jefferson Morgan intended to avoid further bloodshed like that at Wounded Knee, which he believed was a result of unrestricted pagan dancing. A year and a half later, Morgan announced his refined plan for Indian Offenses. Building on the existing and loosely codified list of punishable offenses by Indian Courts, Morgan added specific sentences for each crime.[89] He targeted "Dances, etc.," "Plural or polygamous marriages," and "Practices of medicine men," among other "immoral" activities.[90] This fortified code established sentences of fines, jail time, hard labor, and withheld rations. The code also allowed Indian judges to create community-specific sentences themselves, in consultation with the reservation agent.[91]

At Umatilla, the Indian Court's promotion of assimilationist sentencing caused tensions within the reservation community. On the surface, it would appear that the court judges were simply tools of agent's designs for Indian Offenses. Indeed, Agent Crawford took pride in his report that "By exercising great care in the selection of judges and

[88] For more on this event, see Jeffrey Ostler, *The Plains Sioux and U.S. Colonialism from Lewis and Clark to Wounded Knee* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

[89] Prucha, *The Great Father,* Vol. II, 647-648.

[90] Thomas Jefferson Morgan to Department of Interior, 27 August 1892, *ARCIA*, 28-29.

[91] Hagan, *Indian Police and Judges*, 120-121.

careful supervision over their actions, I have succeeded in making the Indian court here a grand success."[92] This indicates a retention of agent and by extension, Indian Office authority, which was certainly present to a certain extent in court protocol. However, court operations were not completely under the control of the agent. Tribal judges like James Kash Kash and Robinson Minthorn (cousin of the then retired Philip Minthorn) and the Indian police endeavored to make this institution their own. In the1890s, Indian judges added cutting the hair of male offenders to the list of sentences. As at the boarding school, the cutting of an Indian defendant's hair served as a measure of assimilation. For those under the scissors, this was perceived as a corporeal affront to a sacred extension of their indigenous body.[93] An 1897 *East Oregonian* article described the Indian reaction to this practice: "when his hair is abbreviated he is in disgrace until it again grows."[94] Despite protests, the judges continued applying this sentence until Cayuse Jack Weet Soot hired a lawyer to contest this "most villainous" sentence. In federal circuit court in 1897, Judge Fee handed down a decision determining that since Jack was an allotment holder and thus a citizen, he and other citizen-Indians could not be subject to the hair-cutting sentence.[95] Though hair cutting would still be an available punishment for non-citizen Indians, this ruling struck a blow to the legitimacy of the sentence and was

[92] John Crawford to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 22 September 1893, ARCIA, 274.

[93] Parsons, *An Illustrated History of Umatilla County*, 226-227.

[94] "The Indians Are Citizens," *East Oregonian*, 9 February 1897, Historical Edition; The literature analyzing the practice of hair cutting is substantial. Sources include Jon Reyher and Jeanne Eder, *American Indian Education: A History* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2004); David Wallace Adams, *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1995); Michael Coleman, *American Indian Children at School, 1850-1930* (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 1993).

[95] "The Indians Are Citizens," *East Oregonian*, 9 February 1897, Historical Edition.

discontinued at Umatilla. Instead, the Court of Indian Offenses, as well as the state and federal district courts, took up cases concerning medicine men and dances.

Cultural practices involving controversial medicine men became targets for further scrutiny due to a murder case involving a *tewat* in 1900. Reservation and off-reservation *tewats* had continued to offer services for the sick and perform medicine dances and lead ceremonies like the Winter Spirit Dance. Despite the outlawing of these practices in 1892, male and female *tewats* made themselves available to families for healing. The *Natiitayt* understood that these shamans possessed powerful medicine that could be used for evil and the patient seeking those services were taking a risk on the *tewat's* intentions.[96] In the summer of 1900, reservation resident Toy Toy sought out a supposed *tewat* named Anna Edna to help heal his ill father. Edna consented, but her medicine failed to cure his father, who soon passed away. Toy Toy considered the death a result of Edna's "sorcery" and "witchcraft" and demanded that she be killed.[97] In a conversation with his associate Columbia George, George agreed to dispatch her using poison. When George arrived at Edna's home, he gave her the poison concealed in a bottle, and then rode away after she had consumed the solution that killed her soon thereafter.[98] Soon the authorities caught up to George and Toy Toy, arrested them, and held them in Umatilla County jail awaiting trial.

[96] Theodore Stern, "Cayuse, Walla Walla, Umatilla," *Handbook of the North American Indians*, vol. 12, "Plateau," rev. ed (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1998), 411-412.

[97] "Poisoned a "Witch": Two Umatilla Indians on Trial for Murder," *Morning Oregonian*, 22 November 1901. Toy Toy's name has also been spelled Tauitau and Towatoy.

[98] "Toy Toy on Stand: Blames Murder of 'Witch' on Columbia George," *Morning Oregonian*, 23 November 1901.

The murder trial proceeded swiftly, and a capital sentence was handed down, to be carried out by December of that year. However, in an appeal, the defendant's three Pendleton attorneys had the case transferred to a federal district court in Portland. Here, the testimony of the Indian defendants became relevant. George admitted that in killing her "he was just doing his duty in the matter and did not realize that he was committing any crime." Officials cross-examined agent Wilkins who agreed that the Indians believed "in witchcraft, and their right to kill doctors and sorcerers."[99] Such ethnographic evidence did play a role in the jury's decision to confer a sentence of life in prison rather than hanging, as had been the case in Umatilla County. Still, the US court gave little credence to the indigenous justifications for the action and judged the murderer based on the dominant society's social values. Privileging the federal court's interpretation is a clear case of what historian Lisa Ford calls "settler sovereignty," or the "legal obliteration of indigenous customary law." [100] A half century after the hanging of Marcus Whitman's murders known as the "Cayuse Five," the *Natiitayt* were still subject to the "courts of the conquerors." While it is difficult to justify murder in any society, the Indian defendants' assertion of what they believed was an indigenous right to dispose of an evil presence was curtailed in this instance. For cases not involving major crimes like murder, the Indian Court retained and asserted their jurisdictional authority to try civil cases regarding medicine men and "heathenish" dancing.

