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**CREATING OREGON FROM *ILLAHEE*:  
RACE, SETTLER-COLONIALISM, AND NATIVE  
SOVEREIGNTY IN WESTERN OREGON, 1792-1856**

by

**GRAY H. WHALEY**

**A DISSERTATION**

**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  
Doctor of Philosophy**

**June 2002**

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"Creating Oregon from Illahee: Race, Settler-Colonialism, and Native Sovereignty in Western Oregon, 1792-1856," a dissertation prepared by Gray H. Whaley in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of History. This dissertation has been approved and accepted:

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Dean of the Graduate School

## An Abstract of the Dissertation of

Gray H. Whaley for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy  
in the Department of History to be taken June 2002

Title: CREATING OREGON FROM ILLAHEE: RACE, SETTLER-COLONIALISM,  
AND NATIVE SOVEREIGNTY IN WESTERN OREGON, 1792-1856

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
/ / Dr. Jeffrey Ostler

This dissertation analyzes the power of different people to shape western Oregon in the early nineteenth century, a time of fundamental changes to identity, environment, and demography. First, it explores the nature of settler-colonialism as practiced in western Oregon, particularly regarding how legal and folk beliefs about empire, citizenship, property, and race affected the level and nature of colonial violence and Native dispossession. Second, it explores Native sovereignty through the metaphor of Illahee, meaning land or homeland in the region's Chinook trade jargon. The dissertation addresses the ways in which Native peoples defined themselves and their territories from 1792-1856 and the effects of such constructions had on relations both among Indians and between Native and colonial populations. The dissertation draws on a wide breadth of source materials regarding British and Euro-American colonial projects in the region such as land claims abstracts, census manuscripts, mission records, correspondence, journals, and sundry governmental reports. As well, it uses ethnographic, linguistic,

folkloric, and the unpublished fieldnotes of "salvage" ethnographers and linguists (ca. 1880-1940).

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## CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION: OREGON AND *ILLAHEE*

Six years ago, I thought that I would write a social history that examined the merging of Native and Euro-American peoples in southwestern Oregon in the mid-nineteenth century and that the so-called "Indian wars" would play only a small role in my dissertation. However, I quickly found that the dominant story was one of racial exclusion and attempted genocide. After many fits and starts, I overhauled my whole project. I pulled back in time and widened my lens geographically. I gradually expanded the scope to include the Willamette Valley, Klamath Basin, lower and middle Columbia River, the Pacific Rim, the Atlantic Coast, and Europe – in short, the world. Seeking a coherent paradigm, my attention not surprisingly turned to the global realm of colonialism and empire. I have purposely taken an Oregon story that has long been treated as local or regional history and cast it into a national and international context where, I believe, it belongs. Still, a case study of western Oregon remained my principal concern and other geographic areas played an informative rather than evaluative role.

Historians of the American West have explored global contexts before. Previous historiographical trends towards globalism or, at least, global awareness have occurred to varying extents in the years following the First and Second World Wars, the Great Depression, and the Vietnam War.<sup>1</sup> As ever in academic history, the sensibilities, experiences, and concerns of the historians' present day greatly influence their scholarship; and I am, of course, no different. In recent decades, the United States has

played a major role in shaping the emerging global economy, bringing once-arcaic topics such as “free-trade zones” and “deregulation” into the public discourse. As well, the so-called “Third World” or “developing nations” have gained a nominal degree of political power and influenced the perceptions of many people in Europe and North America. Throughout Africa and Asia, these former colonies of Europe and the United States have emerged as independent nations and have achieved sufficient international standing to demand redress for the past and to voice complaints about the evolving neo-colonialism of “First World” nations and multi-national corporations. In the Americas, many Native peoples rightly consider themselves colonized peoples and some in the literary community refer to Indian Country as the Fourth World, drawing on the post-colonial scholarship of Asian and African writers.<sup>2</sup> Surprisingly, however, United States historians have drawn relatively little on the literature and contexts of imperialism and colonialism, though this is certainly changing.

In an influential essay, Amy Kaplan pointed to some of the problems that arise from ignoring empire in the study of United States culture and history, notably the lingering sense of American exceptionalism. Briefly, American exceptionalism is the insistence on the uniqueness of United States history: that the nation was shaped by internal events and by peculiar traits of an imagined American character. According to Frederick Jackson Turner’s classic “frontier thesis,” white male pioneers shaped American democracy by marching westward and taming the wilderness for civilization.<sup>3</sup> The frontier thesis, according to Kaplan, “has undergone revision from the vacant space of the wilderness to a bloody battlefield of conflict and conquest, and more recently to a

site of contacts, encounters, and collisions that produce new hybrid cultures.” With the notable exceptions of William Appleman Williams and a few others, the interrelated experiences of European imperialism and United States westward expansion have been largely ignored. This despite the basic outline of United States history, it was a colony that became an expansionist nation-state. The worst of the recent historical scholarship that stresses encounters and multicultural creations obscures violent interactions and contests of power and little explains the ascendancy of white-male supremacy that is the enduring legacy of the “settlement” era of the “hardy pioneers.” To write a new story, this dissertation attempts to address the roles of race, gender, and sexuality in the context of “United States nation-building and empire-building” which, in Kaplan’s words, were “historically coterminous and mutually defining.”<sup>4</sup>

A potential pitfall of using such a broad national and international framework for western Oregon history is the possible loss of indigenous views and experiences, which were by definition local and regional. From the 1830s, Indians died in nearly incomprehensible numbers and the survivors lost much, but the Native peoples of Oregon also created new identities and connections to place from the destruction and dispossession wrought by nineteenth-century Euro-American settler-colonialism. Today, Native peoples from across the Northwest travel to the village of Siletz located in a small valley in Oregon’s Coast Range Mountains to attend the “*Nesika Illahee*” powwow, the Siletz Tribe’s celebration of “our land.” The multi-ethnic Confederated Tribes of Siletz are, at once, a product of colonialism – the descendants of those who survived the colonial wars and removal – and, at the same time, a product of an older Native history of



accommodating change. In the early 1800s, Native peoples of the “lower Oregon Country,” as early colonialists called western Oregon and Washington, spoke dozens of indigenous languages reflecting centuries of Native emigration, yet western observers could readily note the place of each Indian band. Conflict played a role, but the diverse *Tillicum* (people) created a place in *Illehee*, an historical process of emigration and accommodation that predated, coexisted with, and, by the 1850s, became dominated by settler-colonialism. The history of these changes is fragmented and incomplete, a problem that this dissertation is intended, in part, to address.

My revision attempts to integrate a strong indigenous element to the colonial history by developing ideas regarding *Illehee* (land) and *Tillicum* (people) to parallel the construction of Oregon and “white” citizens. I use words from the Chinook Jargon to represent the historical development of a new Native world. Indians and non-Native traders used Chinook Jargon in the Pacific Northwest in the latter eighteenth and nineteenth-centuries to facilitate trade and later became the lingua franca on western Oregon’s multi-ethnic reservations.

This is not a celebratory history of Indian resurgence, however. Similarly, there is no harmonious multicultural past to recover from the nineteenth century for a new, inclusive “Oregon story”: there are, instead, white patriarchy and the foundations of structural racism and inequality that Native peoples and other non-whites have yet to overcome.<sup>5</sup>

The colonial history of Oregon requires, in my opinion, significant revision. Therefore, I addressed numerous important topics that regional historians, in my

estimation, have handled incompletely. Such topics include the paradoxes of Christian mission and colony, economic speculations of the "hardy pioneers," interracial marriages and the so-called "mixed-bloods," the relationship between citizenship and white patriarchy, and the attempted extermination of the Indians of southwestern Oregon.

This dissertation attempts to analyze the power of different people to shape western Oregon in the early nineteenth century, a time of fundamental changes to identity, environment, and demography. I explored both the nature of Euro-American settler-colonialism in western Oregon and Native efforts to create new forms of sovereignty under the pressures of disease, displacement, and conquest. My emphasis on colonialism provides an effective context for exploring the dynamics of power that are crucial for understanding the region's history. As well, my approach makes it possible to relate an important part of United States history to similar histories in the world such as New Zealand and Australia that also featured settler-colonialism and its counterparts: conquest, Native dispossession, and, in some instances, genocide.<sup>6</sup>

My attention to issues of power stems from a problem that I believe is common in recent scholarship. In the past decade, Richard White's *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (Cambridge, 1991) has gained wide currency among scholars for its depiction of Indian agency in the region's fur trade: a balance of power forced colonials and Indians to compromise and create a "middle ground" of culture, economics, and politics. I agree with the praise of White's work. However, numerous historians have since used the middle ground thesis problematically, overstating Indian agency and replacing colonial conflict with tales of

shared community: the field has lost a critical focus on power dynamics. My work takes seriously indigenous power and analyzes its numerous manifestations over time, but places Native efforts within the larger context of settler-colonialism, an approach that better explains the manner in which Euro-Americans increasingly limited the choices and opportunities of Native peoples as they created western Oregon from *Illlahee*.

By using colonialism as an interpretive structure, I do not mean to suggest that any one form of colonization existed in Oregon or elsewhere. The British Empire, which informs much post-colonial scholarship and figures significantly in this dissertation, was itself "a patchwork quilt of ad hoc adaptations to particular circumstances," in the words of theorist Jurgen Osterhammel. Because individual actions and decisions shaped historically contingent events, and results often defied the best laid plans of the most rationally minded imperialists, Osterhammel argues that "Colonization is thus a phenomenon of colossal vagueness." Still, following in the footsteps of Immanuel Wallerstein's world systems theories, he posited three broad categories of global colonialism, which I found helpful in interpreting the history of Oregon. First, "exploitation colonies" existed to extract raw materials and typically exploited an indigenous labor force. I would argue that this typology roughly fits the fur trade era from 1811 to the 1830s. Second, "maritime enclave colonies" existed to supply ships carrying the products of colonies. Such is an apt description of the Hawaiian Islands from Captain Cook's "discovery" in the late 1780s to their incorporation into the trans-Pacific trade and eventual subjugation by the United States. Third, "settler-colonies" involved the permanent occupation of acquired lands. To this, Osterhammel posits a

“New England variant” to explain the displacement and even annihilation of the economically dispensable indigenous population. He uses this variant for the British colonies in New England, Canada, Australia, and I would add New Zealand. The English considered these their “white colonies” as opposed to their “black” slave colonies in the West Indies and “exploitation” colonies of India and South Africa.

Unfortunately (and I believe incorrectly), Osterhammel does not include the United States as a colonial power in his paradigm; thus, he does not address the American West. As Amy Kaplan has argued, because the United States does not fit the post-colonial model in many ways, it has been left out of international scholarship “curiously reproducing American exceptionalism from without.”<sup>7</sup> Throughout my dissertation, the narrative and analysis are driven by an effort to place the history of western Oregon into the history of colonialism. Osterhammel wrote that “There is no history of colonialism per se, just histories of individual colonialisms.” In western Oregon from 1792 to 1856, there were indeed many individual colonialisms as British traders, Euro-American capitalists, missionaries, and settlers vied with Native people and each other to bring their vision of Oregon to fruition.<sup>8</sup>

Because colonialism and imperialism are vague, amorphous, and historically contingent productions, some further, general clarification of terms and their history is needed. Both concepts derive from the rise of western civilization in the greater Mediterranean realm. The expansionist city-states of Greece and subsequently imperial Rome passed along numerous legacies that survived the fractious European world of the Middle Ages and reemerged in the so-called Age of Exploration in the 1400s. The

revival of classical knowledge during the Renaissance helped newly coalesced western European countries to draw on the histories of *colonos* (Greek settlements away from the sponsoring city-state) and *imperium* (Roman organization of conquered territories or empire.) New formulations of colonialism and imperialism allowed Portugal and Spain and later England and France to consider and organize their expansions on the continent, in Africa and Asia, and eventually in the Americas. Yet through the twentieth-century, imperialism remained more of a set of constantly changing and contested organizing ideas than a coherent system, and as noted above, colonialism took many forms. Therefore, imperialism might best be considered the diverse mass of decisions, policies, and actions that led to the highly localized creation of colonialisms on the ground level. Ian Copland has expressed this notion well: "Imperialism is about the acquisition of power and influence...colonialism is a possible outcome – the next step – of imperialism."<sup>9</sup>

To illustrate, by the 1820s, there were two nations realistically competing for ostensible control of the Oregon Country, the United States and Great Britain. Neither central government could boast a coherent imperial policy regarding Oregon, though well-placed individuals in London and Washington, D.C. intermittently sought dominion, typically for the pecuniary benefits of the fur trade with China. The Board of the Hudson's Bay Company sent individuals such as George Simpson (in 1824) and Reverend Herbert Beaver (in 1836) to the Oregon Country as imperial agents. Their varying purposes were meant to organize the colonial trade settlement on the lower Columbia according to the desires of directors in London. As a colonial on the ground

level. Chief Factor John McLoughlin could only approximate the policies of Simpson, and he openly clashed with Beaver and his proposed Christian reforms. McLoughlin's efforts also had to be further reconciled with the competing colonialisms of Euro-Americans, whose own visions of Oregon ranged from Methodist ideals of Native conversion to the agricultural pursuits of former fur trappers. The concepts of colonialism and imperialism offer a means of ordering and understanding the numerous events and diverse motivations of individuals in the complex history of western Oregon.

As an important component of nineteenth-century colonial thought and action, race also played a crucial role in the history of western Oregon. Although recent scholars have explored the historical construction of race and its importance for conquest and colonization, the work tends to be large-scale meta-narratives that, while useful, fail to account for specific experiences on the ground level.<sup>10</sup> Further, such scholarship tends to focus on race as becoming a concrete ideology in relation to abolitionist threats on slaveholders' property – African Americans – or the Reconstruction period (1863-1877) that threatened the South's racial caste system. Indians are seen as providing an earlier proving ground for the development of race, whereupon African Americans become the "new savage," human property and biologically inferior. Audrey Smedley uses the work of colonial historians, primarily Gary Nash, to substantiate the centrality of African Americans to Euro-American conceptions of racialization and treats the Indians as effectively conquered (and thus racialized) by the 1790s. However, the case of western Oregon, decades later, demonstrates that the permanent racial definitions of Native peoples were undefined in the Far West and likely other regions where Euro-American

supremacy was still effectively challenged. Further, the racialization of African Americans in the East informed the racialization of the indigenous peoples of the Far West and the Pacific Islands, evidencing the ongoing process of defining racial concepts in relation to power and property on the local level. Particularly in the Oregon state constitution of 1859, citizenship inclusion and civil rights reflected "race" and the "slavery question" in the West, as it banned African Americans from the state, disenfranchised Chinese, and codified numerous exclusions against Indians and Pacific Islanders.<sup>11</sup> The constitution reflects a dialogue between established racial beliefs of the East and regional characteristics of the Pacific Northwest and suggests that the racialization process was far more complex, fluid, and dependent on specific circumstance than evident in broad treatments of the history of race. My case study and others from the West contributes to the developing ideas about race and racialization in the nineteenth-century United States.

Additionally, I believe that my treatment of the attempted extermination of southwestern Oregon Indians contributes a much-needed case study to the examination of Native genocide and its role in the Euro-American colonization of North America. Currently, such scholarship tends toward generalizations and polemics that rely heavily on lists of disparate, non-contextualized examples of massacres and extermination rhetoric from 1490s to the 1940s with little empirical evidence linking them. Thus, conclusions regarding causality and intent often seem unsubstantiated. As well, scholars complicate the issue of genocide by including acculturation and modern limits on Native sovereignty to establish a charge of systematic governmental genocide on par with Nazi

Germany.<sup>12</sup> The net effect has been that too many historians currently reject or play down the role of the nineteenth-century extermination efforts in American "westward expansion." With the exception of David Svaldi and a smattering of individual chapters, the topic has received little serious scholarly attention.<sup>13</sup> The limited scholarship partly reflects the trend among "New Western" and "New Indian" historians to feature topics that demonstrate cross-cultural creations, common ground, and subaltern agency. In effect, such focuses neglect inherently divisive issues such as extermination efforts and massive power imbalances that greatly curbed the agency of Indians.<sup>14</sup> While admittedly a horrific topic, genocide and its relationship to colonization needs to be explored if the United States is ever to come to terms with its past and perhaps begin to break down entrenched structural racism that is supported by popular ignorance.

In the individual chapters, I try to retain cohesion by concentrating on a few important types of colonial-indigenous encounters: economic interactions such as trade and land claims, social interactions such as sexuality and marriage, and political interactions such as violence and diplomacy.

In the chapters two and three, I look at the dynamics of colonialism during the early period of interaction between colonialist and indigenous peoples, which as in many regions of North America, revolved around the exchange of furs. Great Britain and the United States competed for domination of the trade in the "lower Oregon Country," the environs of the lower Columbia River that would become western Oregon and Washington. In some sense, the struggle was imperial: commercial enterprises of competing nation-states sought to claim the land exclusively and monopolize the



exploitation of its resources. Notably, however, the contemporary models of empire did not work well for traders of either nation, and ultimately the Oregon of the era was a popular construction of competing colonialisms not an outgrowth of a single imperial order. Following the War of 1812, the British traders displaced the Euro-Americans and advanced their then-preferred colonial system, which favored trading forts and eschewed costly and dangerous "settlements" in distant, uncontrollable colonies. Similarly, it would be decades before United States politicians would seriously consider settler-colonialism in the Oregon Country for much the same reasons. To keep Euro-American trappers from the Oregon Country, the Hudson's Bay Company instituted a policy of resource extermination – wipe out the beaver. Interestingly, the British policy seemed to have backfired. Euro-American trappers began crossing the Rocky Mountains into the Oregon Country in the late 1820s and, by the mid-1830s, began "settling" the Willamette Valley, as the region's fur trade had ceased to be very profitable while the land appeared agriculturally promising. Individual Euro-American men, drawing on a tradition of folk-imperialism, "squatted" in the valley and established the foundations of United States settler-colonialism in the Pacific Northwest.