Cases concerning outlawed Indian dances became increasingly complex as dancers and law enforcement vied for control within the same reservation space. The

[99] Ibid.

[100] Lisa Ford, *Settler Sovereignty: Jurisdiction and Indigenous People in America and Australia, 1788-1836* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), 1-4.

judges, who were often joined on the bench by the chief of police, intended to suppress Indian dances according to the Indian Commissioner's law and buttress assimilation measures. But leaders like Walla Walla No Shirt and Cayuse Young Chief intended to continue practicing ceremonial dances with family members and fellow tribesmen. In fact, their desire to engage in the dances may have been encouraged by the recent arrival of Columbia River Indians seeking allotments on the reservation. Since the 1860s, these off-reservation "renegade" Indians had avoided agency supervision altogether, which allowed them to practice the *washat*, dances, and Smohalla's Dreamer religion without restriction.[101] A surge of Columbia River Indians, particularly those of Walla Walla descent, petitioned for allotments, many of which were supported by Homily before his death in 1891 and then approved by No Shirt and other leaders.[102] Their arrival surely revived reservation Indians' wish to engage in the dances, as indicated by the agent's observation. Agent Crawford noted the presence of "remnants of the old Smohalla, the originators of the ghost dances" among the resurgent adherents.[103] With this development, the agent and Indian Court faced an increase in infractions and subsequent resistance, like that of No Shirt's dance rebellion.

[101] A thorough treatment of the Columbia River Indians' evasion from federal authority is offered in Andrew Fisher, *Shadow Tribe: The Making of Columbia River Indian Identity* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2010).

[102] John Crawford to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1 January 1892, Letters Sent to the CIA 1889-1896, Box 3, NARA.

[103] Ibid.

In February of 1895, No Shirt hosted what was most likely a medicine dance with twenty other participants at his home that lasted "all night."[104] To suppress this activity, the agent dispatched the Indian police, who rounded up and arrested all of the dancers and took them to the agency. During their hearing with the Indian judge, a brawl broke out between the police and the accused dancers. Before the fighting escalated into something worse, "quiet was restored by the head men, and all were permitted to go home," except for the two responsible for initiating the brawl.[105] In a move of compromise, No Shirt assured the "agent he would have the dancing stopped rather than have trouble," but emphatically declared, "it was not the ghost dance and the participants were not armed."[106] This event gained much attention from both the Indian and settler communities, and unsanctioned dances did subside for a while. However, less than a decade later, whites reported that they "saw the reservation Indians engaging in a war dance" down along the Umatilla River near the village of Cayuse.[107] Though these holdouts practiced their ceremonial dances away from the disapproving gaze of the agency, not all dancers accepted their traditions being relegated to the sidelines. Those who wanted to continue the dances and indigenous celebrations in an open environment struck a compromise with the agent that incorporated aspects of the Americans' heritage.

To publically engage in their dances, ceremonies, and gatherings, the tribes scheduled a summer celebration according to the US Fourth of July holiday. From their

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[104] According to Ron Pond and Daniel Hester in *As Days Go By*, "In the old days, these spirit dances or Medicine Dances, represented a strong tradition and were usually held during the winter months, from December to March."

[105] "Dancing Suppressed on Reservation," *Morning Oregonian*, 18 February 1895.

[106] Ibid.

[107] "Fish Did Not Bite Well," *East Oregonian*, 8 July 1904, Daily Evening Edition.

exposure to lessons of patriotic citizenship in the day and boarding schools, a generation of Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla Indian students had become familiar with the American Independence Day. The tribes' awareness of this commemoration was formalized in their participation in Pendleton's July 4 celebration in 1890. Here, a government inspector observed the Indians' "all dressed" up with the performance of "a war dance by a number of the head men." He felt this activity "barbarous" and "urged the Agent to discourage it."[108] The Indians then connected the Americans' patriotism to their propensity for celebrations, and tribal leaders petitioned for holding their own celebrations on the reservation ostensibly for the same patriotic reasons.[109] In 1892, "a delegation" of tribal leaders approached agent Crawford about "having a fourth of July celebration," to which he reluctantly agreed. He declared the festivities would be short, and there "would not be any war dances, capsawalla dances, spirit or ghost dances." The headmen agreed, though they unenthusiastically responded, "there would not be any fun in that kind of a celebration."[110]

Records describing this initial affair are sparse, but the Fourth of July celebration, or the "Festival of the Buck Moon," became a tradition at Umatilla. Through this decade and the next, the tribes more confidently inserted indigenous customs and spiritual ceremonies into the event's proceedings and extended the gathering to a full two

[108] Steven Grafe, *Peoples of the Plateau: The Indian Photographs of Lee Moorhouse, 1898-1915* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2005), 90.

[109] The Indians scheduling their officially outlawed celebrations and dances according to the American holiday calendar occurred in several places in Indian Country. According to John Troutman, *Indian Blues: American Indians and the Politics of Music, 1879-1934* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2009), this may have actually begun with the reservation Lakotas in the late 1880s.

[110] John Crawford to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 22 June 1892, Letters Sent to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs 1880-1912, Box 3, NARA.

weeks.[111] Along the Umatilla River a mile west of the agency school, the Indians "gathered for a big powwow" where they were visited by friends and kin from the Nez Perce, Warm Springs, and Colville reservations.[112] Taking a mile from the inch given by the agent, the participants performed several dances in full regalia and sang with a "spiritual quality which seems to well from the very soul of the singer," according to an observer. In their performance of the ritual scalp dance, the tribes adjusted to the lack of combat-acquired scalps by substituting animal furs for human scalps.[113] Though the agent and Indian Office considered the dances and celebrations detrimental to the Indians' "civilization," the ceremony's peaceful nature encouraged the officials to allow them to continue.[114] This tradition, however, proved to be a vexing issue for the Christian element on the reservation.

Many Indians from the Catholic and Presbyterian communities on the reservation participated in the celebration's dances while simultaneously remaining faithful Christians. The Catholic Indians, many of whom were Cayuse, continued to attend mass and offer confession in rather steady numbers.[115] Cayuse leaders Paul Showaway and Captain Sumkin remained notable figures in the Catholic community through this period. At the Tutuilla Presbyterian Church, the Indians' attendance was consistent as well. The Presbyterians at Tutuilla, administered after the Nez Perce pastors by Reverend James

[111] Golden, *Red Moon Called Me*, 32.