Native peoples of the lower Columbia River environs greatly influenced the fur trade until disease epidemics, particularly malaria from 1830-1834, weakened them. A Native trade network had existed in the regions for centuries, and the colonials did their best to insulate themselves into it. For their own reasons, Native headmen and women helped the colonials establish the fur trade. Others challenged the colonials, often attempting to gain a better position for themselves vis-à-vis the fur trade and among other

Native peoples in the changing landscape of *Illahaee*. The introduction of horses and guns would have profound effects, as had occurred earlier on the southern Plains.

In chapter four, I examine the ambivalent relationship between Protestant-American evangelicalism and Euro-American settler-colonialism. I trace the course of the Methodist Episcopal Church's mission in Hawai'i in the 1820s to western Oregon in the 1830s, from the Willamette Mission's conception and enthusiastic beginnings in 1834 to its disappointing withdrawal and abandonment in 1844. Current historiography explains the Oregon missions as a response to the supposed call from Flatheads visiting St. Louis for the "white man's God" in 1830. I argue that the Flathead visit only opened purse strings for a mission-colony project investigated a few years earlier from the Oahu mission. The Methodists, the first mission society to Oregon, initially related the Native peoples of Oregon to the redeemable heathens of the Gospel, the First-century Gentiles with whom the original Evangelists shared languages and agricultural (or, at least, pastoral) ways of life. As the Oregon missionaries quickly learned, the Gospel was a poor guide. The Indians spoke numerous complex languages (along many rivers, the village tongues were as diverse as Swahili, French, and Mandarin) and lived semi-sedentary lives not conducive to "Christian civilization." Worse, for the missionaries, most Indians were profoundly disinterested; many experimented by sending children for temporary stays at mission stations or engaging in polite, limited dialogues, but few "converted." Indeed, the missionaries could not agree what conversion meant or how to accomplish it.

As well, the mission's downfall resulted from the ambivalence over the mission-

colony relationship. From the outset, missionaries envisioned a colony, as the vast distance from their base in the Northeast demanded self-sufficiency. With the exception of Robert Loewenberg, scholars generally treat the mission's fostering of Euro-American settlement and supposedly "saving Oregon" from British control as an aberrant "secularization," and blame founder Jason Lee for duplicity.<sup>15</sup> Instead, the missionaries could not control the limited settlement they initiated for evangelical purposes any better than they could "convert" Indians. More importantly, the missionaries' support for settler-colonialism took them down the slippery slope of racialized beliefs about citizenship and private property rights. The Methodists were forced to choose sides as the emigrants increased and demanded the Indians' lands. Lee was disgraced and lost his position in heavily politicized disputes over property among colonists, missionaries, and the Hudson's Bay Company. The Methodists abandoned their project and resorted to racial definitions of the Indians of western Oregon as disappearing and irredeemable savages, the "vanishing Indian."

Chapter five explores the nature of settler-colonialism as it manifested in western Oregon through the constituent racial and economic speculations that fueled the Euro-American colonization of the Willamette Valley in the 1840s. I term this loose system of land claims and Indian relations, folk-imperialism. The Euro-American colonists did not suffer from the nagging ambiguities of mission and colony: Oregon was destined to be theirs by virtue of their birthright as United States citizens and "whiteness." The competition over property among "whites" and the growing role of racial ideology evidenced a change from the earlier periods of the fur trade and the brief Methodist

experiment, both of which featured power relations better described in terms of the more malleable and temporal notions of ethnicity. Euro-Americans defined themselves as inherently superior and thus entitled to the property of the “inferior” Native people: this ideology helps explain their often gratuitously violent relations with the Indians.

A complex tale, Euro-Americans aggressively competed among themselves and contended with ambiguous national laws regarding Indian Country and the public domain as well as international boundary disputes between Great Britain and the United States. The mixed-blood population found themselves increasingly marginalized, and some went northward to modern-day Washington and British Columbia and southward to the coast and slender valleys of the Rogue River canyons. As well, the arriving Euro-Americans confronted a diverse and complicated *Illahaee* or Native world, which included attempts by some Indians, primarily Klickitats and Umpquas, to claim property in the Willamette and Umpqua Valleys. Racial constructions provided order from confusion and, with them, Euro-Americans rationalized the continued conquest of western Oregon.

In chapter six, I analyze how the Land Rush in the Willamette Valley of the 1840s and the subsequent California Gold Rush contributed to the infamously violent colonization of southwestern Oregon, the borderland that lay between the two better known regions. A principal topic in this chapter is genocide, literally the attempt to exterminate the so-called “Rogue” Indians of southwestern Oregon. Between 1853 and 1856, the racialization of people and place had advanced to an extremist, militant sense of Euro-American “birthright,” a belief that United States citizenship legitimated the extermination of fully dehumanized Indians perceived to be a threat to the “public

welfare.” The fear of an inter-tribal confederacy from northernmost California to British Columbia fed popular hysteria about the “Indian threat” and contributed to the virulence and pervasiveness of the calls for extermination. Indeed, some evidence points to inter-ethnic unity among Native bands of southwestern Oregon, the Columbia Plateau, and Puget Sound, and requires an exploration of the probable nature and limits of the so-called confederacy based on ethnographic and contemporary accounts. Some Euro-American contemporaries noted the limitations of Indian political unity, and the manner with which they were discredited contributes to my discussion of the extermination campaign’s popularity and the hegemony of white supremacist beliefs.

Throughout, the Native peoples were hardly passive victims of colonialism. There was no single Indian perspective, and I have not tried to forge one. Individual men and women interacted with the colonials and each other on many levels, and I have tried to preserve the complexity of the diverse Native world. Besieged by disease epidemics, especially between 1830 and 1834, the power of the Indians of the lower Columbia River and Willamette Valley was shattered. The survivors confronted the missionaries in many ways, and I have tried to represent those as accurately as possible. The epidemics actually created space for Klickitat Indians from the Columbia Plateau, and they joined the surviving indigenous population in contesting settler-colonialism as a white-only enterprise. With war and removal in the mid-1850s, Native people found ways to retain their sovereignty in the face of colonial administration of the reservations. For example, some individual Indian women used intermarriage to “white” men to avoid the reservations and remain in the homelands. Their continuous occupation formed the legal

basis for the eventual return of relatives after the dissolution of the reservations and the assignment of "Indian homesteads." Many modern-day tribal members on south Oregon's coast trace their ancestry and heritage to such women, and their efforts are a source of tremendous pride and continue to be honored. As well, confinement on the multi-ethnic reservations led to the formation of lasting Indian identities and continuing Native efforts to develop and adapt as colonized people.

In researching my dissertation, I analyzed a wide breadth of source materials regarding British and Euro-American colonial projects in the region such as fur company records, land claims abstracts, census manuscripts, mission records, correspondence, journals, and governmental reports. I also used ethnographic, linguistic, folkloric scholarship and made significant use of the unpublished fieldnotes of "salvage" ethnographers and linguists who interviewed survivors of conquest and removal from the 1880s through the 1940s. Many of these sources are collected in the new and hopefully growing Southwest Oregon Research Project (SWORP) in the Special Collections of the Knight Library at the University of Oregon. SWORP is a joint effort of the Coquille Indian Tribe and the University of Oregon. In a round-about way, SWORP and, more specifically, the cultural heritage conferences of the Coquille Tribe helped me to meet many descendants of the aboriginal peoples of western Oregon. Several tribal members from the Coquille Indian Tribe, the Confederated Tribes of Siletz, the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, and the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw, have been both welcoming and tolerant of me. I have always taken their views, opinions, and criticisms seriously and tried to be sensitive to their concerns.

I have tried to make historical Native voices from the SWORP materials and other early anthropology sources a central part of my analysis. The written record of the Indian informants' has been invaluable, particularly as a window into social relations within Native communities in the nineteenth century. In a way, the historical voices of the Indians, which are mediated by the scholars who recorded them, are comparable to the reminiscences of the so-called "hardy pioneer" generation, which were collected by professional and avocational historians during the same era. Neither can be used uncritically, but both offer important insights into the changing ways in which colonization was understood, remembered, and used by aging participants and their children.

A few words on my language in the dissertation seem warranted. I have consciously avoided using the word "white" as a general reference to Euro-Americans except when I am referring to it as a socially constructed racial identity. When I do use the word, it is typically set off in quotation marks. Given the nature of my study, I have preferred to employ the word colonial or colonist to settler, which I believe, has a far too neutral connotation. I have used the words Indian, Native, and indigenous interchangeably following the fashion of recent scholarship and the self-referential preferences of modern descendants of the aboriginal population with whom I have been familiar over the past several years. When quoting historical figures, I have not altered spellings or used the intrusive term *sic*, in an effort to preserve the flavor of older pronunciations. Many of the phonetic spellings of Native words by early linguists are approximations. Linguistic phonetics were not standardized when much of this early

scholarship was produced and the spellings are therefore highly idiosyncratic and difficult to reproduce. I have provided the citations, and readers should consult the original source for an accurate reproduction of the individual scholar's work.

My approach to interpreting my various sources and writing the text probably does not deserve the exacting title of method. I am an unapologetic borrower of diverse approaches and never tried to conform to a single form of scholarship. I consulted and was influenced by anthropology, ethnohistory, social history, political history, and literary studies to name a few. Rather than being a practitioner or advocate of a particular method, I tried to use the approach most applicable to a given topic or situation.



Notes

<sup>1</sup> For a discussion of such trends in the twentieth century, see Gerald D. Nash, *Creating the West: Historical Interpretations, 1890-1990* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1991).

<sup>2</sup> For an encyclopedic survey of post-colonial literature, see Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, *Key Concepts in Post-Colonial Studies* (New York: Routledge, 1998).

<sup>3</sup> Notably, the term (and concept) frontier has been numerous abandoned, defended, and reconstituted since the 1980s. For the "villain," Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," *Annual Report of the American Historical Association for the Year 1893*, 199-227; and for his numerous detractors and supporters, Patricia Nelson Limerick, *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1987); Martin Ridge, "Turner the Historian: A Long Shadow," *Journal of the Early Republic*, 1993, 133-44; Glenda Riley, "Frederick Jackson Turner Overlooked the Ladies," *Journal of the Early Republic*, 1993, 216-30; William Cronon, "Revisiting the Vanishing Frontier: The Legacy of Frederick Jackson Turner," *Western Historical Quarterly*, 1987, 157-176. Kerwin Klein challenges opponents of the frontier to understand the history of their nemesis. Ironically for professional historians, frontier bashing is ahistorical because Turner wrote for the subalterns of his day: poor white men. His work was thus in similar vein to recent scholarship of modern subalterns: white women and racial minorities. See Klein, *Frontiers of Historical Imagination* (Berkeley: University of California, 1998); "Reclaiming the 'F' Word, Or Being and Becoming Postwestern," *Pacific Historical Review*, 1996, 179-216. What Klein accomplished through historiographic analysis and rhetoric, Stephen Aron accomplished to a fair extent in practice, *How the West was Lost: The Transformation of Kentucky, from Daniel Boone to Henry Clay* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996).

<sup>4</sup> Amy Kaplan, "'Left Alone with America': The Absence of Empire in the Study of American Culture," in *Cultures of United States Imperialism*, edited by Amy Kaplan and Donald E Pease (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), 15-19.

<sup>5</sup> David Rich Lewis's recent work in this vein demonstrates the promise and possibilities for such research, see *Neither Wolf Nor Dog: American Indians, Environment, and Agrarian Change* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994). Lewis expanded on Richard White's earlier ideas about the "roots" of Native dependency, and included a higher degree of Indian agency and historical contingency, *Roots of Dependency: Subsistence, Environment, and Social Change among the Choctaws* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1983). Unlike White, whose work was criticized for tracking a pre-determined, downward spiral toward dependency, Lewis demonstrated the realistic ebbs and flows of economic self-determination through the nineteenth-century experiences of

three unrelated Indian groups. Drawing on Edward Bruner, Wilcomb Washburn has attacked such work as “ethnic resurgence” modeling, based on advocacy and contemporary politics rather than objective scholarship in Calvin Martin, ed., *The American Indian and the Problem of History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 92. I accept Washburn’s criticism that contemporary concerns contribute to new paradigms and narrative forms, but disagree with his condemnation. I hope that my work will demonstrate the efficacy of studying Indian survival without lapsing into a celebratory history of Native Oregonians or a mere diatribe against American colonization. For discussions of structural racism, Robin D.G. Kelley, *Yo’ Mamma’s DisFunktional!: Fighting the Culture Wars in Urban America* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1997), Vijay Prashad, *The Karma of Brown Folk* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000).

<sup>6</sup> For recent comparative compilation of essays on settler-colonialism and frontiers, Lynette Russell, ed., *Colonial Frontiers: Indigenous-European Encounters in Settler Societies* (New York: Manchester University Press; Distributed exclusively in the USA by Palgrave, 2001).

<sup>7</sup> Kaplan, “Left Alone with America,” 17.

<sup>8</sup> Jurgens Osterhammel, *Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview* (Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener Publishers, 1997), 4, 10-12, 25, for “white colonies” and Britain’s “white empire.” P. J. Cain and A. G. Hopkins, *British Imperialism: Innovation and Expansion, 1688-1914* (New York: Longman, 1993), 229-275. Post-Colonial studies have produced significant scholarship on the forms and ramifications of settler-colonialism. See, for example, Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Knopf : Distributed by Random House, 1993); Patrick Wolfe, *Settler Colonialism and the Transformation of Anthropology: The Politics and Poetics of an Ethnographic Event* (New York: Cassell, 1999), 1-3; Ashcroft, Griffith, et. al., *Key Concepts*; and Henry Ray Sangeeta Schwarz, ed., *A Companion to Postcolonial Studies*, (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2000).

<sup>9</sup> Ian Copland, *The Burden of Empire: Perspectives on Imperialism and Colonialism* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1990), 2; see also Osterhammel, *Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview*, 21-22; and appropriate entries in Ashcroft, Griffith, et. al., *Key Concepts*.

<sup>10</sup> Reginald Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981); Audrey Smedley, *Race in North America: Origin and Evolution of a Worldview*, Second ed., (San Francisco: Westview Press, 1999); Theodore W Allen, *The Invention of the White Race* vols. 1-2. (New York: Verso, 1994).

<sup>11</sup> For related discussions of race in Oregon history, Elizabeth McLagan, *A Peculiar Paradise: A History of Blacks in Oregon, 1788-1940* (Portland, OR: Georgian Press, 1980), K. Keith Richard, "Unwelcome Settlers: Black and Mulatto Oregon Pioneers, Part II," *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, 1983, Janice K Duncan, "Minority without a Champion: Kanakas on the Pacific Coast, 1788-1850," *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, 1972, 1-19; and Matthew Aeldun Charles Smith, "Wedding Bands and Marriage Bans: A History of Oregon's Racial Intermarriage Statutes and the Impact on Indian Interracial Nuptials," (master's thesis, Portland State University, 1997).

<sup>12</sup> Ward Churchill, *A Little Matter of Genocide: Holocaust and Denial in the Americas, 1492 to the Present* (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1997); David E Stannard, *American Holocaust: Columbus and the Conquest of the New World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992).

<sup>13</sup> David Svaldi, *Sand Creek and The Rhetoric of Extermination: A Case Study in Indian-White Relations* (New York: University Press of America, 1989); and for select chapters, Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny*; James J. Rawls *Indians of California: The Changing Image* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1984); Albert L. Hurtado, *Indian Survival on the California Frontier* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988).

<sup>14</sup> Richard White recently commented that genocide has fallen from recent scholarly tendency to examine Indian agency, which "makes no sense within a framework of genocide," in Eric Foner, ed., *The New American History*, 2nd ed., (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1997), 210; and for a recent example of taking an approach with no villainy (except human ignorance of the environment), see Elliott West, *The Way to the West: Essays on the Central Plains* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995) and *The Contested Plains: Indians, Goldseekers, & the Rush to Colorado* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998).

<sup>15</sup> Loewenberg's analysis focuses much on Lee and his beliefs rather than the mission-colonial relationship or the role of race and property. Robert J Loewenberg, "Saving Oregon Again: A Western Perennial?," *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, 1977, 332-350; and *Equality on the Oregon Frontier: Jason Lee and the Methodist Mission, 1834-43* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1976).