[112] Ibid.

[113] Ibid., 34, 37.

[114] Golden, *Red Moon Called Me*, 40.

[115] This trend is consistently supported by Robert Carriker, ed., *The Pacific Northwest Tribes Missions Collection of the Oregon Province Archives of the Society of Jesus* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1987), Reel 27, St. Andrew's Mission Indian School Correspondence to *Indian Sentinel* 2 (October 1920) records.

Cornelison, consisted of many Umatillas from families of those like Parsons Motanic and Amos Pond.[116] When the Fourth of July celebration came around, however, tribal members from both denominations would participate in the dances and singing. The Catholic priest at St. Andrews strongly discouraged participation, fearing a backslide in his Indians' "civilization." He admonished the Indians that the "Bishop exhorted them to abstain from the 4 July celebration."[117] They attended anyway. In this decision they juggled both of their spiritual commitments through the two week event: "During the Sunday which intervened, while the great ceremonies were in progress, most of the aborigines did not forget to 'Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy,' and refrained from the dances."[118]

Presbyterian leaders, along with Reverend Cornelison, reconciled with their congregation's participation by holding revivalist "camp meetings" nearby. The Presbyterians hoped to use this gathering as an opportunity to gain converts, but they also intended to make the church services available during the tribes' celebration of indigenous spirituality and culture.[119] The Indians' ability to move from Christian church rituals to native spiritual practices and back is representative of the tribes' continuously evolving relationship with colonial religion. The priests harangued them to eschew the "pagan" dances, but the Indians' embrace of religious pluralism imbued them with the

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[116] James Cornelison, "Some Results Among the Umatillas," *The Assembly Herald* (February 1908): 69-71.

[117] Robert Carriker, ed., *The Pacific Northwest Tribes Missions Collection of the Oregon Province Archives of the Society of Jesus* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1987), Reel 27, St. Andrew's Mission Indian School Correspondence to *Indian Sentinel* 2 (October 1920), 114.

[118] Charles Sawyer, "Festivities of the Buck Moon on Umatilla Reservation," *The Sunday Oregonian*, 8 July 1900, Part Three.

[119] "Seminary Notes," *Pacific Presbyterian* 33 (August 1907): 11; "Revival Among the Indians," *Pacific Presbyterian* 1 (January 1909): 10-11.

ability and confidence to practice both traditions. Though many converted to Christianity, most would not wholly give up the dances and songs that made them indigenous people.

After living a long life as a successful warrior and dancer, Cayuse Fish Hawk became aware that his temporal demise was soon approaching. While recovering from an alcoholic binge down by the Umatilla River, Fish Hawk had a vision of his deceased sister telling him that he would soon join her in heaven.[120] After relating this story to his friend Motanic, he sent for the Presbyterian minister to inform him of his desire to convert to Christianity. He was concerned about absolving himself of what he described as "crimes," which his Christian associates called "sins"- robbery and murder - to cleanse his spirit and avoid being denied his move on to the afterlife. Historian Bonnie Sue Lewis concludes that Fish Hawk "found in Christianity a viable religious alternative, with parallels to his own cultural values and a solution to his personal crisis."[121] When the Nez Perce minister, Enoch Pond, arrived, Fish Hawk then explained that he was actually not ready to convert just yet. He waited another two years and then sent for the minster again, saying, "Now I want to repent of my sins. I want the Session to take me into the church."[122] On August 1, 1901, Pond showed up with a few other Indian church leaders and conducted his conversion to Christianity. Less than a year later, Fish Hawk passed away.[123] Fish Hawk had lived his life according to indigenous traditions but saw an opportunity to use Christianity's repentance as an assurance that he would be elevated in the afterlife.

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[120] Lessie Cornelison, "The Conversion of Fish Hawk," *Pioneer Trails* 1 (March 1977): 18-19.

[121] Bonnie Sue Lewis, *Creating Christian Indians: Native Clergy in the Presbyterian Church* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2003), 27.

[122] Ibid., 19.

[123] Parsons, *An Illustrated History of Umatilla County*, 223-224.

Christianity and policies that attempted to suppress indigenous spiritual and cultural practices were insistent and pervasive and yet the Umatilla Indians accommodated, resisted, or embraced these religious interventions on their own terms. Fish Hawk converted before his death so he could join his sister in heaven. Some tribal members contested the humiliating punishment of hair cutting while others engaged what they perceived was their ability to extinguish a negative spiritual energy from their community. The tribes asserted their ability to practice their dances in the face of censorious laws by casting their celebrations as patriotic. In this complex space of multiple, seemingly incompatible, Christian and indigenous spiritual institutions, the *Natiitayt* forged a religious tradition that incorporated aspects of both belief systems. This tradition, shaped as much as possible by their own efforts, endured among the Indians of the Umatilla reservation into the twentieth century.

Conclusion

Through the turn of the century, the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla tribes had endured a host of new initiatives designed to further dismantle their homelands and destroy their tribal identity. The tribes employed an array of strategies aimed to control or mitigate these imposing forces of American colonialism. Such programs like allotment in severalty, boarding school education, and laws against Indian Offenses were handed down with the plenary power of Congress and the Indian Office. The Umatilla tribes realized the impracticality of outright refuting the introduction of these federal initiatives and thus adjusted their approach to these impositions. Tribal leaders attempted to slow the allotment process down and affect the Indian Offices' handling of their people's lease

money. Indian parents sought to influence the manner in which school administrators and teachers educated their children in the boarding schools. The tribes actively petitioned for the ability to engage in their traditional dances, even if it meant accommodating the American's sense of patriotism. The tribes, families, and individuals engaged in these acts of adaptive resistance to keep their tribal identities intact and their community together. By 1910, the *Natiitayt* had largely accomplished these goals. The Indians were still working, gathering, healing, dancing, and attending school and church in a distinctly indigenous way. The agency displayed in these decades set a precedence for future Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla interactions with colonialism in the twentieth century.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION: ROUNDING UP