## CHAPTER II

"so many little sovereignties": COLONIAL ENCOUNTERS  
OF THE LOWER OREGON FUR TRADE, 1792-1822

Some three decades ago, Alfred Crosby coined the phrase the "Columbian exchange" for the colonial Atlantic trade of foods, raw materials, manufactures, human beings, and pathogenic microbes among the Americas, Europe, and Africa.<sup>1</sup> With the consolidation of Spanish rule on the Pacific coast of the Americas and several South Pacific islands, the Russian colonization of Siberia and North Pacific islands, and the increased presence of Europeans generally on the Pacific Ocean, the late eighteenth century witnessed the growth of a new era of global commerce: the trans-Pacific trade. Specifically, the Pacific fur trade of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries established permanent relations among the populations of "Spanish America," the Pacific Northwest Coast, the Pacific Islands, East Asia, western Europe, and the United States. Beginning in the 1740s, Russian traders exploited Aleut and Kodiak hunters to hunt sea otter pelts for the northern Chinese market at Kyakhtah. In 1788, the British Captain James Cook "discovered" the profitable trade for Northwest Coast sea otters at Canton in southern China for the "western" nations. Justifiably distrustful of Europeans, the Chinese maintained different ports and markets for the western and eastern Europeans despite repeated Russian complaints that prices were lower at Kyakhtah than Canton and that the northern market required an excruciatingly expensive overland trek from coastal Siberia through Mongolia.<sup>2</sup> The western Europeans and the Euro-Americans who joined

them made the best of their superior trading position at Canton. By the early 1790s, English and American mariners regularly "coasted" the Northwest Coast seeking sea otter and other pelts for Canton with some of the earliest furs going directly from clothing Nuu-chah-nulth and Chinook Indians to adorning Chinese Mandarins across the ocean. From the mouth of the Columbia River to the middle stretches along the Columbia Plateau Native peoples of the Oregon Country prized *tia Commashuk* (blue "chief beads") crafted by Canton artisans and obtained from the coasters and Native intermediaries.<sup>3</sup> Although *tia Commashuk* never displaced *hyqua* or dentalia shells as the medium of indigenous exchange, the Canton beads formed the basis for much of the colonial-Native exchanges in the first decades. Colonial coasters carried Native manufactures such as *clamon* (elk-skin armor), water-tight hats and basketry as well as slaves to indigenous traders, providing quick, direct routes for peoples separated by hundreds of miles of mountainous coastline. The Native trade network preexisted the Pacific trade but was, nevertheless, radically altered by the newcomers. European and Euro-American traders reveled in temporarily having found a trade item, in sea otter pelts, desired by the Chinese, the Mandarins added to their finery, and the Northwest Coast Indians obtained manufactured goods and another source for indigenous trade items. In May 1792, Captain Robert Gray named the southern Northwest Coast river, which would become increasingly important, for his ship the *Columbia Rediva*, itself named for the European most responsible for the Atlantic trade. On the newly named Columbia River, Gray and his Chinookan trading partners ushered in a new Columbian exchange, which connected the peoples of the Atlantic and the Pacific oceans.

The people in between East Asia and North America were indelibly affected as well. Benefiting from British warships, King Kamehameha solidified his control of the Hawai'ian Islands and allowed *haole* (foreigner) trading ships to rest and resupply in his waters, principally at the harbor of Honolulu on O'ahu. Mariners colonized familiar plants and animals on the islands for convenient resupplying beginning the destruction of the indigenous ecology and, ultimately, the Native economy. Kamehameha also contracted the labor of Kanakas (Native men) to *haole* ship captains who desired seasoned seamen and inexpensive fur trappers.<sup>4</sup> In June 1812, there were thirty-one Kanakas employed by the Pacific Fur Company and in 1818, twenty-six of the forty-two employees at the fur-trading depot on the lower Columbia River were Kanakas.<sup>5</sup> Some Wahines (Native women) also left Hawai'i aboard European and Euro-American ships as wives and exploited as prostitutes.<sup>6</sup> In 1813, William Wadsworth brought his Wahine wife to Astoria and, in the 1830s, some Wahines accompanied their Kanaka husbands to Fort Vancouver. To the chagrin of the fort's Anglican missionary, some of the first "British" settler families of the lower Oregon were Hawai'ian.<sup>7</sup>

With British, French, Spanish, American, Russian and a smattering of other nations using the Hawai'ian ports, strict enforcement of trade restrictions was impossible. Still, the motley assortment of imperial competitors initially had its advantages for the Hawai'ians; with the numerous, mutually distrustful nations involved, none of them could singly challenge Kamehameha's sovereignty without stirring the defenses of the others. When the Russian-American Company fortified its Hawai'ian trading posts in 1816-1817, Kamehameha had the support of competing imperialist nations in ejecting the

Russians.<sup>8</sup> But, as predicted in the commentary of the Irish fur-trader Ross Cox in 1831: Hawai'i "will become an important acquisition to a maritime power." Whether it would be American, British, or Russian, he was not certain but he "safely" concluded that the victor "would control the commerce of the Pacific."<sup>9</sup> Far to the north, the Russians had conquered Siberia and successfully worked their way across the north Pacific, pulling Native peoples from the Aleutian Islands, Kodiak Island, and modern-day southeast Alaska into the trade and based their American operation at New Archangel among the Sitka Tlingits. By the 1810s, the trade, facilitated by Chinese demand, Native Northwest Coast supply, and Pacific Island labor and ports, was firmly established.

As profitable as the Pacific trade was, the price was high for everyone involved. Eventually, the indigenous participants would pay the dearest prices: the majority of their lives and their independent sovereignty. The initial commercial exploits of the competing European empires and the United States paved the way for the early settler-colonialism of the 1830s through the 1870s wherein land possession became more important than resource extraction. Western diseases decimated Native populations of the Northwest Coast and the Pacific Islands, introduced plants and animals devastated local ecology, and colonial peoples dispossessed the reeling indigenous survivors. When Captains Meriwether Lewis and William Clark of the Corps of Discovery reached the lower Columbia in the late autumn of 1805 they saw the devastation of a recent smallpox epidemic that had occurred about five years earlier among the lower Chinookan Clatsops and the neighboring Salishan Tillamooks.<sup>10</sup> The Pacific trade on the lower Columbia was scarcely more than a decade old and its negative effects were already all too evident to

the colonialists. Indeed smallpox was predicted; there had been some discussion during the planning stage of the expedition to carry vaccine to inoculate at least some Indians, but a concerted inoculation effort by Euro-Americans did not emerge then or later.<sup>11</sup> The Hudson's Bay Company made some effort to combat the lower Columbia smallpox epidemics when they vaccinated their "fort Indians" and local Klickitats in the 1830s, but they do not seem to have tried too hard to reach beyond the immediate Native population. If quinine was distributed among the Indians to fight the malarial "fever and ague" outbreaks, there is no record.<sup>12</sup>

The early nineteenth-century Pacific trade had numerous short and long term effects worthy of study for Americanists. European imperialism in China, particularly in the southeastern Guangdong province by which the British came to dominate Canton by the late 1830s, exacerbated political and economic problems which, among other effects, led to the recruitment and emigration of contracted Chinese laborers or "coolies" to the United States from the 1850s to the 1880s. These men (women were mostly excluded: at first by Chinese custom and American policy and later by Congressional legislation) would form the kernel of the Chinese-American population that has figured so prominently in United States history.<sup>13</sup> As predicted by Ross Cox, Hawai'i became the imperial prize of the Pacific being conveniently situated for trade between the Americas and East Asia; it was ultimately seized by wealthy citizens of the United States with the support of the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps in the 1890s. The Philippines, one of the few examples of openly named United States imperialism, met a similar fate; unlike Hawai'i, though, the Filipinos eventually achieved nominal independence. As should be evident



from these brief examples, the consequences of the Pacific trade are many and far-reaching.

I have chosen to focus on the colonization of the "lower Oregon Country" from which we can learn something of the trade's internal dynamics and the nature of colonialism in a region that would become part of the continental United States. This chapter examines the trade as experienced in the expansive region that most directly affected the lower country. Roughly, the area includes the lower Columbia River environs (including the adjacent coast and river valleys), the southern Columbia Plateau, the northern Great Basin and Klamath Basin, the northern California-southwestern Oregon borderlands, and north along the Oregon coast and Willamette River back to the lower Columbia. As recently demonstrated by anthropologist Theodore Stern, this massive region featured an elaborate trading network long predating encounters with Europeans and Euro-Americans.<sup>14</sup> The colonialists sought to overlay this extant network with a fur trade and to control the procurement of that commodity vis-à-vis competing imperial powers with the concomitant long-term goals of securing sovereignty and dominion over the indigenous peoples and their lands. Although the governments of Great Britain and the United States exhibited only occasional interest in the Oregon Country, mercantilists such as Simon McGillvray of Montreal and John Astor of New York kept the issue of imperial dominion alive. Ultimately, the nations divided the massive region between themselves in a series of treaties between 1818 and 1846.<sup>15</sup> Per usual in imperial politics, the indigenous peoples were not included in the diplomatic negotiations.<sup>16</sup> As well, colonial traders on the ground level in the lower Oregon did not

discuss sovereignty issues or international disputes with Indians.

In the Oregon Country, the Chinookan peoples of the lower Columbia River benefited first and most extensively at the expense of both colonialists and other Native peoples. In 1792, Captain Robert Gray was the first non-Native mariner to navigate the treacherous mouth of the Columbia River, "one of the most fearful sights to meet the eye of the sailor," according to a subsequent voyager.<sup>17</sup> Gray's ship was also first to trade with the Chinook Indians of modern-day southwest Washington at the village of *qwatsa'mts* or "Chinook" on the north bank of the lower Columbia.<sup>18</sup> The name Chinook most likely derived from the Chehalis (Salish people neighboring to the north) word for the village and people and became the ascription for not only *qwatsa'mts* but more loosely applied to all the similarly speaking peoples below The Dalles, the great narrows of the Columbia near the Cascade Mountain divide.<sup>19</sup> Indeed, according to the Corps of Discovery notes, the villagers at *qwatsa'mts* had adopted the term Chinook as self-referential as early as 1805.<sup>20</sup> So central did the Chinooks become to the Northwest Coast trade that the trade jargon bore their name as well, and until the cataclysmic malaria outbreaks began in 1830, the lower Chinookan peoples greatly influenced the regional fur trade. Under the nominal leadership of Concomoly and his wife, "who by influence or example kept order as much as possible," the Chinooks at *qwatsa'mts* and their lower Chinookan neighbors – the Willapa Chinooks, Clatsops, Cathlamet, Wahkiakum, and Clackamas – earned reputations as shrewd traders. Lewis and Clark famously wrote of them: "they are great higlers in trade...[and have] an avericious all grasping disposition. [I]n this respect they differ from all Indian I ever became

acquainted with.”<sup>21</sup> Unstated, the explorers were noting a “respect” that the Chinooks seemingly had in common with colonial traders. Indeed, the Chinookan traders frustrated Europeans and Euro-Americans through their adept bargaining and by refusing to accept fixed prices or cheap company goods, leading partly to trader David Thompson’s characterization of them in 1811 as “the scoundrels that possess this River from its mouth up to the first Falls.”<sup>22</sup>

Although the mouth of the Columbia was dangerous and Native traders kept the costs high, the trade attracted many ships to the river. After 1792, the lower Columbia gradually emerged as a necessary stop rivaling the importance of the islands above Puget Sound, particularly since the Chinooks initially forced other Native traders such as the Chehalis to trade their furs to them for subsequent exchange with the British and Euro-Americans.<sup>23</sup> As well, the coasters sought indigenous products to facilitate further trade along the Northwest Coast. Although the sea otters – the prize of the Pacific fur trade – were in shorter supply in this southern region, the lower Chinookan and Tillamook peoples supplied colonialist traders with *clamon* or dressed elk-skin hides that northern Native groups desired as body armor, similar to leather jerkins of medieval Europe. The *clamon* were effective for slave raids, feuds, and wealth displays. The dressed hides were reportedly sufficient to turn an arrow as readily as a pistol ball, though the later proliferation of more powerful arms would eventually render them useless and quash the market.<sup>24</sup> Lower Chinookans also provided some slaves, which coasters traded northward along the coast.<sup>25</sup>

The lower Chinookans did supply assorted peltries for the Chinese market, but

their importance to the trade was also less direct. From lower Chinookan traders, ships obtained fresh water and food at the beginning and end of their Northwest Coast visits in addition to the aforementioned indigenous goods necessary for a successful trade. Moreover, the same climate and geography that limited the sea-otter population made the region an obvious choice for a trade settlement. A lower Columbia station could gather inland peltries, supply coasting vessels and the Russian posts in modern southeast Alaska and northern California, and not incidentally establish the colonialists' nation with a secure imperial claim. The colonialists recognized this possibility, but none was able to establish a post until 1811 with Fort Astoria's curious mixture of American capital and quasi-sovereignty with mostly British direction and personnel. Indeed, the employees were generally not American or British per se, but French Canadians from Montreal and Michilimackinac, Kanakas from O'ahu, Iroquois (likely Mohawks because they were recruited in Montreal), and Nippisings from the eastern Canadian Plains.

Several factors conflated to limit the imperial competition over the lower Oregon trade to Great Britain and the United States. The Russians were mostly interested in sea otters or "Мягкое Золото" literally "soft gold"<sup>26</sup> rather than the fur-bearers of interior Oregon. From their tenuous colony among the Sitka Tlingits, the Russians reached southward to Alta California, the terminus of the sea otter lands. The pelts of the sea otters became browner and thinner south of Puget Sound and consequently less valuable to Chinese traders at Canton and Kyakhtah which partly limited Russian activity in the Oregon Country and Alta California. The Spanish further inhibited the development of an Alta California colony, limiting the Russians to a small trading post dependent on

external food supplies. An attempted Oregon settlement by the Russians was also unsuccessful. In March 1806, as the Corps of Discovery was heading back to St. Louis, Captain Nicolai Rezanov of the *Juno* failed in his attempt to cross the bar at the Columbia's mouth. The Russians did not mount another attempt at exploring the area for colonization before the construction of Fort Astoria in 1811 effectively preempted subsequent Russian efforts.<sup>27</sup> The Spanish had their mines of precious ore in New Spain and Peru and were interested in the Northwest Coast trade only insofar as it attracted unwanted imperial competitors to the Pacific American coastline. In 1788, the Spanish ventured to the Northwest Coast to monitor the Russians; earlier Spanish voyages had only been exploratory but they claimed the entire Pacific American Coast nonetheless. To the Spaniards' surprise, they encountered British ships. To secure their claim, in 1789, they established presidios among the Wakashan peoples, the Makahs on the northern tip of the Olympic Peninsula and the Nuu-chah-nulth across the straits on western Vancouver Island, deploying Native Peruvians as soldiers. Although the Spanish advised Maquinna the principal Nuu-chah-nulth headman of the Nootka Confederacy that they were the reigning authority, the presidio commander refused to intervene when Maquinna complained of abuses by European and Euro-American coasters. The ineffective Spanish presence soon dissipated with the so-called "Nootka Dispute" with Great Britain in 1789-1790. Maquinna had granted British Captain John Meares "a spot of ground...whereupon a house might be built for the accommodation of the people we intend to leave behind."<sup>28</sup> Francisco Eliza as presidio commander at Santa Cruz de Nootka did not want even a small British presence on the Nootka Sound and seized the

property, asserting Spanish sovereignty over Northwest Coast through right of discovery. The British threatened war over the matter and argued that since the Spanish had not occupied the region until the belated and small presidios, their claim was void. France, embroiled in revolution, could not come to the aid of its Catholic ally while Britain had the likely support of Prussia, The Netherlands, and possibly the United States. Spain backed off and agreed to compensate British losses and to honor free and open trading on the Northwest Coast.<sup>29</sup>

The British advanced an important precedent in imperial diplomacy: occupation determined the legitimacy of imperial claims, a precedent that would haunt them when the United States vied for dominion in the Oregon Country. Spain withdrew from the Northwest Coast in 1790 and, in 1819, it officially ceded claims north of Alta California (42<sup>nd</sup> latitude) jointly to Great Britain and the United States. Although Austrian and Portuguese flags occasionally flew from the mastheads of coasters, the ships actually tended to be owned and operated by British merchants seeking to avoid the profit-draining constraints of the East India Company's imperial monopoly in the Cantonese trade.

Indeed, the bureaucratic ordering of empire inhibited both the Russian and British traders and consequently aided the Americans. In 1799 the Russians emulated the seemingly effective imperial order of Great Britain and formed the Russian American Company, a monopoly modeled after the East India and Hudson's Bay Companies. The Russian imitation had numerous problems: its fixed prices and policies set from the vastly distant St. Petersburg and Moscow combined with supply problems and occasional

conflicts with powerful Tlingit clans between 1805 and 1856 to keep the Russians from significant colonization.<sup>30</sup> After several decades of precarious fits and starts and never breaking their dependency on British, Americans, and Tlingits for food and supplies, the Russians cut their losses and sold out their claims to an American empire entirely in 1867. The British whom the Russians had emulated created similar imperial constraints for themselves. Internal dissent and rigid, avaricious policies stalled the British maritime and land-based trade in the Pacific Northwest for decades. In Asia, the East India Company drowned the enterprise of independent British Northwest maritime traders by forcing them to exchange their furs with company traders at low, fixed rates and then dealt with the Cantonese themselves and kept the resulting profits. The effect of this unequal relationship was not altogether different from the Chehalis position vis-à-vis the Chinooks wherein the procurers of the furs were largely shut out from the benefits of their labors. The merchants of the United States faced no such monopolistic constraints: indeed, the predominantly Boston-based ships exploited the bureaucratic faultlines of imperial monopoly and dominated the maritime trade during its heyday from 1792 to 1824.<sup>31</sup>

The land-based trade of the Oregon Country fared similarly for the British. The Hudson's Bay Company wasted tremendous resources and nearly fifteen years battling the Montreal upstarts, the Northwest Company, for dominance in "Rupert's Land," the interior Canadian West. The Northwest Company disputed the claims of the London-based Hudson's Bay Company charter, which was created before most of Canada had been "discovered." Although the British companies had established trading posts well

west of their American competitors to the south and reached the coast of modern-day British Columbia in 1793, they did not venture down the Columbia River until David Thompson's expedition in 1810. By then the United States had ships regularly coasting the lower Columbia environs and the famed expedition of Captains Meriwether Lewis and William Clark had personalized ties with the lower Chinookan peoples, particularly the Clatsop Nation on the south bank.