On September 29, 1910, as the Bishop Brothers of the Pendleton Woolen Mills gazed to the east of the city, they observed an imposing cloud of dust rising up off the rolling hills of the Umatilla Valley. As the dust began to clear, they could to see hundreds of Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla Indian families on horseback and travois riding down into Pendleton from the reservation.[1] Led by Cayuse Gilbert Minthorn and Walla Walla Poker Jim, this mass of people was making their way to the first annual Pendleton Round-Up. The delegation paraded past the woolen mills and down the streets of Pendleton in an enthusiastic, colorful procession. Carting lodge poles, canvas, dance regalia, and food, the tribal delegates bypassed the rodeo grounds and began to set up a massive encampment behind the arena.[2] After making camp, food was prepared and served, and soon, dancers and horse racers began readying themselves for the week's Round-Up festivities. In between the rodeo's various races and bucking contests, in the arena *Natiitayt* men and women performed dances in front of crowds of captivated White spectators. They also engaged in "Indian style" bareback horse races, a unique and popular Round-Up event.[3] The Indian presence was key to the allure and authenticity of the city's first "Wild West" exhibition.[4] The tribes' decision to participate in the

[1] Eric Cain and Nadine Jelsing, *Pendleton Round-Up: Wild West Way*, Film, Eric Cain and Nadine Jelsing (2010; Portland: Oregon Public Broadcasting, 2010).

[2] E.N. Boylen, *Episode of the West: The Pendleton Round-Up, 1910-1951, Facts and Figures* (Pendleton, OR: Boylen, 1975), 1; Michael Bales and Ann Terry Hill, *Pendleton Round-UP at 100: Oregon's Legendary Rodeo* (Pendleton: East Oregonian Publishing Co., 2009), 210-211, 53, 54.

[3] Ibid., 49, 59.

[4] Ibid., 17; "Pendleton to Have an Old Time Round-Up," *Daily Capital Journal*, 24 August 1910.

Pendleton Round-Up exemplifies their unwavering determination to approach outside-imposed change on their own terms.

When No Shirt, Umapine, and Amos Pond were approached by Round-Up promoters to join in the rodeo fair, the Umatilla leaders saw an opportunity to assert tribal interests. In council with former agent Lee Moorhouse and Chauncey and Roy Bishop, who acted as community liaisons and event boosters, the tribal delegates actively asserted their terms for participation. They negotiated for "hay, beef, rations, potatoes, and watermelon, as well as plenty of room to camp, a pit for cooking, space for dancing, and room for the hundreds of horses" their people would bring. Moorhouse and the Bishops agreed on the conditions, and the headmen voted unanimously to becoming partners in the Pendleton Round-Up.[5] With this compact secured, the Indians began to insert aspects of their tribal celebrations into the event's proceedings.

The Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla Indians saw their participation and performances at the Round-Up as a chance to publically display their living culture, despite the exoticized and reflective expectations of White audiences. Many Indian men and women had become familiar with American society's fascination with the "passing of the frontier" and the "vanishing Indian" perception over the past two decades.[6] The Indians who engaged in dance performances for non-Indian spectators at Wild West exhibitions were aware of the public's interest in their "exotic" though "disappearing" customs. However, the Umatilla Indians also considered the narrowed social and legal space they had in which to dance, celebrate, and "go back to the Indian days" before

[5] Ibid., 17, 53.

[6] Brian Dippie, *The Vanishing Indian: White Attitudes and U.S. Indian Policy* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1982), 206-207.

Indian Office supervision on the reservation.[7] They realized that the Round-Up offered something different. The *Natiitayt* saw the Round-Up as a dual opportunity to engage in performative traditions and to exert their cultural sovereignty and self-representation.[8] An elder later recalled, "the 1910 Round-Up presented an opportunity to do what we had done countless times in our very long history – camp with relatives and friends, feast, gamble, race horses, parade, sing, and dance."[9] White audiences would see the Indians engage in these activities as living, vibrant peoples with no intention of "vanishing" or giving up their traditions.

Five years after the rodeo's inaugural showing, Cayuse Anna Minthorn Wannassay incorporated an indelible indigenous presence into the Round-Up's Happy Canyon Pageant. Happy Canyon, organized by former Round-Up president Roy Raley, was a "wild and wooley" frontier exhibition show, performed by the local White community after the rodeo's daytime events.[10] Two years after Raley launched the show, he contacted Wannassay about adding a Native American piece to the conquest narrative, cowboy-centered performance. Wannassay was a Carlisle Indian School graduate who chose to move back to Oregon and live with her parents on the Umatilla reservation.[11] She took Raley's offer as an opportunity to double the pageant's "script" by including a section on the three tribes' history and culture before the arrival of Euroamericans. Her

[7] "Big Round-Up On Today," *Morning Oregonian*, 29 September 1910.

[8] L.G. Moses, "Performative Traditions in American Indian History," *A Companion to American Indian History*, Philip Deloria and Neal Salisbury, ed.s (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2002), 195-200.

[9] Bales and Hill, *Pendleton Round-Up at 100*, 17, 45, 53.

[10] Bales and Hill, *Pendleton Round-Up at 100*, 230.

[11] Ibid.

segment included an explanation of *Natiitayt* horsemanship, wedding rituals, and food customs. Raley was persuaded by Wannssay's input, and they inserted this feature into the Happy Canyon pageant.[12] After 1915, audiences were then exposed to a half tribally-produced performance that depicted Indian culture in what she and her descendants considered a more accurate portrayal.[13] Her contemporaries approved of this "script," and Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla families participated in Happy Canyon by the dozens.[14] The Pendleton Round Up and its Happy Canyon pageant, though planned and produced by the nearby settler community, became inexplicably linked to the Indians of the Umatilla reservation for the next 113 years. The tribes asserted themselves in the organizer's designs for the rodeo fair and, in the process, carved out an indigenous space in this local event. An ability and determination to advocate for themselves within a constrained space of independence became the Umatilla Indians' prevailing strategy when confronted with the forces of colonialism. This strategy consisted of adaptive resistance and accommodation that served the need to keep their community and indigenous identity intact up to 1910.

Through the twentieth century, the tribes would build upon these methods and began to assert themselves with more confidence. When paralyzed by debilitating landownership and allotment issues, tribal leaders and delegates in the 1920s and 1930s learned to work within the federal system. They lobbied Oregon senators, congressional representatives, and the Indian Office for relief. In 1939, the tribes successfully petitioned

[12] Michael Bales, "Wannassay Helped Night Show Get It Right," *East Oregonian*, 10 September 2010.