According to the Nootka Dispute's resolution, the Lewis and Clark expedition down the Columbia could not secure the Oregon Country for the United States: theirs was only a temporary occupation. Still, they carefully left evidence of their stay in the form of a written statement, a map of their travels, and a listing of their names; these papers were nailed inside their "Fort Clatsop" and given to local Native headmen.<sup>32</sup> The expedition improved the American diplomatic position vis-à-vis British claims as had Gray's successful navigation of the Columbia's mouth in 1792. By design, the Lewis and Clark expedition had important imperial implications. The Corps of Discovery followed the Louisiana Purchase of 1803 by which the young United States obtained 828,000 square miles of the northern Great Plains (between modern Canada and the American Southwest) east of the Rocky Mountains from Napoleon Bonaparte of France. The purchase did not include the vast and, to colonialists, largely unknown Oregon Country (modern northwestern Wyoming, western Montana, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington). The indigenous peoples who lived and possessed these lands in reality rather than on paper obviously had no role in the imperial negotiations and were not particularly impressed by the announcement of American sovereignty. James Ronda has written an



excellent account of Lewis and Clark's attempts to convince the Plains Indians of the supposed import of the United States and the need for them to trade only with Americans based in St. Louis. The Corps appointed chiefs, giving medals as tokens of their status, and tried unsuccessfully to make the Indians conform to their wishes, including a halt to raiding one another and honoring the proposed national trade monopoly of St. Louis fur traders.<sup>33</sup>

The Oregon Country phase of the Lewis and Clark expedition was different in that the United States had no claim of imperial sovereignty through purchase; instead, they attempted to advance the commercial relationship between Euro-American and Native traders. Nonetheless, the trade relationship had indirect imperial origins in that British and Russian bureaucracy contributed to its growth and had possible future imperial implications if the United States could cement ties with the lower Chinookans to the exclusion of the British. The Northwest Company had already established trading forts on the upper Columbia River and in much of modern British Columbia and Alberta and was an obvious possible competitor for the traders of the United States. For their part, however, the lower Chinookans considered the maritime traders individually not nationally; they indicated their favorites among the thirteen ships that visited biannually, basing their preferences on the captain's disposition and prices. The Clatsops seem to have referred generally to all colonialist traders as *pâh-shish'-e-ooks* "cloth men" or "blanket people" for one of the common trade items.<sup>34</sup> This sobriquet was in keeping with the local trading scene in which peoples sometimes received the name of their most prominent contribution. For example, Clatsop (variously spelled) meant "pounded

salmon," a dried preparation comparable to pemmican that formed such a crucial part of the diet and culture of the Northwest. The Clatsop people seem to have been so called not because they necessarily produced a large surplus of that important product but because the calm, sheltered bay in which lower Chinookans obtained it from visiting upper Chinookans was in "Clatsop" territory.<sup>35</sup> The best fisheries were upriver where the Columbia narrowed, gained elevation near the Cascades divide, and obstacles (natural and artificial) bunched and impeded the migrating fish, allowing for dip-netting; the Cascades rapids, The Dalles, and Celilo Falls were particularly productive until drowned by the hydro-electric dams of the latter twentieth century. With the exception of the Athapaskan Clatskanies whom the lower Chinookans derisively called "Claxstars" ("round-heads"), Lewis and Clark continued the practice of giving medals, appointing chiefs among influential, local headmen and mostly tried to avoid violence and negative interactions – their theft of a Clatsop canoe in March 1806 notwithstanding.<sup>36</sup> The Clatskanies may have been part of the regional cultural-trade network previously, though they did not participate in the common practice of head-flattening among high-status individuals (hence the derogatory name "Claxstar"). However, these Athapaskans of the lower Columbia environs had recently "flogged" the Chinooks and were *personae-non-grata* in the winter of 1805-1806; and the Corps predictably recorded only second-hand negative reports of them.<sup>37</sup>

The Corps of Discovery had descended below the Cascade Mountain divide and arrived on the lower Columbia in late October 1805, too late for the fall visit of the coasters and too early for the spring trade. As was partly their mission, the explorers

(particularly William Clark) wrote extensively about the indigenous peoples, native flora and fauna, climate, geography, evidence of competing colonialists, and the economic promise of the region. They witnessed much of the bustling trade among the Native peoples on the lower river and along some of the subsidiary streams and the local Pacific Coast; the trade, as far as the explorers could judge, was conducted almost entirely by water. The lower Chinookans employed three distinct canoe-types to navigate the rough coastal and intertidal waters, the expansive estuaries, and the swift currents of the narrows and subsidiary streams. Lewis and Clark were taken with the functional designs but particularly impressed with the ornately carved décor of the canoes (and gabled plank-houses), commenting that "the woodwork and sculpture of these people...evince an ingenuity by no means common among the Aborigines of America."<sup>38</sup> They noted relatively few horses compared with the Columbia Plateau and Plains Indians, as the animals were of less use in the river economy, though lower Chinookans could and did obtain them from the Sahaptins upriver on the Plateau.<sup>39</sup>

The previous decade of the maritime trade had left a permanent imprint on the region with the effects of disease already taking an early, brutal toll and Chinese, American, and European trade goods abounding. Clark wrote "The *Small Pox* had destroyed a great number of the natives in this quarter. it prevailed about 4 or 5 yrs Sinc among the Clatsops, and distroy'd Several hundreds of them, four of their Chiefs fell a victym to it's ravages." He also noted many burial canoes on-land a few miles downstream from Fort Clatsop and empty villages among the Tillamooks on the coast.<sup>40</sup> Among the many survivors, China plates, red and blue blankets, old muskets (mostly in

disrepair from lack of maintenance and firing gravel instead of scarce lead-balls), kettles, pots, and *tia Commashuck* or "chief beads" were ubiquitous. During the winter, at least, the most common trade item among Indians was food. Roots, particularly wapato, "the most valuable of all roots" grew in the marshy river valleys and formed "a principal article of traffic between the inhabitants of the valley and those of this neighborhood or sea coast."<sup>41</sup> The expedition's Fort Clatsop stood between the wapato suppliers – mostly Wahkiakums and Cathlamets with ready access to the wetlands of the river valleys – and the three principal Clatsop villages; however, the Corps rarely obtained as much wapato as they desired from the Native traders. The Wahkiakums and Cathlamets saved much of their wapato for trade with the Clatsops for their finely crafted reed-mats, waterproof hats and baskets (all of which impressed the Corps as much as the woodworking). As well, the Chinookan wapato-suppliers sought whale blubber and oil as well as other gifts of the sea that came to the Clatsops via the neighboring Tillamooks on the northern Oregon coast. As well, the expeditions' supply of trade goods was largely depleted by their venture up the Missouri, across the Rockies, and down the Columbia, which limited their bargaining ability. Regardless, the Native traders seemed unwilling to trade all their foodstuffs for non-Native manufactured goods, preferring to spread out their trade and diversify the nature of what they obtained. Realizing the trade value of the Clatsop-manufactured goods, the Corps re-supplied their stores for the return journey with the crafts of the lower Chinookans. Subsequent land-based traders would continue this practice, as the Sahaptin peoples of the Plateau readily bartered for lower Chinookan products.<sup>42</sup>

The journals of the Corps of Discovery are invaluable sources for glimpsing everyday life on the lower Columbia during the early colonial-indigenous encounters. Clark took copious notes throughout their visit (November 1805 – April 1806) on the lower Columbia and Lewis wrote irregularly beginning in late December, although the two captains mostly reproduced the other's observations, rarely producing independent entries for the same day. They documented the manner of trade, communication, and personal relations that existed independent of the fur trade, bits of "Indian history" which the Corps was instructed to record.<sup>43</sup> Their observations were admirable but, predictably, not without fault. Probably confused by bilingual border villages, the Indians' multilingual abilities generally, and perhaps the Chinook trade jargon, the explorers noted that all the Native peoples spoke the same language below the Cascades rapids. As mentioned, they never met the Clatskanies and so were not aware of the presence of an Athapaskan language. They did meet Chehalis and Tillamook Indians, however: both peoples were coastal Salish speakers. Because Lewis and Clark could discern upper Chinookan (Cascades rapids to Celilo Falls) from lower Chinookan dialects, it seems likely that the Salishan speakers whom they met did not speak their principal language when trading. As the trade jargon was based largely on Chinookan words (though also an assortment of other languages such as Salish, Nuu-chah-nulth, and English as well as onomatopoeia), the confusion is perfectly understandable. Still, here and elsewhere, the captains did not let limited evidence keep them from sweeping generalizations about the Native peoples of lower Oregon.

The ethnographic value and the racist faults of the journals conflated regarding

many topics of human behavior though perhaps none more so than the "vices" of theft and prostitution. Lewis and Clark considered thievery a cultural trait and their assessments are still to be found in modern historiography. Stephen Ambrose recently discussed the Corps' decision to winter near the Clatsops on the south bank rather than the Chinooks on the north bank and rightly noted the roles of the promised availability of food and the lobbying efforts of the Clatsops that are clearly evident in the journals. More problematic is his unqualified statement regarding a single incident in which five Chinook men stole two rifles and subsequently returned them: "the Captains found they liked the Clatsops much better than their relatives the Chinooks, mainly because the Clatsops were not thieves."<sup>44</sup> The journals, indeed, reveal that the Corps was intimidated by and distrusted the Chinooks, but while it is not surprising to encounter the attribution of thefts to Chinook culture in early nineteenth-century writings, it is surprising to read them in recent scholarship. Theft occurred in all societies; indeed, the Euro-American explorers stole one of the most valuable items on the lower Columbia, a Clatsop canoe, for their return journey.

The topic of prostitution has a similarly problematic history. Despite the inhibitions one might expect in early nineteenth-century writings, the Corps of Discovery journals freely addressed sexuality, and their observations readily found their way (in altered form) into the published versions of the adventure; as James Ronda has observed: "Sex usually made for good copy."<sup>45</sup> Indeed, Lewis's published history of 1814, which was actually written by Philadelphia politician and financier Nicholas Biddle who was not on the expedition, was decidedly racier than the original journals. Such was probably

true generally of the journals-cum-travel-literature written during and about the early Pacific trade; the works became so prevalent that by 1831 Ross Cox worried that “I might subject myself to the charge of plagiarism...if I touched on” a discussion of Hawai’ian culture and “vices.” Cox’s complaint that charges “of lasciviousness...[are] too general,” and his proto-relativist stance that “English chastity” is not judged by “the disgusting conduct of the unfortunate females who crowd our sea-ports and ships” was not typical of his time.<sup>46</sup> Although the Wahines of Hawai’i were arguably the women most addressed and fantasized about, Chinookan women received an ignominious place in the literary canon. Indeed, in Sylvia Van Kirk’s study of North American fur trade marriages, they serve as a principal example of sexually exploited Native women.<sup>47</sup> Sexuality was also part of the behavior of what was to them a Native menagerie about which “enlightened” scholars desired “scientific” information from the Corps. Lewis (with Biddle) wrote that “Among these people, as indeed among all Indians, the prostitution of unmarried women is so far from being considered criminal or improper, that the females themselves solicit the favours of the other sex, with the entire approbation of their friends and connexions.” The published account – though none of the journals – notes that the prostituted young women were daughters and nieces of Chinookan men and women conducting trade with the explorers.<sup>48</sup> Although sexual behavior, values, and mores are nearly as diverse as human societies are numerous and such observations should not be dismissed uncritically, there is still some question whether Chinookan peoples deserved their reputation. From the journals, there is only one group of young women that seem to have been prostituted, though the concept of prostitution may not be quite accurate. The six

women acted under the direction of a Chinook headman Delashelwilt from *qwatsa'mts* and his wife known commonly as "the old baud." The Corps encountered the group three times: November 21, 1805, March 15, 1806 and shortly after departing Fort Clatsop, probably March 24, 1806.<sup>49</sup> According to Gary Moulton who edited the most recent publication of the Lewis and Clark journals, Biddle added "her daughters & nieces" where Clark had written only "her 6 young squars."<sup>50</sup> The women's supposed status as daughters and nieces stemmed perhaps from conflating a separate story in which a family member was supposedly prostituted, as related by Clark to Biddle four years later in an April 1810 interview in Virginia. However, the man's intention seems to have been a custom-of-the-country marriage not prostitution. Clark told Biddle that "A Clatsop whom I had cured of some disorder brought me out of gratitude his sister." Clark apparently ignored her and, after she stayed "two or three days in [the] next room with Chabono's wife [Sacajawea]" and "declined the solicitations of the men," she returned to her village.<sup>51</sup> The lower Chinookan peoples were accustomed to the common fur trade practice of informal or custom-of-the-country marriages. Most famously, one woman bore a tattoo "J. Bowman," referring most likely to a sailor from a seasonal coaster.<sup>52</sup>

Further, the published accounts often conflicted with the original journals in which juicy details took on a life of their own. In the published version of Sergeant Patrick Gass's journal of 1811, the number of "the old baud's" prostitutes grew from six to nine and their encounters from three to "frequently."<sup>53</sup> Although Gass included this statement under the entry date of March 21, 1805, it is part of longer, rambling commentary ruminating on all the "Flatheads" west of the Rocky Mountains and seems



likely written later and with publication in mind. Indeed, the original journals of Lewis and Clark make it clear that the encounters were not frequent. On the second meeting on March 15<sup>th</sup>, Lewis and Clark both commented that “this was the same party that had communicated the venereal to so many [Clark says “several”] of our party in November last,” and they advised their men to avoid contact. The attribution of so much venereal infection is noteworthy as well since only one expedition member, Silas Goodrich, is explicitly mentioned as having contracted the disease, likely syphilis, in Oregon.<sup>54</sup> Finally, according to Sergeant Ordway’s journal which was not rewritten for publication, the third encounter with the “old baud” and her six young women occurred on the river, and consisted of their offering “a Sea otter Skin dried fish & hats for Sale” not themselves.<sup>55</sup>

The last piece of evidence, from the Corps’ journals, for the Chinookan peoples’ supposed propensity to prostitute family members derives from an interaction between the captains and a young Clatsop man of some local standing named Cuscalar. The captains first met Cuscalar when visiting his village on December 9<sup>th</sup>, shortly after having established Fort Clatsop in the same vicinity. Two weeks later on December 23<sup>rd</sup> Clark learned that Cuscalar was ill and “Sent him a little pounded fish [because Cuscalar] could not come to See us.” The following day Cuscalar, his brother “and 2 young Squar” came to Fort Clatsop, presenting mats for Lewis and Clark “and a parcel of roots” in exchange for two files, which the lower Chinookans prized for woodworking. Clark decided he could not afford to part with the tools and refused the trade, “which displeased Cuscalah a little. [H]e then offered a woman to each of us which we also declined accepting which

also displeased them." The identity of the two women is unknown. Neither seems to have been the wife of Cuscalar because she was identified on a visit five days later and Clark made no connection between them. The intent of Cuscalar and his brother is equally unclear; the captains assumed prostitution, but arranging a custom-of-the-country marriage may have been their goal. Although Clark identified Cuscalar as "the young Clatsop chief," he had not bestowed upon him a chief medal as he had the elders Coboway and Comowool. Cuscalar may have been seeking to advance his position vis-à-vis the new traders in the neighborhood through their curious ranking system, viewing Clark's gift of pounded salmon as an opening. Theodore Stern notes that men who became regular trading partners in the Native Columbia trade network did not barter as much as they presented reciprocal gifts to each other. In this light, Clark's pounded salmon and the mats and roots of Cuscalar take on a different meaning, particularly since Cuscalar fully expected the files and became upset when Clark balked. Such trading partnerships were generally accomplished through a marriage, a filial connection. Still, we cannot know for certain what Cuscalar and his brother intended. Nor do we know the women's status, highly ranked or prostitutes. They may even have been slaves as was the young cook whom Cuscalar offered to trade to Clark for "some beads and a gun" on February 28<sup>th</sup>.<sup>56</sup>

Slave raiding and trading were integral parts of Northwest Coast trade among Native peoples. Lewis and Clark commented that Cuscalar had purchased his cook from the Tillamooks who had taken him from a "great distance" down the coast. Both men also stated that slaves were adopted into Chinookan families that treated "them as their

own children."<sup>57</sup> The positive treatment of slaves has been heavily debated by scholars and there is much contrary anecdotal evidence from other western observers of the early nineteenth century. Important here is the point of identifying the women purportedly offered in trade. As anthropologist Yvonne Hajda has observed "many of the women whites took to be relatives were probably slaves." Chinookans with any social standing had flattened heads and, ideally, slaves were captured or traded from "round-headed" peoples or Claxstars. (The Athapaskan Clatskanies would have been only one among many Native peoples to get that name from the Chinookans.) Chinookan parents tied their infants' heads to cradleboards to produce the desired mark of distinction and beauty. By 1805, the practice extended up to the middle Columbia, leading to the Corps' tendency to refer to all Indians west of the Rocky Mountains (except the Shoshones of the Snake River) as the "Flatheads." Indeed, Kalapuya bands of the Willamette Valley, Chinookans, and Coast Salish peoples from the Alsea River on Oregon's central coast to the Quinault on the Olympic Peninsula flattened their heads. Hajda has argued that the various ethnic groups adopted the Chinookan practice partly to protect women from slave raids. As well, adopting the Chinookan mark of distinction added to their prestige regionally and made it more likely that an advantageous marriage could be arranged with the increasingly powerful Chinooks. Moreover, on the eastern and southern frontiers of the Greater lower Columbia region, only girls' heads were flattened.<sup>58</sup> Perhaps many Native prostitutes were slaves, young women captured or obtained through trade as children and who, while not necessarily chattel, had little social status or control over their bodies. Two decades later, in 1824, George Simpson noted that Native wives of

company employees kept female slaves at Fort George, hiring them out as prostitutes to newly arrived men for varying lengths of time. He claimed many died of the young women miserably of venereal diseases.<sup>59</sup>

The writings of the Lewis and Clark expedition in many ways form the base knowledge for the history of subsequent colonial-indigenous encounters of the fur trade era. It may be as Ronda has argued that: "The Chinookans, whose lives focused on trading and material wealth, saw sex as an equally valid way to amass the goods that signaled power and prestige."<sup>60</sup> Unfortunately, however, the way in which the sex trade worked in the first decade of the nineteenth century remains unclear. The earlier accounts of the maritime traders are problematic because the journal entries regarding the lower Columbia are relatively limited, which is not surprising given the extent of the ships' travels, and the colonialist-indigenous interactions were fleeting, rendering observations and conclusions questionable.<sup>61</sup> I will not attempt an encompassing explanation for the sex trade here but instead will return to the topic as the fur trade developed and offer more evidence for analysis. Nonetheless, it does seem safe at this point to conclude that Chinookan sexuality during the initial encounters is far more complex and the sources more problematic than has been typically recognized.

With the departure of the Corps of Discovery in the spring of 1806, the Pacific trade continued as a series of biannual encounters until 1811 and the construction of Fort Astoria, again in Clatsop country on the south bank of the lower Columbia. The enterprise was primarily a commercial venture to benefit John Jacob Astor and his partners, but because of the competing expansionist nations involved in the Pacific trade,

Fort Astoria was also an imperial venture by default. When the entrepreneur Astor (a German who had emigrated to New York via London) determined to establish a trading post on the northern Pacific American coast to boost his profits from the maritime trade, he was necessarily creating a permanent United States presence on the lower Columbia. Well aware of the political climate and its possible benefits, Astor approached President Thomas Jefferson for a monopoly of the land-based trade of the lower Oregon country citing national concerns. Jefferson dismissed Astor's request, preferring free competition among American traders west of the Mississippi River. East of that boundary, the central government had been operating trading houses through its factory system since 1796, effectively maintaining a monopoly of official Indian trade until abolishing the system in 1822.<sup>62</sup> The factory system existed to maintain order and peace between Indians and frontier settlements and, more nefariously, operated at a loss to encourage Indian debt, which could then be repaid through land cessions. The vastly distant Oregon Country without settlements or the concomitant need to "extinguish Indian title" to the land did not merit the governmental expense of operating a trading house and, all things being equal, Jefferson and his generation eschewed monopolies. Even the British barred monopolies within their domestic markets; the Hudsons Bay Company and the East India Company were seen as necessary evils for efficiently ordering the empire at the least expense to the Crown and Parliament.<sup>63</sup> Jefferson was also not convinced that the Oregon Country would ever be more than a "great state" with an affinity with the United States; constituent statehood for the far-off land seemed highly unlikely at the turn of the nineteenth century. Without his desired monopoly or significant support from the central

government of the United States. Astor labored to gather the capital and expertise for his proposed Oregon venture.<sup>64</sup>

In 1810, Astor sent one party by sea led by Duncan McDougall aboard the ill-fated *Tonquin* and a second party overland led by Wilson Price Hunt. The *Tonquin* party arrived at the Columbia in the spring of 1811, losing two boats and eight men attempting to cross the treacherous mouth, and gaining passage only by the luck of an in-coming tide, which carried the helpless ship into the estuary and away from the rocks. The "Astorian" arrived at their selected fort site on April 12, 1811. Like the Corps of Discovery, they opted for a south-bank location on Young's Bay; indeed, the nearby remains of Fort Clatsop quickly became a tourist attraction for colonials.<sup>65</sup> The first group of overlanders did not reach the lower Columbia until January 1812 with stragglers continuing to arrive and to be collected from Indian villages into the spring. Hunt had opted to attempt a route south of the Corps of Discovery's trek across the Bitterroot Mountains, mistakenly believing that the Snake River was navigable. Almost drowning in whitewater and being trapped by the towering walls of Hell's Canyon, Hunt's party was fortunate to have survived their journey. On his return trip to St. Louis in 1814, Robert Stuart took advantage of lessons learned and established a relatively safer route that would come to be known as the "Oregon Trail."

Although Astor failed to strike a partnership with Montreal's Northwest Company, he did lure away a few of its "wintering partners" – traders who lived and worked in the field at Fort William on Lake Superior and were invested in the company – and created the Pacific Fur Company. The Scots-Canadian defectors from the Northwest

Company added leadership, experience, and recruiting abilities. When Hunt had attempted to engage American trappers at Mackinac and St. Louis for the initial foray into the Oregon Country, few joined. Why venture to distant, unknown lands when productive trapping was known and readily available east of the Rocky Mountains? Thus, the Scots-Canadians recently of the Northwest Company supplied the brunt of the "American" labor force for Fort Astoria by contracting French Canadians, Kanakas, and eastern Indians such as Jean Baptiste Saganakei of the Lake of the Two Mountains Nipissings and Ignace Salioheni of an unnamed Iroquois band. Watatcum, a Cathlamet Chinook, became an essential "Astorian" early on as well. Contracted as a hunter, he supplied much of the fort's meat, particularly before the arrival of Saganakei, Salioheni, and the Metis Pierre Dorion. Despite the fact that only a minority of the labor force was Euro-American, the small trading post "Fort Astoria" flew the Stars and Stripes on occasion (such as Independence Day), received its funding from New York, and was thus American – more or less. In its multi-ethnic and multi-national composition, Fort Astoria actually resembled most contemporary colonial enterprises around the world.<sup>66</sup>

Writing of the daily activities in the company log, factor Duncan McDougall referred to his diverse employees simply as "the People," however, it would be a mistake to assume that this unifying, neutral identity inferred an egalitarian fort society. The structure of the enterprise reflected a complex hierarchy based on labor, race, and nationality with Hunt (Euro-American) and partner McDougall (Scots-Canadian) at the top, followed by subordinate Scots-Canadian partners, a few clerks some of whom were Euro-American, ethnically European and Native trappers, and Native hunters.<sup>67</sup> (Hunt

was absent at sea during almost the entire tenure of the Pacific Fur Company, arranging a contract with the Russians, coasting, and getting supplies at Hawai'i, leaving McDougall as the de facto leader.) Although the Europeans and Kanakas worked side-by-side in their daily pursuits of felling trees, building, gardening, tending livestock, and burning vast numbers of trees in the coal pit for charcoal (required by the blacksmiths' forge), the men's bunks were segregated and their positions were not equal.<sup>68</sup> A sense of the way this order was maintained can be gleaned from a drunken argument between Euro-American John Mumford and an unnamed Kanaka in which Mumford ultimately delivered a "cut very ill" to the Kanaka. Although in many cases a strict disciplinarian, McDougall dismissed the incident noting that the Kanaka had been "rather forward," having overstepped his place with the white man.<sup>69</sup> The Kanakas seem to have been regarded similarly to continental indigenes, and Alfred Seton often referred to them as "Owyhee Indians."<sup>70</sup> Although McDougall did allow "the People" to celebrate the Hawai'ian New Year on October 27, 1812, the fete was not repeated in subsequent years and seems to have been an excuse for the Europeans to get drunk and avoid their drudgery for a day.<sup>71</sup> Salioheni, though a valued and respected hunter, saw his family unceremoniously removed from the fort to make room for stores; they were to be told to share the "Nepisangue's house." This incident and another in which McDougall publicly upbraided Salioheni's wife may have contributed to the Iroquois' departure for home in 1814.<sup>72</sup> When the Cathlamet hunter Watatcum used his company-issued musket to hunt elk for his wife's Clatsop village after they had nursed him through a debilitating sickness, McDougall had him put in irons to remind him who owned the fruits of his



labors.<sup>73</sup> McDougall also tried to establish the hierarchy of "the People" in terms that he deemed the local Indians would comprehend and respect. According to Seton, McDougall represented himself to Concomly as the chief and the Astorian employees as his slaves.<sup>74</sup> Indeed, when one Canadian, Paul Jeremie, became upset with McDougall and his reportedly harsh work schedule in the construction of Fort Astoria, he led a small group of runaways. Chinookan headmen such as Comcomly captured and returned runaway men to Fort Astoria. As trader Alexander Ross wrote of one incident: "We had some time ago found out that the sordid hope of gain alone attached this old and crafty chief to the whites."<sup>75</sup> If Ross's assessment was accurate, Concomly's and the Astorians' interests were mutual.

Almost immediately after arrival, McDougall and company began to assess the political and economic lay of the land. It was readily apparent that, although the Chinookan peoples lived in identifiable winter settlements along the river and thus could be loosely categorized, there was no unifying polity despite a kinship network that loosely bound the villages. And other than slaves, headmen and women had little control over their people. Gabriel Franchere reflected that "the villages form so many little sovereignties."<sup>76</sup> The Astorians thus had to establish and maintain relationships with leading men and women in each village instead of dealing with a central power. The decentralization of power and lack of a clear order led visiting Northwesters David Thompson to complain in 1811 that the Chinookans were "bungling blockheads" because, according to his European sensibilities, work could not be done effectively without hierarchy and regimentation. As well, Thompson reserved some of the blame for

McDougall for not enforcing standardized trading practices and allowing each group of Native men and women that visited the fort with food and furs to haggle individual transactions autonomously.<sup>77</sup> That McDougall and subsequent Chief Factors could not force a radical altering of the Chinookans' loose political structure has led to some understatements of the fur companies' political power and influence between 1811 and the early 1830s, the heyday of the lower Columbia's land-based fur trade.

Anthropologist Robert Boyd went so far as to argue that the fur traders "operated in a political vacuum" because they "did not exert political control over the Indians of the area...."<sup>78</sup> While it is true that the initial form of colonialism evident in western Oregon did not resemble the British bureaucratic control that would later be achieved in India or that of the United States in the Philippines and Indian reservations, there are many stops along the road between "political vacuum" and imperial dominance.

After only a month at Astoria, McDougall began to play an obvious role in lower Columbian politics. On May 16, 1811, Dhaichowan, a Clatsop headman, brought the Chief trader to his village on Point Adams "to visit with a party of 80 or 90" Tillamooks and to confer about their potentially violent dispute with the Chinooks across the estuary. All parties agreed, according to McDougall, that hostilities should be avoided among "neighbors, but [Dhaichowan] said that the Tshinook's conduct forced them into those disagreeable broils, etc., etc." The following day McDougall dispatched one of his most experienced clerks Thomas McKay to the Chinooks to gain their side of the story and mediate. On the eighteenth, McKay returned saying that matters should be settled amicably, "as both parties from knowing our sentiments seem averse to commence

hostilities." The Astorians had not bent anyone to their will or fired a shot, but by declaring their neutrality and wish for settlement, they played an important diplomatic and, therefore, political role.<sup>79</sup> Likely the Native adversaries were not particularly fearful of the Astorians, who had yet to be reinforced by Hunt's overlanders. Still, the newcomers had obvious economic and military clout to be respected if they chose to take sides in hostilities and, as the preferred Native conflict resolution was settlement not war, the Indians' esteem for McKay and McDougall probably improved in the wake of this incident.

As well, trade was not easily separated from politics on the lower Columbia. After gaining the trust of headmen already experienced with maritime traders such as Coalpo and his powerful wife of the Clatsops, Comcomly of Chinook village, and Kamaquiah of a neighboring north-bank village upriver, McDougall's people accompanied them to meet other potential Native trading partners further afield. In early June, Coalpo took David Stuart about 80 miles up the coast to meet the Quinalts who were coastal Salish speakers like the Tillamooks with whom the Clatsops had a close affinity. Not to be excluded, Comcomly joined them as well and managed to connect Stuart with his relatives among the Quinalts. On his return, Stuart apprized McDougall that they would have to challenge a preexisting trade network dominated by the Quileutes of the Olympic Peninsula. The purportedly "wicked" Quileutes were currently taking "the otters, beavers etc." above Gray's Harbor and trading them for hyqua shells at Newetee on western Vancouver Island's Clayoquot Sound. Maritime traders presumably then traded with the Nuu-chah-nulth at Newetee for the furs. Stuart recommended the

Russian approach of obtaining "a few good Kodiak Indians" to hunt the sea otters and take the trade away from the Quileutes, Newetee, and the coasters.<sup>80</sup>

The Astorians eventually established direct trade with the Quinaults, the Chehalis, and others previously dependent on Chinook mediators, and these trade relationships had clear political implications. Comcomly and the Chinooks would have less advantage over their Native neighbors when they could no longer mediate the fur trade. Although he could do nothing to prevent such losses, Comcomly kept his one good eye open for any hint that other headmen had gained some advantage over him. When McDougall exhibited obvious distrust of his intentions during the first year, Comcomly sent his son Challowane to serve aboard the Astorian's little sloop the *Dolly* with which they plied the lower Columbia to the Cascades Rapids obtaining food, furs, timber, and cedar bark for the fledgling settlement. Comcomly's overture and Challowane's successful performance greatly warmed relations between Astoria and Chinook.<sup>81</sup> When McDougall gave Casino, principal headman of the Clackamas, a blue greatcoat, Comcomly insisted on one as well. He probably coveted the French linen coat less than what the garment might represent. Mariners, the Corps of Discovery, and the Astorians commonly bestowed western garb to honor and distinguish their preferred Native trading partners. Casino was one of the most powerful figures among the cluster of villages around the confluence of the Columbia and Willamette rivers, and the Astorians demonstrated an increasing interest in the Willamette Valley since 1811. They dispatched trapping and hunting parties, opened trade with the Kalapuyan bands above the falls, and wintered the upper Oregon trappers throughout the lower Willamette Valley before permanent stations were

established on the Columbia Plateau. Comcomly did not miss much nor did McDougall. The blue greatcoat McDougall gave Comcomly was apparently more ornate than Casino's, "handsomely made with large Capes, the whole bound with red binding: after the manner he had expressed a wish to have such a coat."<sup>82</sup> The presentation of gifts, the jockeying for trade position, and entrusting the care of your people to others (i.e., Chalowane and David Stuart) were inherently political acts. Company clerk Alexander Ross described the lower Columbians as "a commercial rather than a warlike people. Traffic in slaves and furs," he explained, "is their occupation."<sup>83</sup> While his assessment is certainly oversimplified, it strongly suggests the extent to which lower Columbia economics and politics were linked, particularly from 1811 onward. Far from existing in a political vacuum, the fur companies occupied central roles in Indian political affairs and vice versa.

The political effects of the trade sometimes manifested in unpredictable ways, partly because the fort demanded so many resources from the Indians during the long, if relatively mild, winters between late September and late June. (West of the Cascades, autumn, winter, and spring blur into each other as a often chilly "rainy season" broken periodically by brief periods of welcome sun and warmth, which the traders and subsequent colonialists rarely failed to note in their journals.) As evidenced by the daily entries of the company log, the fort was nearly dependent on Native traders for nourishment, most famously salmon but also sturgeon and eulachon "smelts" that run in the months of February and March as well as nutritious, starchy roots such as wapato and camas. This dependence caused various political problems. During an early February

squall in 1813, two Chinooks and a Clatsop drowned while bringing salmon across the estuary to Astoria. Distraught relatives from Point Adams and Chinook blamed Comcomly, who had arranged for the food delivery. According to Comcomly, his position as a headman and perhaps his life were threatened by the tragedy. He turned to McDougall, who agreed to provide the mourning families with gifts to cover the dead, which helped Comcomly maintain his status as a respected headman and retained him as one of Astoria's most important trading partners.<sup>84</sup> The dependence pulled Fort Astoria into the lower Columbian cultural orbit as well. The hungry and frustrated fort-dwellers had to wait through the First Rites observances of the Chinookans before they could obtain sufficient salmon from the late spring and fall runs of salmon. Rightfully distrusting the colonials to treat the first salmon correctly, the Indians brought only a few fish to the fort, and to the chagrin of the Astorians, each salmon was already prepared according to cleaning and roasting customs. Specifically, the salmon could not be cross-cut into steaks but had to be filleted, and the meat could not be boiled but had to be roasted. The Astorians commonly committed both of these faux-pas. Finally, the Chinookans often dined with the Astorians to ensure that all the fish was consumed before sundown. The preparation and consumption customs demonstrated the peoples' respect for the salmon and both encouraged and welcomed the larger run to follow.<sup>85</sup> McDougall complained his first year and even prepared for attack because he thought the Chinookan peoples had formed an alliance and would first weaken his people with hunger before mounting a concerted assault on the fort, such as it was after two months of fevered construction. However, he soon decided it was only a "superstition" and he

could do nothing to alter the Native peoples' practices. In subsequent years when planning for the fort's food supply, he estimated the arrival of each "fish season" and calculated for the initial prohibitions at the beginning of the runs. The Astorians did grow some food, but the garden was not terribly productive and the pigs brought from Hawai'i seem to have consumed more calories in the garden than they delivered as pork. The pigs seem to have often broken from their pen. Bears, attracted by the fort's free-range pigs and goats, provided additional calories thanks to Watacum's musketry.

Contrary to the commonly held notion that fur traders did not compete with Indians for resources,<sup>86</sup> competition between colonials and Native peoples, particularly in the Willamette Valley, soon became a problem. It is difficult to determine the exact number of deer and elk killed by the Astorians because they freely interchanged three measurements: the imprecise "bales," gross weight, and number of carcasses; but the inexact and anecdotal evidence suggests the figures were quite high. Within two and a half years of the establishment of Astoria, Alexander Henry noted that the "Red Deer or elk are now scarce near the fort, having been hunted so much...."<sup>87</sup> According to Gabriel Franchere, the Willamette station near modern Salem was originally established specifically to obtain meat, though, as he complained, most of it rotted before arriving at Astoria. The colonials apparently employed drying and storage techniques better suited for the colder climes of the Great Lakes and northern Plains where their experiential knowledge was generated.<sup>88</sup> Between the end of May and the beginning of August 1813, 74 bales of dried meat came to Astoria via the Willamette Valley. The number of animals is difficult to determine because deer and the significantly larger elk were not

distinguished, but Alfred Seton indicated that one shipment of 33 bales consisted of 117 "mostly deer."<sup>89</sup> One month after Seton's August haul, on September 9, 1813, McDougall reported that hunters "brought about 600 lbs. dried meat and a small bale of tallows [rendered fat rolls]." Far from being satisfied, McDougall explained that the limited take was "Owing chiefly to the great number of Indians, which over run the Wolamat at this season of the year."<sup>90</sup> Earlier in March, McDougall had received a report from the Willamette fort that, although Wallace and Halsey were on good terms with the Calipuyas, the Indians were curiously disinterested in company trade goods. For their roots, they only wanted meat, which the traders were collecting for Astoria. In June, when Wallace and Halsey arrived with their 19 bales of dried meat, they informed McDougall that they had explored the Willamette "almost to its source" and that "[t]he inhabitants throughout [the valley] are a set of poverty-strick beings, totally ignorant of hunting Furs & scarce capable of procuring their own subsistence."<sup>91</sup> The traders' assessment echoes the typical disparagement of Indians not yet initiated into the fur trade, but we should not wholly dismiss the claim of malnourishment. The following winter, trappers would complain that Kalapuyans stole beavers from their traps and, worse, ate them without preserving the pelts.