[13] Bales and Hill, *Pendleton Round-Up at 100*, 264.

[14] An actual script of the Native American part of the show does not exist. The Indian players have passed down their roles to their progeny in a tradition that has lasted up to today.

Congress to restore 14,000 acres of unalloted reservation land back to tribal control and to reincorporate the Johnson Creek Restoration Area, located south of the reservation boundaries.[15] In tribal education, parents began to send their children to nearby public schools in the 1910s and 1920s. In 1918, the Umatilla boarding school closed due to low enrollment and was replaced by a day school for a short time afterwards. The St. Andrews Catholic mission operated its school until the 1960s, when it too closed. Fewer and fewer Umatilla youth attended Chemawa Indian School or other off-reservation boarding schools around the country.[16] The native Catholic and Presbyterian congregations continued to meet in steady numbers as did those who practiced the *washat* or engaged in ritual dances. In the mid-twentieth century, the Dreamer or Seven Drums religion experienced a revival that resulted in an increase in adherents and the construction of a community longhouse on the reservation.[17]

In 1935, the Umatilla tribes were presented with the Indian Reorganization Act. This legislation, crafted by Franklin Roosevelt's Commissioner of Indian Affairs, John Collier, allowed Indian reservations to organize tribal governments. The tribes opted out of the opportunity and instead formed their own constitution in 1949 that established a democratic government led by a Board of Trustees and a General Council.[18] As a formally consolidated entity, the council of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla

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[15] Ron Pond and Daniel Hester, *Wiyaxayxt As Days Go By Wiyaakaa?awn: Our History, Our Land, and Our People, The Cayuse, Umatilla, and Walla Walla*, ed. Jennifer Karson (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2006), 110.

[16] Brill Eugene Lee, "Educational History of the United States Government Indian Schools on the Umatilla Indian Reservation, 1855-1926" (MS thesis, Eastern Oregon College, 1966), 91-92, 126-127.

[17] John Tovey Jr. and Friends of the Late Michael Farrow, *As Days Go By*, 196; Donald Sampson, *As Days Go By*, 249.

[18] Ibid., 139, 156-157.

Indian Reservation, as they became known, managed to ward off the 1954 federal termination legislation that had severed the government ties to other Oregon tribes like Klamath and Siltez.[19] The Confederated Tribes actively sought and negotiated for compensation for the damming of the Columbia River that inundated their traditional fishing sites like Celilo Falls in 1957.[20] Through the era of self-determination in Indian Country in the 1970s and 1980s, the Confederated Tribes began contracting with the Indian Office, now known as the Bureau of Indian Affairs, for control of education and housing programs. In addition to the leasing and farming enterprises that continue to operate on the reservation, they have also invested in commercial projects to ensure economic prosperity. These ventures include a golf course, casino, and retail stores.[21] Motivated by *tamanwit*, the Confederated Tribes established a successful Department of Natural Resource Protection that helped reestablish formerly threatened fisheries within their aboriginal territories. To continue the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla tradition of representing their own culture to the non-Indian public, they have also constructed the Tamastslikt Cultural Institute, a tribal museum dedicated to informing the public about *Natiitayt* culture and history.[22]

The Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla tribes' story of survival against the juggernaut forces of colonialism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries contributes to our understanding of native agency and adaptation. The colonial project promoted by American settlers and implemented by the US government intended to

[19] *Kwayni Nata Chana Anakwinata: Comprehensive Plan of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation* (Tribal Development Office, 1995), 14.

[20] Charles Luce and William Johnson, *As Days Go By*, 160-161.

[21] John Tovey Jr. and Friends of the Late Michael Farrow, *As Days Go By*, 194-187, 202-207.

[22] Ibid., 212-214.

dispossess Indian people of their land and marginalize their existence. Within the constricted space of the reservation, government agents, teachers, and missionaries labored to detribalize the Indian wards and assimilate them into the dominant society, thereby making their remaining communally held lands available to White settlement. The federal government implemented this invasive and demoralizing project in hundreds of native communities with varying levels of success. At Umatilla, this desired outcome was never fully achieved.

Though they were subjected to all of the most intrusive tactics and institutions of colonialism – allotment, assimilationist school curriculum, restricted access to food gathering grounds – the tribes made pragmatic, creative adjustments to these impositions. In an 1860s instance of evasion, many families held off sending their children to school due to the agency day school's long distance from their camps. In the 1870s, Cayuse and Walla Walla scouts lived out their well-known but recently restricted warrior tradition by serving with the US Army against the Shoshone Bannocks. In an 1880s case of adaptive resistance, the Presbyterian Indians subtly denounced the Catholic domination of the agency and school by sending their children to Forest Grove. And when the commercial market forced the Indians to supplement their gathering and hunting economy in the 1890s and 1900s, *Natiitayt* women accommodated American nostalgia for the passing frontier by selling handmade baskets for cash. Employing these tactics allowed the Indians to transition to new economic, religious, and educational systems while maintaining cultural practices and native priorities. The collective tribal identity did experience some significant changes as many became wage earners, Christians, and individual landowners, but even these markers of identity were modified according to

tribal perceptions. The tribes made concessions to the overwhelming forces of colonialism but would not submit fully to its power and designs. As a resilient and determined reservation community, the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla people refused to accept complete cultural assimilation. In the face of colonialism, they would remain indigenous.

APPENDIX A

WALLA WALLA TREATY - 1855

TREATY WITH THE WALLAWALLA, CAYUSE, ETC., 1855.

June 9, 1855.
12 Stats., 945.
Ratified Mar. 8, 1859.
Proclaimed Apr. 11, 1859.