The three factors of McDougall's vague reference to Indians over-running the Willamette Valley, the local Kalpuyans' supposed inability to obtain sufficient protein, and the pressures of Astorian hunters can be best explored through an incident in January 1814. "Grande Nepisangué" was hunting on the Willamette when ten Sahaptian horsemen from the Columbia Plateau overtook him. The accounts of the ensuing threats



and communication between the Nipissing and the Sahaptians vary somewhat among the writings of Seton and Henry, but the gist was the same. According to Henry, the horsemen stated that "they did not wish white people to come up this river; that our guns had driven away the deer or made them so wild that they could no longer be killed with bows and arrows; and finally, that if we did not abandon the river, they would drive us away."<sup>92</sup> The less experienced and more nervous Seton insisted that the Plateau Indians threatened to exterminate the whites, but that the Nipissing convinced them of the whites' superior numbers and that an attack was unwise.<sup>93</sup> In the end, the Nipissing promised not to hunt in the immediate area and returned to the Willamette station without further incident. The encounter suggests that the pressures on the deer and elk populations were becoming unsustainable as early as January 1814, less than three years after the first colonial settlement. The Plateau people, who later visited Fort Astoria, had probably been hunting seasonally in the Willamette Valley for generations, though their exploitation may have increased in the previous half-century since the introduction of horses from the Spanish settlements. The result of the increased competition and pressures on the deer and elk populations for the indigenous Kalapuyans seems evident in the descriptions of Halsey and Wallace, and their weakening condition may help explain why the malarial outbreaks of the 1830s were so cataclysmic in the valley. Far from being a benign presence, the fur traders competed directly for important resources. From 1814, the problem would only grow as Henry began offering winter exploitation of the Willamette Valley's resources to "freemen" or unaffiliated trappers in exchange for their summer services.<sup>94</sup> These winter settlements gradually grew into permanent homesteads

with the freemen's retirement from trapping in the late 1820s and presaged the massive settler-colonialism of the 1840s and 1850s.

Of course, there was more to life than furs, food, and politics: as always in the North American fur trade, the company employees established "tender ties" with Native women.<sup>95</sup> Unlike the sexual relations between lower Chinookans and the Corps of Discovery, which were necessarily fleeting, poorly documented, and difficult to analyze, the permanent colonial presence of the fur trade offered a fuller account of wide-ranging relationships. On one end of the spectrum, McDougall and Comcomly negotiated a formal diplomatic and economic union between the chief trader and the Chinook headman's daughter, Ilche ("Moon Girl.") More typical and less formal, several traders, trappers, and fort employees – Kanaka, eastern Native American, Euro-American, and Canadian – maintained monogamous relationships with lower Columbian women for varying lengths of time from weeks to months to years. On the other end of the spectrum, there were the brief sexual encounters that involved a simple trade transaction: prostitution.

If Duncan McDougall or Ilche had any affection for each other before their marriage, his company log entry from their wedding day, July 20, 1813, does not reveal it. Instead, it shows only cold calculation to benefit the trade. McDougall dryly indicated that "For some time past [I] have in treaty with Comcomly for a female branch of his family to remain at this place." Presumably, such an arrangement would be a step above Chalowane's employment on the *Dolly*, which had effectively advanced the trading relationship. McDougall claimed that "the old man" was flattered, and for the purposes

of trade, "we conceive [the union] will be the means of securing to us his friendship more effectually than any other measure that could be adopted, and for which purpose only it was proposed." McDougall described the event with the same passive disinterest that he recorded most daily transactions at the fort: "In the afternoon received a visit from him for the purpose of finally settling the agreement spoken of. The female was brought, and the presents agreed on delivered; after which his people took leave without out further ceremony." Actually, the agreement was not settled yet. Native marriages involved reciprocal gifts and subsequent exchanges; they were not, as often characterized, "bride purchases." Indeed, approximately two weeks later, McDougall noted that "Comcomly brought over forty Salmon as a present, on account of the late arrangement with him."<sup>96</sup> Nearly a year later, the "agreement" was still unsettled, though it is not clear if short supplies in the summer of 1813 or some other reason accounts for the second round of gifts. With obvious sarcasm and disdain for the marriage, Alexander Henry recorded on April 25, 1814 that, "McDougall this afternoon completed the payment for his wife to Comcomly, whose daughter she was; he gave 5 new guns, and 5 blankets, 2 1/2 feet wide, which makes 15 guns and 15 blankets, besides a great deal of other property, as the total cost of this precious lady. This Comcomly is a mercenary brute, destitute of decency."<sup>97</sup> Henry's may not have been a representative opinion, however; Alfred Seton wrote that "[e]very thing went on well [at Fort Astoria in 1814] owing to Mr. McDougall's marriage with Comcomoly's (Chinook chief) daughter."<sup>98</sup>

Seton's positive assessment may have been true economically and diplomatically. Socially, however, Ilche's assumption of her role as Astoria's headwoman created

disruptions in the diverse fort community. In Native villages throughout coastal Oregon, headwomen and first wives commanded high social status, overseeing the labors of lower ranked women, lesser wives, children, and slaves, and often conducted inter-village diplomacy and trade.<sup>99</sup> Their power was a common cause of comment from ethnically European men unaccustomed to the public influence of women. According to Alexander Ross, "a Chinooke matron" accompanied by slaves "obsequious to her will," would "trade and barter...as actively...as the men, and it is as common to see the wife...trading at the factory, as her husband."<sup>100</sup> Ross Cox similarly noted the power of "chieftainesses" who "possess great authority" on the lower Columbia.<sup>101</sup> Indeed, the traders depended greatly on the diplomacy of "Madame Coalpo" after a conflict near The Dalles in 1814. A decade later in 1824 George Simpson claimed that she – not Coalpo – "rules the Roost" and her 1829 threats to abandon trade with Fort Vancouver in favor of American coasters brought gifts and a capitulation to her demands from Chief Factor John McLoughlin.<sup>102</sup> With her marriage to the headman or, in this case, Chief Trader McDougall, Ilche could reasonably expect a degree of deference and authority at Astoria and to be ranked above other women. Indeed, Alexander Henry complained that "the lady" was "haughty and imperious."<sup>103</sup>

However, the Astoria women were not all native to the lower Oregon Country. The differences between Chinookan and Iroquoian social norms, for example, were readily apparent. Iroquois women did not recognize rank in the same fashion as Chinookans. Clan mothers were respected elders and had important responsibilities in Iroquoian society, but there was no position comparable to Ilche's headwoman status

among the largely egalitarian agriculturalists of the Northeast.<sup>104</sup> Unfortunately, the interactions of the Native women from either end of the continent rarely entered the record, with the following exception offering only a suggestive peek. Upset with Salhione's children for "playing with some trifling things," Ilche entered the Iroquois family's tent, "took the playthings from them and set them bawling." According to Henry, Salhione's wife [anonymous per usual] responded by slapping Ilche, "Royalty was offended, and a dreadful row ensued." A disapproving Henry noted that McDougall intervened the following day, "revenged the insult offered to his lady" by "slapping and kicking Ignace's boy."<sup>105</sup> Five days later, McDougall gave Comcomly the second round of marriage gifts, though if there was a connection to Ilche's humiliating slap from the wife of a hunter, Henry missed it. Unfortunately, McDougall kept no journal after being temporarily relieved of his command after the sale of Fort Astoria to the Northwest Company six months earlier. There is no mention of how or if Salhione and his wife responded to McDougall's abuse of their son, but company personnel records indicate that the Iroquois family returned to Montreal at the end of the 1814 trapping season.<sup>106</sup>

The majority of monogamous relationships between company employees and Native women produced a predictably scant record compared with that of McDougall and Ilche. Alexander Ross noted one other union similar to McDougall and Ilche's: The Astorians arranged a marriage with "Chief How-How" specifically to "pave the way for our trappers and hunters to return to the Cowlitz."<sup>107</sup> For the most part, however, intermarriages were rarely mentioned. Quite simply, few men besides the traders and clerks kept journals; likely, many trappers were illiterate. There are passing references to

“William’s woman” or “two women” who accompanied their husbands on a trapping expedition.<sup>108</sup> Mariner Peter Corney mentioned vaguely in 1817 that “[t]he whole of the settlers do not exceed one hundred and fifty men, most of whom keep Indian women....”<sup>109</sup> Similarly, in 1828, “Rocky Mountain man” Jedediah Smith remarked on the many mixed-blood women “treated as wives” during his winter on the lower Columbia.<sup>110</sup> The colonials chose, as George Roberts, an officer of the Company put it: “The flower of the lower Columbia women were wives to the Company’s laboring men.”<sup>111</sup>

However, complaints most often seemed to have caused comment regarding intermarriages such as McTavish’s refusal to sleep in his quarters after his two roommates “took each of them a Chinook woman.”<sup>112</sup> Ross Cox, whose 1831 narrative consists of nearly equal parts memoir, morality play, and political commentary, claimed that “[n]umbers of the women reside during certain periods of the year in small huts about the fort from which it is difficult to keep the men.” Cox unequivocally considered all such sexual encounters prostitution, though he noted that the men and women might stay together for weeks. His reference to the seasonal nature of the encounters refers to the periods in the early summer and late fall in which the *voyageurs* were present at the lower Columbia fort. Cox did not consider that the trappers might be returning to the same women or might hold affections deeper than prostitution implies. That the men were protective of the Chinookan women, however, seems evident in an altercation between one “Mac” and Jane Barnes, an adventurous barmaid from Portsmouth, England, who resided at the fort for a few months in the summer of 1814. Barnes disparaged “the

native and half-bred women," "violently" attacking their "characters...and [Mac] recriminated in no very measured language on the conduct of the white ladies," presumably of Portsmouth tavern society. Cox states that "Mac" subsequently complained to him of Jane's "contempt on our women, and may I be d----d if the b---h understands B from a buffalo!" Cox concluded mildly, "he judged her 'poor indeed.'" <sup>113</sup> Trappers and traders valued Native women as much for their "tender ties" as for their practical knowledge, labor, and experience. Without them, the fur trade would not have succeeded. <sup>114</sup>

At Fort Vancouver in the 1830s, Anglican missionary Herbert Beaver would concur with Cox's assessment that without a formal Christian ceremony, the relationships between company men and Native women in the huts surrounding the fort were prostitution or in his preferred terminology, "concubinage." Totally inexperienced with the North American fur trade or the type of human relations it engendered, Beaver's overseas experience came as garrison chaplain on St. Lucia, and his stay was marked by complaints that Oregon was not "civilized" like Britain's Caribbean slave colonies. To counter "the beastly state of fornication," Beaver wanted the men bunked within the fort in a proposed bachelor's quarters and the "the native females, whether of pure or mixed breed" barred from residence, provisions, and medical attention. Beaver was not terribly popular among the Hudson's Bay men, not surprisingly since he considered their Native wives to be "the very excrement" on the "scale of humanity." He refused to marry A.C. Anderson to the mixed-blood daughter of James Birnie (a clerk at Fort George) and his Clatsop wife. Having conducted "one marriage between two persons of the lower order,

the man being Canadian, and the woman half-bred between an Iroquis and native woman...in the present deplorable and almost hopeless state of female vice and ignorance, I have no desire to unite more couples." He deemed inter-marriages on the lower Columbia "both irreligious and illegal." However, the following year in 1838, he changed his mind and recommended corporal punishment for all men who refused to marry their Native "concubines" in an Anglican ceremony. Beaver left later that year bound for a garrison chaplaincy in South Africa and frustrated that his many recommendations for civilizing Native women in Oregon were ignored. The regimented racial lines between indigenous South Africans and Anglo colonists better suited Beaver, and he remained there until his death in 1857.<sup>115</sup>

William Wadsworth who was, according to Cox, unaccustomed "to live in a state of single blessedness" brought a Wahine with him to Oregon from Hawai'i; he had arranged a special clause in his employment contract allowing this unusual situation. The unnamed Wahine seems to have stayed only for the approximately three months in 1812 that the *Beaver* remained on the Columbia before returning home, accompanied by her paramour Wadsworth who had apparently decided that sailing the *Dolly* along the lower river was not for him.<sup>116</sup> Other Wahines would later accompany their Kanaka husbands as Hudson's Bay Company employees in the 1830s.<sup>117</sup> Together with the Nipissings and Iroquois, transplanted indigenous peoples accounted for the earliest colonized families in the Oregon Country, predating the Euro-American "hardy pioneers" and Red River Metis by decades. That fact formed part of the contemporary criticism of the colonization of lower Oregon. Reverend Beaver complained that the lack of a "civilized population" was



no way for England to conduct its "infant colony" and to establish "perhaps a future London" on the Pacific. Rather, the Hudson's Bay Company board must send "hither a few respectable English families of the labouring class." As discussed in the following chapter, American missionaries would feel similarly, though they, of course, favored colonization by white, Christian families from the United States not England. Amidst the economic upheaval of the late 1830s and 1840s that would fuel the migration of "hardy pioneers" to Oregon, England did export part of its "surplus" population. However, their destinations were the "white colonies" of Australia and New Zealand where British imperial claims were unchallenged.<sup>118</sup>

As Beaver made his various complaints and recommendations directly to London, Chief Trader James Douglas had to respond and, in so doing, provided a little more information on "custom of the country" marriages on the lower Columbia. Regarding the withholding of medicine and provisions as inducement to marriage, "our own people...would absolutely ridicule us." Besides, he noted, only five wives receive company rations and all "have claims to consideration." Regarding charges of prostitution, Douglas firmly stated that "no person is permitted to make fancy visits, and I neither have nor would suffer any person, of whatever rank, to introduce loose women into this Fort." Indeed, he claimed no one had ever attempted such a thing. Rather, the Native women live "in a state of approval by friends and sanctioned by immemorial custom, which she believes strictly honourable." The women married by custom of the country form "a perfect contrast to the degraded creature who has sacrificed the great principle which from infancy she is taught to rever as the ground work of female virtue:

who lives in a disgrace to friends and an outcast from society." Thus, Douglas acknowledged prostitution on the lower Columbia but, unlike the writings of the Corps of Discovery, Cox, Beaver, and others, he differentiated it from the informal, monogamous unions and suggests that prostitutes were deemed low among Indians.<sup>119</sup>

Prostitution was one of the most commonly charged and least evidenced complaints in the traders' discussions of Chinookan women. Clearly, ethnocentrism played a major role in this and other negative depictions of lower Columbia women. For nineteenth-century Europeans and Euro-Americans, women fit roughly into one of two idealistic categories: chaste or loose. Chastity was an ideal that western women of "the better sorts" (those who were either wealthy or noble) embodied in their conservative dress, demeanor, and actions. Simply put, to meet the social expectations of a decidedly male-dominated world, women covered themselves toe to chin, deferred to men, and were supposed to avoid compromising situations and sexually charged talk; any violation might damage their reputation and render them "loose." The colonialists' models for loose women, on the other hand, were the working poor of early industrial England and the Atlantic seaboard cities of the United States. Displaced rural populations and impoverished immigrants could not afford to purchase "chastity," and the economic disruptions of modernity thrust prostitution, whether occasional or full-time, onto many women as a means of survival. If the expectations for chastity were unrealistic for many Anglo and Euro-American women, it was an absurd measure for Native women of the lower Columbia. Yet Ross Cox readily compared Chinookan women with "their frail sisters at Portsmouth," an English port town infamous for its taverns, brothels, and

desperate poverty.<sup>120</sup> Unwittingly, the Chinookan women embodied the westerners' notion of looseness. They bathed daily on the open shoreline of the Columbia and, according to the voyeuristic voyageur Alexander Henry, did not object as he gawked at them, even as he moved about to see if he could view their genitals. He could not; "so close did they keep their thighs together." Still, he deemed them "disgusting creatures" who were "devoid of shame or decency."<sup>121</sup> One man's perversion was apparently another's enlightened inquiry. Even when dressed, western observers frequently complained of Chinookan women's "nakedness." Where Anglo women were stifled under layers of linens, woolens, and contorting girdles, Chinookan women wore only skirts woven from cedar-bark that hung in strands from a kind of belt at the waist. Like Chinookan men, during much of the year, they wore nothing on their upper body except tattoos and perhaps a string of blue beads or hyqua shells. From the Corps of Discovery through the fur trade era, western observers ceaselessly commented on what the cedar-bark skirts did and did not reveal in various postures.<sup>122</sup> The Northwester David Thompson made the connection between dress and sexuality explicit, concluding "from what I could see and learn of them they are very sensual people."<sup>123</sup>

Besides idealized Anglo women, the colonials had another source of comparison to disparage the "naked" Chinookans: Native women of the Columbia Plateau or "upper Oregon Country." Not surprisingly, the Sahaptian and Shoshone women wore more clothing; they lived in the high desert country where the weather is colder and more severe than the sea-level Columbia estuary which is warmed by currents from the Pacific. As well, the cedar-rich forests, which supplied Chinookan clothing materials, stop at the

Cascade Mountains, which trap most of the substantial moisture on the west side, leaving Ponderosa, Lodgepole, and other species of conifers tolerant of dry conditions to dominate the eastern plateau and canyon country. East of the Cascade Mountains, people made their clothing from animal hides. Cox swooned over the Wallawalla women: "The females...were distinguished by a degree of attentive kindness, totally removed from the disgusting familiarity of the kilted ladies below the rapids, and equally free from an affectation of prudery. Prostitution is unknown among them; and I believe no inducement would tempt them to commit a breach of chastity."<sup>124</sup> David Thompson offered similar appraisals as he returned up the Columbia in 1811, "we no longer had to see naked females, many were well clothed, all of [the Nez Perce women] decently with leather, and in cleanly order, it was a pleasure to see them." This in stark contrast to the Chinookan women who, he charged, "had scarcely a trace of the decency and modesty of the upper country women."<sup>125</sup> Further, Chinookan women did not demure themselves or defer to men, but rather engaged openly in public affairs. Sahaptian women on the Plateau, according to the traders, were more subdued, further endearing them to the westerners.

The only Anglo woman on the lower Columbia was Jane Barnes. Though her stay was brief, she caused considerable competition and comment among potential suitors and her treatment points to the extent to which, in a colonial setting, race could mitigate a "white" woman's class status. By the standards of her day, Barnes could be considered "loose": Ross Cox's "Mac" certainly thought so. She had met Donald McTavish in her capacity as barmaid in a Portsmouth inn and had agreed to accompany the aging

Northwester to the Oregon Country and back without being married. McTavish likely mentioned that this trip was his last bit of foreign service and that he had already purchased a retirement estate in his native Scotland with his substantial fur trade earnings. However, upon Barnes's arrival aboard the *Isaac Todd* in April 1814, Chief Trader Alexander Henry competed with McTavish for her affections. Henry's case was helped by Barnes's sobering realization of what accompanying McTavish actually entailed. His duties necessitated an overland voyage on the northerly route across Canada, known with characteristic British understatement as "the express." The express meant up to six months and roughly two thousand miles of canoeing and portaging up the Columbia to the Athasbasca country across the Canadian Great Plains to Fort William on the western shore of Lake Superior where McTavish was to serve temporarily as Governor of the Northwest Company. Then, they would venture the last thousand miles across the Great Lakes and up the St. Lawrence to Montreal where a ship would bear them back to Portsmouth. Iroquois and eastern Algonkian women made the arduous trip between the Pacific and Montreal through the 1830s demonstrating that it was hardly a male-only pursuit, but Barnes declined to try it. Cox suggested that she regretted leaving home, having agreed to the overseas adventure "in a temporary fit of erratic enthusiasm."<sup>126</sup> According to Henry, he and McTavish negotiated her position over the course of a week and arrived at a settlement, although "[w]e differ on some personal points...." The continuing points of contention probably owed much to Barnes's being lodged in Henry's quarters rather than with McTavish or aboard the *Isaac Todd*. The plan was that Barnes would travel via the *Isaac Todd*, which would depart some weeks

later to Canton, and eventually back to England. Both men were concerned for her physical wellbeing and her reputation: "to cause no misunderstanding with the young gentlemen, etc." Indeed, the two were linked: if considered loose, the men feared that Barnes might be raped or as Henry called it, "ill usage."<sup>127</sup> McTavish apparently recovered from his loss of Barnes' affections quickly and married a Chinook woman on May 19<sup>th</sup>, but three days later both he and Henry joined the growing list of colonialists' lives claimed by the lower Columbia when they drowned paddling out to the *Isaac Todd's* anchorage.

Contrary to the elder gentlemen's fears, Barnes does not seem to have been abused after their demise. Cox claimed that the "flaxen-haired, blue-eyed daughter of Albion" became something of a belle of the ball for the remainder of her stay. Ignoring her lowly background in England and "loose" activities since, he deemed her worth "a score of the chastest brown vestals that ever flourished among the lower tribes of the Columbia." When Comcomly's eldest son Cassakas approached the fort to cement further the ties between the two peoples, his marriage proposal for Barnes was unconditionally rejected. Barnes reportedly replied in racialized terms, based on "certain Anglican predilections respecting mankind...among which she [and her country] did not include a flat head, a half naked body, or a copper-coloured skin besmeared with whale oil."<sup>128</sup> Inter-racial marriage, and any sexual interaction, worked in only one direction: male European and female Indian. This distinction made little sense to Cassakas whose sister Ilche had married McDougall the year before. Cox claimed that after this and subsequent refusals, Cassakas had a plan to kidnap Jane, which resulted in her having to

abandon her accustomed evening walks on the beach; perhaps, though the story could as likely have been concocted to control her movements. Barnes's status was premised on her racial identity, which included – in a colonial setting – a pass from looseness to chastity, but this conditional uplift apparently included checks on her freedom of movement, which were part and parcel of the ideal of chastity.

In his six months on the lower Columbia, from November 1813 to his death in May 1814, Alexander Henry tried to reform fort conduct, which included the access of Native women traders. He evidenced little experience with or tolerance for women conducting trade. His inexperience on the lower Columbia led him to accuse nearly every canoe of female Chinookan traders of being prostitutes, including chasing them off the beach even when they were obviously toting food and their woven manufactures, and he threatened to put women in irons. He claimed, for example, that Clatsop women who came to trade cranberries also came to trade “their precious favors.” He recorded a specific instance in March 1814 when “Several Chinooks who had slept here, mostly women, bartering their favors with the men....”<sup>129</sup> Gabriel Franchere, a French-Canadian clerk who resided on the lower Columbia from April 1811 until September 1814, did not term such liaisons prostitution. Generally, his writing reflected tinges of eighteenth-century French romanticism regarding “natural” societies uncorrupted by civilization rather than the moral condemnations more typical of the “enlightened” British and Euro-Americans, who celebrated civilization over savagery. According to Franchere’s basic ethnography, he considered the women’s behavior to be culturally accepted pre-marital sexuality. He concluded that “few marriages would occur [among Chinookans] if the

young men wished to marry only chaste young women, for the girls have no qualms as to their conduct and their parents give them complete liberty in that respect."<sup>130</sup> Young women expressed a degree of autonomy by having sexual relations with colonials and obtained "baubles" for themselves. Still, the participation of slaves and a grizzly story from Henry suggest that some of the sexual encounters might best be considered prostitution with all its implications of exploitation. Some weeks after his arrival on the lower Columbia, in late January 1814, he saw the corpse of one of the slaves belonging to Coalpo's family lying outside the fort. "The poor girl had died in a horrible condition, in the last stage of venereal disease, discolored and swollen, and not the least care was ever taken to conceal the parts from bystanders."<sup>131</sup> After some prodding, Coalpo sent people to remove the body, which they dragged away and unceremoniously stuffed into a hole. The writings of Henry and McDougall suggest that Coalpo or his wife had been prostituting slaves in a similar fashion as the "Old baud" in the Corps of Discovery accounts. In December 1812, McDougall had demanded that Coalpo send the "girls" away and was frustrated when he later learned that the Clatsops had only "concealed" them instead. McDougall ordered Coalpo and his encampment to leave their site below the fort but tried to ameliorate the rejection by offering tobacco. Coalpo refused the present and claimed he would never enter Fort Astoria again.<sup>132</sup> The sex trade was apparently a lucrative part of the relationship with the colonials and not one to be readily surrendered and, as evident from Henry's complaints two years later, Coalpo neither stayed away from the fort nor discontinued the prostitution of slaves.

On the issue of sex, the Chinookans and Henry had opposing economic interests.



In early 1814, with two men incapacitated by venereal disease, Henry feared that "the foul malady" would affect half his men by spring "and may seriously affect our commerce."<sup>133</sup> Venereal disease had been evident among the Astorians long before they even reached the Columbia: McDougall recorded cases on board the *Tonquin* after leaving New York in 1810 and one of the Kanakas Thomas Tuana brought it with him from Hawai'i in 1811. From April 1811 through the autumn of 1813, McDougall's sick-call registry often indicated three or four men either infected, receiving mercury "treatments," or recovering from bouts of venereal disease.<sup>134</sup> By 1814, Henry claimed that the disease, likely syphilis, was "prevalent among our people and the women in this quarter." He could not force his men to refrain from sexual interaction, though his paranoia about the disease seems to have spread. Henry noted that Cartier "discharged his lady" after discovering two pimples. Cartier's roommate "Bethune keeps his, though he is very dubious of her." Because Henry drowned two weeks later and fort record-keeping suffered as a result, we do not know if Cartier's pimples indicated anything. While venereal disease was a real problem for the Native and colonial communities, it may still have been overstated, becoming confused with skin conditions that reflected seasonal imbalances in nutrition. Henry noted in mid-March that Chinookan women began bringing "a quantity of cranberries and some roots." He claimed further that "[t]his vegetable diet has the good effect of purifying the blood and cleaning them of scabs...even venereal disease is checked by this diet, and sometimes cured."<sup>135</sup> Cranberries, wapato, camas, and licorice roots do not cure syphilis any more than the colonials' concoctions of mercury "quick-silver" ointments or Paul Jeremie's experiment

in which he submerged the hapless Tuana inside a horse freshly killed and disemboweled for his "cure."<sup>136</sup> In other words, what was reported as venereal disease, in some cases, was not.

The sex trade had political effects as well. McDougall alienated Coalpo in December 1812 when he ordered him "to be off with the whole of his people immediately" and destroyed "the remains of their houses" at the Clatsops' encampment on Point George. As well, other lower Chinookans were clearly concerned that women from their villages could be taken and enslaved as prostitutes. Two days after his confrontation with Coalpo, representatives from an unnamed Chinookan group "living a few miles behind us in Young's Bay" arrived at the fort. They were searching for a woman who had been lost in an overturned canoe a couple of days earlier. One of their slaves returned to the village and reported having left her alive on the shore. With Coalpo's recent abrupt departure, they thought that she had either been taken away by the Clatsops or that she was being held at the fort. McDougall denied any knowledge and accused their slave of lying. Four days later, McDougall noted that the missing woman had been found, ending a situation that could have fueled an altercation.<sup>137</sup>

One of the more curious ways that sexuality and potential violence entered the Astoria record was through the mysterious "strangers, a Man & woman" who arrived at the fort on June 15, 1811 bearing a letter from an unknown Northwest Company post presumably at the headwaters of the Columbia River. McDougall could not put his finger on it, but something was odd about the "man." Initially, McDougall thought "he" was "a half breed...spy" of the rival Northwesters but soon abandoned such nefarious thoughts

and actually protected the "inland Visitor" from the lower Chinookans. Although he expressed little curiosity in the log, McDougall noted that, after a week at Astoria, "[t]he Tshinooks threaten to kill our inland stranger & he is anxious to be off." The following day he wrote: "It seems the Natives all along the River are determined to kill our strange visitor." On the first of July, McDougall claimed that Chinookan headmen "frequently" demanded the strangers as slaves or insisted that he hold them as such. As the stranger had helped considerably by sketching a map of the upper Columbia country, which allowed the Astorians to plan what would become Fort Okanagan, McDougall pretended to enslave the couple for their protection. He also learned the source of the Chinookans' enmity: "the dread they entertain of his power to introduce the Small Pox, which he very impudently boasted of on his way down."<sup>138</sup> McDougall either misconstrued the problem, likely given the communication problems after only two months residence among Chinookan speakers, or the stranger soon changed his message. On July 15, Fort Astoria received another unexpected guest, David Thompson of the Northwest Company, who had traveled down the Columbia in a failed attempt to beat the Pacific Fur Company to establish a post in the lower Oregon country. To McDougall's further surprise, the guests were previously acquainted.

Thompson recognized McDougall's stranger as Kauxuma-nupika, a Kutenai woman and the former custom-of-the-country wife of a Canadian in his employ in the upper country. He had advised the trapper to send her away because "her conduct...was so loose" and had apparently created problems at Rocky Mountain House. Unfortunately, he did not elaborate on this vague sexual assertion; it may have provided

more context for her actions. According to Thompson's account, the trans-gendered Kutenai Indian from the headwaters of the Columbia River delivered a dystopic prophecy of disease and settler-colonialism to the Native peoples of the middle and lower Columbia. The prophet Kauxuma-nupika embodied radical transformation as much as she prophesized one. Thompson wrote that she then "found her way [down the Columbia River] from Tribe to Tribe to the Sea." Along the way, "She became a prophetess, declared her sex changed, that she was now a Man, dressed, and armed herself as such, and also took a young women to Wife, of whom she pretended to be very jealous..."<sup>139</sup>

Trans-gendered individuals were unusual but not unprecedented in Native North America or in the Oregon Country. In September 1814, trader Ross Cox claimed to have encountered a "hermaphrodite chief" among a small tribe of about fifteen families on the upper Columbia, approximately 45 miles above Spokane House. According to Cox, "The Indians allege that he belongs to the epicene gender." Although "epicene" can connote femininity, Cox's intermittent use of "hermaphrodite" suggests epicene's alternative meaning of a crossed or third gender. Cox claimed that the individual never "associates with either sex, and he is regarded with a certain portion of fear and awe by both men and women, who look upon him as something more than human." The extra-human power derived also from an "oracular" power of weather forecasting. Cox described that: "[h]e wears a woman's dress, overloaded with a profusion of beads, thimbles, and small shells...[and] the upper part of the face and the manner of wearing the hair are quite feminine." However, Cox determined to call the individual a male because of biological features – beard and masculine musculature – and because of more socially constructed

“male” features: a commanding tone of voice and the respect he received from the people. Cox claimed that the chief was something of a reformer-by-example: against gambling and for encouraging “a sufficient quantity of salmon [to be gathered and dried] for the spring, which is the season of scarcity.”<sup>140</sup> Other trader narratives do not corroborate Cox’s tale, suggesting the possibility of creative writing, but the faults of Cox’s narrative generally involve misdating, confusing names, and self-aggrandizement not wholesale fabrication of events. I do not think there is sufficient reason to discount his account, though he may have colored it to tantalize his European readers. A third, better evidenced example of trans-gendered individuals was Lileks of the Klamath Lake people. Lileks rose to power among his people in the 1830s and also brought a message of transformation – coalescence of Klamath bands and peaceful resistance to colonization – and altered his gender identity from male to female and back again.<sup>141</sup>

This discussion is not to suggest that trans-gendered Indians necessarily fit into a role as prophets or social transformers; indeed, one problem with the few studies of such remarkable individuals is the attempt to create an over-arching explanation or significance. To Richard Trexler, trans-gendered individuals were conquered supplicants of a Native power system in the Americas; to Evelyn Blackwood, examples of indigenous egalitarian sexuality; and to Will Roscoe, a “traditional gay role model” for the modern world.<sup>142</sup> The truth probably lies closer to the specific historical circumstances in which each individual lived, including the possibility of no larger cultural significance. In 1934, ethnographer H.G. Barnett recorded differing opinions regarding “transvestites” or “berdaches” along the Oregon Coast from his Native informants. Agnes Johnson and

Billy Metcalf offered no examples<sup>143</sup> from the south coast while Louis Fuller noted "once a strong berdache doctor" at the Grand Ronde reservation and S. Scott claimed that "Berdaches [were] always the biggest [most powerful] doctors."<sup>144</sup> Philip Drucker's informant for the lower Umpqua and Alsea Mrs. Ludson recalled a trans-gendered person at the Yaquina agency on the Oregon Coast and another from Grand Ronde, perhaps the same individual noted by Fuller. Drucker wanted to know if they were doctors, but Mrs. Ludson did not remember.<sup>145</sup> Similarly, according to his fieldnotes, Barnett had asked his informants about trans-gendered people only in the context of doctoring discussions. That trans-gendered individuals appear in the context of spirituality or "medicine" in the ethnographic record may have more to do with the assumptions of the scholars than Native norms. The prophetic power of Kauxuma-nupika likely did not reside in gender transformation but that characteristic did evidence a power worthy of note and make her tale the more compelling, in Thompson's words: "[T]he story of the Woman that carried a Bow and Arrows and had a Wife, was to them a romance to which they paid great attention."<sup>146</sup>

Per Thompson, upper Chinookans at the head of the Cascades rapids had heard Kauxuma-nupika's prophecy as a warning that "the Small Pox...was coming with the white Men & that 2 Men of enourmous Size [were coming] to overturn the Ground &c." They were concerned because they were "strong to live," and wanted an explanation of the epidemic and the giant white men reportedly "overturning the Ground, and burying all the Villages and lodges underneath it: is this true," they wondered, "and are we all soon to die?" Thompson and company successfully assuaged their fears, undermined

Kauxuma-nupika sufficiently and claimed that "if the man woman had not been sitting behind us they would have plunged a dagger in her."<sup>147</sup> The gist of the prophecy well reflects the unmistakable patterns of North American colonization: disease followed by agrarian "settlement." If so, such prophecies were hardly surprising given Kauxuma-nupika's probable familiarity with historical processes that had already played out in eastern North America. As a Kutenai, Kauxuma-nupika and her people had more exposure to and experience with both colonialists of the western Canadian fur trade and Native peoples such as the Crees who, in turn, were connected to Algonkians eastward to the Great Lakes. Kauxuma-nupika seems to have used the mystical language of prophecy to convey a warning about real tragedies of which she had apparently become aware, perhaps from Euro-Canadians such as her former husband or other Indians. Iroquois peoples, for example, were veterans of two centuries of colonization and many traveled to the Far West with the fur brigades. As well, Gabriel Franchere wrote that trader John McTavish had met an elderly woman among the Spokanes who spoke of white men plowing, mimicked the sound and motion of swinging church bells, and imitated a Catholic genuflection. McTavish figured that she had been a slave in the northern Mexican settlements "on the upper banks of the Del Norte River" or Rio Grande. Others have since guessed that she been at an Alta California mission. Similarly, Robert Stuart witnessed a Native ceremony on the upper Columbia in 1811 featuring "a crude imitation" of Catholic rites and so named the site Priest Rapids.<sup>148</sup> Plateau Sahaptians had apparently obtained more than horses from the northern Mexican settlements. The Nez Perce maintain an oral tradition that Hahatstusti ("Bear Stands High" or "High

Bear”) traveled across the Plains alone in the first decades of the nineteenth century, wintering at a large village of whites he called “sisinéte,” believed to have been Cincinnati, Ohio.<sup>149</sup> Although fragmented, the Native peoples of the Oregon Country appear to have had some prior knowledge of settler-colonialism at the advent of the Pacific fur trade. And as evidenced again later regarding the *polaklie illahee* (“land of darkness”) prophecy of the 1850s, prophetic narratives seem to have been an effective means of expression across languages and cultures. One could also cite Neolin and Tenskwatawa of the Ohio River Valley and Wovoka of the Great Basin as well, perhaps, as Abraham, Jesus Christ, and Mohammed of the Asian Middle East.<sup>150</sup> Copper kettles and horses had preceded colonialists via indigenous trade routes; so too, it seems, did knowledge, although the Native peoples of the Oregon Country had not seen enough to accept, let alone, act upon the warnings of Kauxuma-nupika. McDougall’s version of Kauxuma-nupika – that she was a malicious conjuror threatening to wield smallpox instead of a prophet bearing a dystopic message of a colonial world – is curious. Kauxuma-nupika may well have altered her message from the middle to lower Columbia, but it seems doubtful. She and her wife had initially arrived at the fort in canoe of Clatsops and their upriver relatives from the Cascades.<sup>151</sup> There was no clear break between upper and lower Chinookans in which to alter her tale so substantially; communication among the Native peoples from the rapids to the Pacific was quite good and obvious. More likely, the difference resulted from the chief Astorian’s problematic comprehension of the Chinookans’ language and actions, his disinterest in affairs with no obvious economic implications, and his tendency to reduce everything to a potential



threat.