Articles of agreement and convention made and concluded at the treaty-ground, Camp Stevens, in the Wall-Walla Valley, this ninth day of June, in the year one thousand eight hundred and fifty-five, by and between Isaac I. Stevens, governor and superintendent of Indian affairs for the Territory of Washington, and Joel Palmer, superintendent of Indian affairs for Oregon Territory, on the part of the United States, and the undersigned chiefs, head-men, and delegates of the Walla-Wallas, Cayuses, and Umatilla tribes, and bands of Indians, occupying lands partly in Washington and partly in Oregon Territories, and who, for the purposes of this treaty, are to be regarded as one nation acting for and in behalf of their respective bands and tribes, they being duly authorized thereto; it being understood that Superintendent I. I. Stevens assumes to treat with that portion of the above-named bands and tribes residing within the Territory of Washington, and Superintendent Palmer with those residing within Oregon.

ARTICLE 1.

The above-named confederated bands of Indians cede to the United States all their right, title, and claim to all and every part of the country claimed by them included in the following boundaries, to wit: Commencing at the mouth of the Tocannon River, in Washington Territory, running thence up said river to its source; thence easterly along the summit of the Blue Mountains, and on the southern boundaries of he purchase made of the Nez Percés Indians, and easterly along that boundary to the western limits of the country claimed by the Shoshonees or Snake Indians; thence southerly along that boundary (being the waters of Powder River) to the source of Powder River, thence to the head-waters of Willow Creek, thence down Willow Creek to the Columbia River, thence up the channel of the Columbia River to the lower end of a large island below the mouth of Umatilla River, thence northerly to a point on the Yakama River, called Tomah-luke, thence to Le Lac, thence to the White Banks on the Columbia below Priests Rapids, thence down the Columbia River to the junction of the Columbia and Snake Rivers, thence up the Snake River to the place of beginning: *Provided, however*, That so much of the country described above as is contained in the following boundaries shall be set apart as a residence for said Indians, which tract for the purposes contemplated shall be held and regarded as an Indian reservation; to wit: Commencing in the middle of the channel

of Umatilla River opposite the mouth of Wild Horse Creek, thence up the middle of the channel of said creek to its source, thence southerly to a point in the Blue Mountains, known as Lees Encampment, thence in a line to the head-waters of Howtome Creek, thence west to the divide between Howtome and Birch Creeks, thence northerly along said divide to a point due west of the southwest corner of William C. McKays land-claim, thence east along hi s line to his southeast corner, thence in a line to the place of beginning; all of which tract shall be set apart and, so far as necessary, surveyed and marked out for their exclusive use; nor shall any white person be permitted to reside upon the same without permission of the agent and superintendent. The said tribes and bands agree to remove to and settle upon the same within one year after the ratification of this treaty, without any additional expense to the Government other than is provided by this treaty, and until the expiration of the time specified, the said bands shall be permitted to occupy and reside upon the tracts now possessed by them, guaranteeing to all citizen[s] of the United States, the right to enter upon and occupy as settlers any lands not actually enclosed by said Indians: *Provided, also,* That the exclusive right of taking fish in the streams running through and bordering said reservation is hereby secured to said Indians, and at all other usual and accustomed stations in common with citizens of the United States, and of erecting suitable buildings for curing the same; the privilege of hunting, gathering roots and berries and pasturing their stock on unclaimed lands in common with citizens, is also secured to them. *And provided, also,* That if any band or bands of Indians, residing in and claiming any portion or portions of the country described in this article, shall not accede to the terms of this treaty, then the bands becoming parties hereunto agree to reserve such part of the several and other payments herein named, as a consideration for the entire country described as aforesaid, as shall be in the proportion that their aggregate number may have to the whole number of Indians residing in and claiming the entire country aforesaid, as consideration and payment in full for the tracts in said country claimed by them. *And provided, also,* That when substantial improvements have been made by any member of the bands being parties to this treaty, who are compelled to abandon them in consequence of said treaty, [they] shall be valued under the direction of the President of the United States, and payment made therefor.

ARTICLE 2.

In consideration of and payment for the country hereby ceded, the United States agree to pay the bands and tribes of Indians claiming territory and residing in said country, and who remove to and reside upon said reservation, the several sums of money following, to wit: eight thousand dollars per annum for the term of five years, commencing on the first day of September, 1856; six thousand dollars per annum for the term of five years next succeeding the first five; four thousand dollars per annum for the term of five years next succeeding the second five, and two thousand dollars per annum for the term of five years next succeeding the third five; all of which several sums of money shall be expended for the use and benefit of the confederated bands herein named, under the direction of the President of the United States, who may from time to time at his discretion, determine what proportion thereof shall be expended for such objects as in his judgment will promote their well-being, and advance them in civilization, for their moral improvement

and education, for buildings, opening and fencing farms, breaking land, purchasing teams, wagons, agricultural implements and seeds, for clothing, provision and tools, for medical purposes, providing mechanics and farmers, and for arms and ammunition.

ARTICLE 3.

In addition to the articles advanced the Indians at the time of signing this treaty, the United States agree to expend the sum of fifty thousand dollars during the first and second years after its ratification, for the erection of buildings on the reservation, fencing and opening farms, for the purchase of teams, farming implements, clothing, and provisions, for medicines and tools, for the payment of employes, and for subsisting the Indians the first year after their removal.

ARTICLE 4.

In addition to the consideration above specified, the United States agree to erect, at suitable points on the reservation, one saw-mill, and one flouring-mill, a building suitable for a hospital, two school-houses, one blacksmith shop, one building for wagon and plough maker and one carpenter and joiner shop, one dwelling for each, two millers, one farmer, one superintendent of farming operations, two school-teachers, one blacksmith, one wagon and plough maker, one carpenter and joiner, to each of which the necessary out-buildings. To purchase and keep in repair for the term of twenty years all necessary mill fixtures and mechanical tools, medicines and hospital stores, books and stationery for schools, and furniture for employés.

The United States further engage to secure and pay for the services and subsistence, for the term of twenty years, [of] one superintendent of farming operations, one farmer, one blacksmith, one wagon and plough maker, one carpenter and joiner, one physician, and two school-teachers.

ARTICLE 5.

The United States further engage to build for the head chiefs of the Walla-Walla, Cayuse, and Umatilla bands each one dwelling-house, and to plough and fence ten acres of land for each, and to pay to each five hundred dollars per annum in cash for the term of twenty years. The first payment to the Walla-Walla chief to commence upon the signing of this treaty. To give to the Walla-Walla chief three yoke of oxen, three yokes and four chains, one wagon, two ploughs, twelve hoes, twelve axes, two shovels, and one saddle and bridle, one set of wagon-harness, and one set of plough-harness, within three months after the signing of this treaty.

To build for the son of Pio-pio-mox-mox one dwelling-house, and plough and fence five acres of land, and to give him a salary for twenty years, one hundred dollars in cash per annum, commencing September first, eighteen hundred and fifty-six.

The improvement named in this section to be completed as soon after the ratification of this treaty as possible.

It is further stipulated that Pio-pio-mox-mox is secured for the term of five years, the right to build and occupy a house at or near the mouth of Yakama River, to be used as a

trading-post in the sale of his bands of wild cattle ranging in that district: *And provided, also*, That in consequence of the immigrant wagon-road from Grand Round to Umatilla, passing through the reservation herein specified, thus leading to turmoils and disputes between Indians and immigrants, and as it is known that a more desirable and practicable route may be had to the south of the present road, that a sum not exceeding ten thousand dollars shall be expended in locating and opening a wagon-road from Powder River or Grand Round, so as to reach the plain at the western base of the Blue Mountain, south of the southern limits of said reservation.

ARTICLE 6.

The President may, from time to time at his discretion cause the whole or such portion as he may think proper, of the tract that may now or hereafter be set apart as a permanent home for those Indians, to be surveyed into lots and assigned to such Indians of the confederated bands as may wish to enjoy the privilege, and locate thereon permanently, to a single person over twenty-one years of age, forty acres, to a family of two persons, sixty acres, to a family of three and not exceeding five, eighty acres; to a family of six persons and not exceeding ten, one hundred and twenty acres; and to each family over ten in number, twenty acres to each additional three members; and the President may provide for such rules and regulations as will secure to the family in case of the death of the head thereof, the possession and enjoyment of such permanent home and improvement thereon; and he may at any time, at his discretion, after such person or family has made location on the land assigned as a permanent home, issue a patent to such person or family for such assigned land, conditioned that the tract shall not be aliened or leased for a longer term than two years, and shall be exempt from levy, sale, or forfeiture, which condition shall continue in force until a State constitution, embracing such land within its limits, shall have been formed and the legislature of the State shall remove the restriction: *Provided, however*, That no State legislature shall remove the restriction herein provided for without the consent of Congress: *And provided, also*, That if any person or family, shall at any time, neglect or refuse to occupy or till a portion of the land assigned and on which they have located, or shall roam from place to place, indicating a desire to abandon his home, the President may if the patent shall have been issued, cancel the assignment, and may also withhold from such pe rson or family their portion of the annuities or other money due them, until they shall have returned to such permanent home, and resumed the pursuits of industry, and in default of their return the tract may be declared abandoned, and thereafter assigned to some other person or family of Indians residing on said reservation: *And provided, also*, That the head chiefs of the three principal bands, to wit, Pio-pio-mox-mox, Weyatenatemany, and Wenap-snoot, shall be secured in a tract of at least one hundred and sixty acres of land.

ARTICLE 7.

The annuities of the Indians shall not be taken to pay the debts of individuals.

ARTICLE 8.

The confederated bands acknowledge their dependence on the Government of the United States and promise to be friendly with all the citizens thereof, and pledge themselves to commit no depredation on the property of such citizens, and should any one or more of the Indians violate this pledge, and the fact be satisfactorily proven before the agent, the property taken shall be returned, or in default thereof, or if injured or destroyed, compensation may be made by the Government out of their annuities; nor will they make war on any other tribe of Indians except in self-defense, but submit all matter of difference between them and other Indians, to the Government of the United States or its agents for decision, and abide thereby; and if any of the said Indians commit any depredations on other Indians, the same rule shall prevail as that prescribed in the article in case of depredations against citizens. Said Indians further engage to submit to and observe all laws, rules, and regulations which may be prescribed by the United States for the government of said Indians.

ARTICLE 9.

In order to prevent the evils of intemperance among said Indians, it is hereby provided that if any one of them shall drink liquor, or procure it for others to drink, [such one] may have his or her proportion of the annuities withheld from him or her for such time as the President may determine.

ARTICLE 10.

The said confederated bands agree that, whenever in the opinion of the President of the United States the public interest may require it, *that* all roads highways and railroads shall have the right of way through the reservation herein designated or which may at any time hereafter be set apart as a reservation for said Indians.

ARTICLE 11.

This treaty shall be obligatory on the contracting parties as soon as the same shall be ratified by the President and Senate of the United States.

In testimony whereof, the said I. I. Stevens and Joel Palmer, on the part of the United States, and the undersigned chiefs, headmen, and delegates of the said confederated bands, have hereunto set their hands and seals, this ninth day of June, eighteen hundred and fifty-five.
Isaac I. Stevens, [L. S.]
Governor and Superintendent Washington Territory.
Joel Palmer, [L. S.]
Superintendent Indian Affairs, O. T.
Pio-pio-mox-mox, his x mark, head chief of Walla-Wallas. [L. S.]
Meani-teat or Pierre, his x mark. [L. S.]
Weyatenatemany, his x mark, head chief of Cayuses. [L. S.]
Wenap-snoot, his x mark, head chief of Umatilla. [L. S.]
Kamaspello, his x mark. [L. S.]

Steachus, his x mark. [L. S.]
Howlish-wampo, his x mark. [L. S.]
Five Crows, his x mark. [L. S.]
Stocheania, his x mark. [L. S.]
Mu-howlish, his x mark. [L. S.]
Lin-tin-met-cheania, his x mark. [L. S.]
Petamyo-mox-mox, his x mark. [L. S.]
Watash-te-waty, his x mark. [L. S.]
She-yam-na-kon, his x mark. [L. S.]
Qua-chim, his x mark. [L. S.]
Te-walca-temany, his x mark. [L. S.]
Keantoan, his x mark. [L. S.]
U-wait-quaick, his x mark. [L. S.]
Tilch-a-waix, his x mark. [L. S.]
La-ta-chin, his x mark. [L. S.]
Kacho-rolich, his x mark. [L. S.]
Kanocey, his x mark. [L. S.]
Som-na-howlish, his x mark. [L. S.]
Ta-we-way, his x mark. [L. S.]
Ha-hats-me-cheat-pus, his x mark. [L. S.]
Pe-na-cheanit, his x mark. [L. S.]
Ha-yo-ma-kin, his x mark. [L. S.]
Ya-ca-lox, his x mark. [L. S.]
Na-kas, his x mark. [L. S.]
Stop-cha-yeou, his x mark. [L. S.]
He-yeau-she-keaut, his x mark. [L. S.]
Sha-wa-way, his x mark. [L. S.]
Tam-cha-key, his x mark. [L. S.]
Te-na-we-na-cha, his x mark. [L. S.]
Johnson, his x mark. [L. S.]
Whe-la-chey, his x mark. [L. S.]
Signed in the presence of—
James Doty, secretary treaties.
Wm. C. McKay, secretary treaties.
C. Chirouse, O. M. I.
A. D. Pamburn, interpreter.
John Whitford, his x mark, interpreter.
Mathew Dofa, his x mark, interpreter.
William Craig, interpreter.
James Coxey, his x mark, interpreter.
Patrick McKenzie, interpreter.
Arch. Gracie, jr., brevet second lieutenant, Fourth Infantry.
R. R. Thompson, Indian agent.
R. B. Metcalfe, Indian sub-agent.

Source: Charles Kappler, ed. *Indian Affairs. Laws and Treaties Vol. II (Treaties)* (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1904), 694-698.

APPENDIX B

COMMISSIONER FELIX BRUNOT COUNCIL WITH UMATILLA LEADERS – 1871

Report on Umatilla Reservation

The council was continued from day to day until the afternoon of the 12th, when it was finally adjourned. The proceedings were conducted by the commission in accordance with the letter of instruction form you department, and the spirit of the resolution of Congress. They fairly and fully presented to the Indians the grounds upon which their removal was deemed expedient, suggested other districts of country which might be secured to them, should they consent to remove; and made a proposition, deemed to be the most favorable, likely to meet with Government approval. Ample time was given to the business, so that the conclusions reached should be deliberate and final. The Indians evinced a full and perfect understanding of the subject; and with entire unanimity expressed their determination not to sell their lands at any price, or to consent, upon any terms, to leave the reservation, which the Government had by the treaty marked out for their occupation.

Howlish-Wam-po, the Cayuse chief, a Catholic Indian, in dress, personal appearance, and bearing, superior to the average American farmer, said: "You talked with a good heart when you told me that you believed in God. I thought that was good; that is my heart too, while I stand upon this ground." And after enumerating the promises of Governor Stevens and the treaty unfulfilled, he said in regard to the proposition of the commissioners:

"What you have spoken this people have heard; all understand what you have said. You came here to ascertain what is our mind. This reservation is marked out for us. We see it with our eyes, and our hearts, we all hold it with our bodies and with our souls. Right out here are my father and mother, and brothers and sisters, and children, all buried; I am guarding their graves. My friend, this reservation, this small piece of land, we look upon it as our mother, as if she were raising us. You come to ask me for my land. It is like as if we, who are Indians, were to be sent away and get lost. I look upon all sides. On the outside of the reservation I see your houses, they have windows, they are good. You are bringing up your children well. What is the reason you white men who live near the reservation like my land and want to get it? You must not think so. My friends, you must not talk too strong about getting my land. I like my land, and will not let it go. You have been asking my heart about the reservation. This is my heart."

Hom-li (chief of the Walla-Wallas) said: "We have looked upon you for six days with our hearts. The heart is as it were difficult to arrange, and I have tried all the reservation in my heart, and it cannot be loosened. It is dear as our bodies to us. My friends, you see your children growing outside the reservation. They are growing well, and I think they ought to grow out there, just where they are. My cattle and stock are running on this reservation, and they need it all. Some good white men look at us, and see our land, and they say this is right; they need that country for their stock. I see it is not the white man who has helped me; I have made all the improvements on my own land myself; I speak to you, my friends, with a good heart; with love. I hope the President, though he is a long

way off, will look at my heart just as if I had been speaking; I want you to present my heart to the President.

Wenap-Snoot (chief of the Umatillas) said: "Our red people were brought up here and some one had to teach them as they grew. Those who were taught grew up well; I believe the man who understands and follows the way he is taught grows up well. I learned from the way in which I was brought up, and I am going to have my children taught more and they will grow up better than I am. When my father and mother died I was left here. They gave me rules, and gave me their lands to live upon. They left me to take care of them after they were buried. I was to watch over their graves. I do not wish to part with my land. I have felt tired working on my land, so tired that the sweat dropped off me on the ground. Where is all that Governor Stevens and General Palmer said? I am very fond of this land that is marked out for me, and the rest of the Indians have no more room for their stock than they need, and I do not know where I'd put them if I had to confine myself to a small piece of ground; should I take only a small piece of ground, and a white man sit down beside me, I fear there would be trouble all the time."

Pierre, one of the younger chiefs, said: "I am going to make a short speech. I have only one heart, one tongue, although you say, 'Go to another country.' My heart is not that way. I do not wish for any money for my land; I am here, and here is where I am going to be. I think all these young men's hearts are like mine; I think a great deal, and have but little to say. What I have said and will go on paper to Washington. They will think over what we Indians have said; this is all I have to say. I will not part with lands, and if you come again, I will say the same thing, I will not part my lands."

Wal-che-te-ma-ne, said "Listen to me, you white chiefs, you are my friends, and you (to Rev. Father Vermeerch) are the one who straightens out my heart. My father and mother and children have died; I am getting old now, and I want to die where my father and mother and children have died; I do not wish to leave this land and go off to some other land. I see the church there, I am glad to see it, and I think I will stay beside it, and die by the teachings of the Father. I see where I have sweat and worked in trying to get food. I see the flour-mill the Government has promised, I see my friends. I like all that I have and cannot go away from here. What the whites have tried to show me, I have tried to learn. It is not much, but I have fenced in a small piece of land and try to raise grain on it. I am showing you my heart. The President will see the record, and know what we poor men have said in this council. I love my church, my mills, my farm, the graves of my parents and children. I do not wish to leave my land; that is all my heart and I show it to you."

Source: Felix R. Bruot Report to the Board of Indian Commissioners, 15 November 1871, *Annual Report of the Board of Indian Commissioners to the President of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1872), 86-87.

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