Violence between the colonial and indigenous traders was rare in the first years, but fears of it were not. From early June 1811 when the Chinookans had scared McDougall by observing the rites at the beginning of the salmon run, which he interpreted as a pre-attack starvation plot, the colonials at Fort Astoria exhibited paranoia of a pan-Indian assault. Although McDougall determined that the salmon rites were "from a superstitious idea" rather than a militaristic one, he remained convinced that the Indians would attack as soon as the *Tonquin* departed up the coast to trade for furs and to arrange a supply contract with the Russians at Sitka. He was somewhat relieved after hearing that Casakas had wounded a Chehalis headman in a game of shinny, hoping that the inter-ethnic dispute would prevent an anti-Astoria alliance, though he subsequently fretted whether the injury was just an excuse to mobilize men for a concerted attack. McDougall's mind swirled with various possible plots and intrigue amidst rumors that had begun trickling into the fort that the *Tonquin* had been lost.<sup>152</sup> By the end of July, McDougall ordered military drills at the fort. With the help of a group of Clatsops, he was able to convince the Chehalis of the Astorians' friendship and that the Chinooks had been misleading them about the colonialists' supposed animosity. Instead, he tried to explain that the Chinooks lied out of a desire to monopolize the trade among the Indians. The parading and target practice, not surprisingly, attracted attention, and a few Chinookans complained "about our War like appearance." In mid-August, Comcomly confessed that he had known about the *Tonquin's* fate but had withheld his knowledge

because he did not want to "afflict us" with the pain of losing friends. Distrusting Comcomly's reasoning, McDougall "[t]urned all hands out to drill, & examined their Arms."<sup>153</sup> As they would ultimately learn from the sole survivor of the *Tonquin* tragedy, the ship had indeed sunk after an altercation between the Captain John Thorn and Wicanninish somewhere off the coast of western Vancouver Island, probably Clayoquot Sound. Joseachal, a Quinault who fished the lower Columbia in spring, had made two previous voyages up the coast onboard colonial ships and was thus recruited by the Astorians for the *Tonquin*. After the incident, he avoided the colonialists for two years before Comcomly finally brought him to the fort to tell his story in June 1813. Thorn had apparently humiliated Wicanninish and the following day, under the pretense of trade, numerous Native people boarded the ship and overwhelmed the colonials. The magazine blew, sinking the ship and killing everyone on board. Wounded members of the crew may have touched off the magazine as a dying gasp of revenge. The *Tonquin's* fate would haunt the minds of the colonial traders for decades.<sup>154</sup>

Despite McDougall's fears, no attack followed the loss of the *Tonquin* that first summer. Paranoia at Astoria resumed in November when McDougall learned that a headman from the Cascades was reportedly trying to assemble the lower Chinookan headmen. He recalled the Iroquois hunter Ignace Salioheni to help defend the fort. Nothing came of the alleged meeting of Chinookans, and if it occurred, there is no reason to believe that the Astorians were the cause: Comcomly, Coalpo, and Casino (and likely other lower Chinookan principals) had relatives at the Cascades rapids. Still, the stretch of the Columbia River from the Cascades rapids to Celilo Falls had been the scene of

some disturbances. The fast, rough currents forced travelers to portage. Canoes could be emptied of trade goods, requiring extra labor or horses to carry the bales, which made the colonials dependent on local Indians with whom they otherwise had no relationship. Or canoes could be pulled against the current, which, as experience taught, risked losing the entire load as the swirling whitewater swamped or ripped canoes away, dispersing trade goods all along shoreline, islands, and eddies of the river. On July 31, David Thompson reported that "Rogues" along the portage had plotted to steal his company's arms but a combination of Northwester bravado, vigilance, and "Providence" prevented an altercation.<sup>155</sup> Five years earlier, the Corps of Discovery had had a few problems there as well with Lewis's dog being stolen, John Shields harrassed when he lagged behind, and a Native man raining stones down on the expedition as they made their way along the steep-sided, slippery portage. Still, a local headman apologized, explaining that all was the work of a couple of individual troublemakers. Any altercation was averted, as it was with Thompson in 1811.<sup>156</sup>

In the spring of 1812, however, colonial-indigenous encounters along the portage route turned violent. David Stuart had hired some Cathlaskos to help with the portage, as he had extensive supplies and trade goods for the season in the upper country. According to Robert Stuart's account, a couple of Cathlaskos engaged to help portage purposely damaged a canoe and looted some goods. The next day, four hundred Indians accompanied the canoes to The Dalles and volunteered to help with the last portage above Celilo Falls. Fearing further problems, David Stuart engaged some of the Indians to transport empty canoes above the falls but not the bales of trade goods. Some men

apparently threatened to destroy the canoes after carrying them until an elder convinced them otherwise. At 1 am, a sleepless Stuart decided to avert further problems by portaging goods by moonlight. By daybreak, only two loads were left when "at least 30 determined Villains" crossed from north bank and began "an indiscriminate pillage." John Reed and Robert McClellan, whose turn it was to stay behind, intervened and a scuffle broke out in which two Indians were shot and killed, and Reed received a nasty head injury. The rest of the party hurried back, firing their weapons, and frightened off the remaining Indians. According to Robert Stuart, 120 men then rode out from Cathlasko village and cut off the colonials heading upriver. A Cathlasko headman approached the party and explained that he was compelled to lead a war party but stated that bereaved relatives would be satisfied if the colonials would surrender Reed. The leaders haggled a settlement to avert further bloodshed and arrived at "3 Blankets to cover the dead, and some Tobacco to fill the Calumet of Peace."<sup>157</sup>

The incident produced a couple of precedents. First, for McDougall, it proved "the bad intentions" of the "daring and resolute" upper Chinookans and river Sahaptians between the Cascades rapids and Celilo Falls. Consequently, subsequent brigades would have to be large, "well armed and on their guard."<sup>158</sup> Colonials transferred much of their animosity and distrust from the "roguish" Chinooks at the river mouth to the "rogues" and "saucy, impudent rascals" of the upriver "fishing places." Robert Stuart used an environmentalist explanation, claiming that the region from the Cascades Rapids to Celilo Falls was inhabited by slothful, "worthless Dogs" similar to England's urban poor; both peoples were supposedly too lazy to work. In his conception, the fishing sites, like

Europe's early industrial cities, were "the Schools of Villainy or the Head Quarters of vitiated principles." The Dalles where Chinookan and Sahaptian of numerous bands and ethnicities "mix promiscuously" to gamble, trade, and fish was particularly loathed by fearful colonial travelers.<sup>159</sup> Thus, until the disease epidemics of the 1830s, the Native peoples along the portage route or "fishing places" of the middle Columbia would be among the most vilified Indians in the Oregon Country. The Shasta and Takelma peoples of southwestern Oregon would later inherit the title of "Rogue Indians" in the 1840s. Secondly, the means of diplomacy would be repeated as the colonials introduced their method of "covering the dead," which was created through relations among eastern Algonkians, Iroquoians, and Europeans in the lower Canada and Great Lakes trade in the seventeenth century. The Native peoples of the Oregon Country typically demanded slaves (often the guilty party) in addition to material goods as restitution, but they accepted the colonials' custom of trade goods and tobacco. Victorian-era historian Francis Parkman called such invented traditions "meeting the Indian half-way," and more recently Richard White has argued that, within a specific context of international and local pressures, such interactions produced a new syncretic culture in the Great Lakes region during the mid-seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.<sup>160</sup> In the Oregon Country, nothing as elaborate or coherent as a syncretic middle-ground culture developed, but the colonials and Natives did have to meet each other "halfway" with their diplomacy.

Rumors of Stuart's clash with the Cathlaskos reached McDougall at Fort Astoria within days, but he had to wait over a month before some of the party returned from the upper country with their version of events. In the meantime, the *Beaver* had arrived with

new "settlers" and supplies for the fort. As with the year before when the *Tonquin* was about to leave, McDougall prepared for an Indian attack that he was convinced would occur as soon as the *Beaver* departed. His paranoia was fed by the tales of a Chinook elder who had been banished from his village for some unknown reason; perhaps it was related to his love of intrigue. McDougall called him "Raccoon," though he did not explain why. Raccoon had McDougall's ear and appears to have convinced the nervous colonial that the Nuu-chah-nulths from Vancouver Island, Chinooks, and upper Chinookans "from above" the rapids were joining to "Massacre the whole of us." McDougall ordered militia drills, target practice, and established a "strict watch." Raccoon was not the only one to have some fun at the colonials' expense: Coalpo sent "slave girls" running into the fort crying that Casackas was crossing from Chinook with a force to attack, which was, of course, not true.<sup>161</sup>

Much of the paranoia at Astoria resulted from a convergence of unrelated events. First, there was Stuart's altercation at The Dalles in April. Second, Raccoon apparently began rumor mongering and, for whatever reason, McDougall believed him regardless of how preposterous the tale.<sup>162</sup> Third, Indians of different ethnicities were indeed gathering, though it had nothing to do with the Astorians. A large number of Nuu-chah-nulths from Vancouver Island arrived in Baker's Bay across the estuary to fish for sturgeon and settle some affairs with the Chinooks. The northern people brought the coveted hyqua beads to the Columbia, and the Chinooks apparently kept up a lively trade of slaves and clamon for the northern coast. As usual, lower and upper Chinookans traded and visited relatives back and forth, and Tillamooks from the coast paddled up the

river to settle accounts with the Chelwits, an upper Chinookan village near the Cascades rapids.<sup>163</sup> Likely, the Plateau Sahaptians, particularly the "Mount St. Helen Indians" or Klickitats would have begun assembling to hunt and obtain roots in the Willamette Valley.<sup>164</sup> In short, it was life as usual in *Illalhee*, the Native world of the lower Columbia region. Fourth, as in 1811, McDougall's military preparations attracted attention and when Casackas insisted on being allowed to watch, climbing the fort walls to get a view of the militia drills, he was dragged back to his canoe in humiliation. Comcomly arrived upset at the treatment of his eldest son, which, in turn, fueled McDougall's distrust of the Chinooks. Fifth, despite the heightened tensions on the lower Columbia, which emanated from Fort Astoria, McDougall decided to celebrate American Independence Day by firing off the fort's cannons twice during the day. (In 1811, they had only fired a single round of muskets before commencing a considerable consumption of grog.) The concussions of the blasts echoed up the river, alarming Native villages and Salioheni and Pierre Dorion whose wives and children were at the fort. They hurried back to join the non-existent battle. Finally, McDougall had dispatched another brigade to the upper country, and rumors arrived in mid-July that a terrible battle had occurred along the portage route and that John Clarke's party had burned a house and the winter stores of the "guilty" Indians. McDougall seemed elated, hoping the violence "may prove an example to them in future and shew what they may expect from such behaviour as they were guilty of to our former party."<sup>165</sup> However, the rumor was unfounded: the whitewater swamped Clarke's canoe and swept off its contents. Rather than a battle, the Cascades Indians acted "civilly," collecting some of the trade goods from the shoreline and islands and joined Clarke for a

smoke as he waited for his recovered bales to dry in the sun.<sup>166</sup> The Cascades Indians warned that others from above would attack, but the brigade passed above Celilo Falls without incident.

Significantly, however, Stuart did not recover several rifles and "fowling pieces" (shotguns). The people of the middle Columbia rapids apparently had a growing interest in guns. In the previous July, David Thompson had claimed that the "Rogues" at the portage below the Deschutes River had plotted unsuccessfully to "seize all our arms."<sup>167</sup> Still, the colonials would not understand the "fishing peoples'" desire for guns until they became aware of the raids of Plateau Sahaptians and Shoshones later in 1814. For the moment, the colonials, particularly McDougall, interpreted events as if Astoria was the target of some diabolical Native intrigue.

Scholars have generally explained the "rascally" behavior of the upper Chinookans and river Sahaptian neighbors of the rapids in terms of the preexisting trade network: the colonials threatened their powerful position as the bridge between the Northwest Coast and the Columbia Plateau (and, by extension, the Rocky Mountains and Great Plains.) The conjecture seems logical, as The Dalles or "Indian mart" featured hyqua from Vancouver Island, local salmon, eel, horses, canoes, and buffalo products from the Plains as well as nutritious roots from the valleys and, finally, slaves from as far away as the Oregon-California borderlands. The Native residents enjoyed a privileged position in the indigenous network, and the fur brigades may have been expected to pay a toll of sorts for their passage. However, Robert Stuart noted an incident that might explain why the altercations between colonials and Native peoples occurred when they



did. On the first portage after the April clash, he was frightened when two Indians ran into his camp. However, they were not attacking but warning. Through their Clatsop interpreter, the colonials learned that Shoshones (generically, "people of the interior") had assailed a canoe earlier in the afternoon and killed four men and two women.<sup>168</sup> The trade items that the wealthy river peoples did not have, at this point, were guns. Horsemen from the Plateau did, and the river people knew the original source of the guns: the colonial traders. Traders of Astor's Pacific Fur Company did, in fact, trade guns on the Columbia Plateau. According to Alfred Seton, they provided weapons to Nez Perce, Cayuse, and other Sahaptians because the "Snakes" (Shoshones) had driven them out of their homelands across the Blue Mountains in the Grande Ronde and Wallowa valleys. Without guns to match their enemies, they could not retake their lands and, presumably, benefit the fur trade.<sup>169</sup> As well, David Thompson's disdain for the Americans' failure to profit significantly from a musket trade on the lower Columbia suggests that the Northwest Company had been actively trading guns on the upper Columbia since 1810.<sup>170</sup> On the portage through the "fish places," the colonials offered the river peoples tobacco and beads but never guns. Indeed, throughout 1812 and 1813, McDougall paid "extravagant" prices trying to buy back the rifles and shotguns lost by Clarke at the Cascades, fearing that they would be used against his portaging brigades.<sup>171</sup> Only a few were recovered. In November 1813, Ross Cox's party lost two bales of goods and recovered most of the contents only after seizing some elders, women, and children as hostages and exchanging them for the property.<sup>172</sup> Two months later in January 1814, the cauldron of the river peoples' fearing "Shoshone" raids, their desire for guns to

defend themselves, and the mutual vilification of the colonials and the Indians of the middle Columbia rapids boiled over into a second, bloody altercation.

In the winter of 1813-1814, warfare among Native peoples had broken out on the Plateau and many people fled to The Dalles to escape the gun-wielding raiders.<sup>173</sup> Henry noted on January 6, 1814 that an "uncommon number of Indians" had "fled down to the Banks of the Columbia, for safety and in readiness to cross the river or escape if pursued by their enemies."<sup>174</sup> Stuart led a supply brigade for the interior, carrying as usual bales of goods that included guns, and walked headlong into this unstable situation. With the brigade of forty-five men split into two groups for a portage, a party of upper Chinookans attacked from the north bank, wounding David Stuart and Saganakei. The colonials left their trade goods, including some fifty rifles and ammunition, abandoned their wounded Nipissing companion, and fled back to the fort, but not before killing two of the Native assailants during the raid.<sup>175</sup> Henry claimed "These villains...are bent on taking revenge upon us for having furnished firearms to their enemies above," on the Columbia Plateau. He sent word to his brother William at "Fort Calipuyaw" in the Willamette Valley warning that the Indians of the lower Country desired "firearms to put them on a footing with their enemies; plunder seems to be their main object, not blood."<sup>176</sup> As suggested by McDougall's reaction to the rumor that Clarke had torched a Native house in retaliation for the first altercation, the colonials decided to mount an expedition to avenge this second attack and recover their property.

The facts of the retaliatory expedition are relatively consistent among the sources, though the evaluations of its consequences varied considerably. January was probably

the worst month to conduct such an operation because of the scarcity of food. McDougall knew that from October until the February runs of eulachon and sturgeon and the early spring vegetables, the fort had a chronic shortage of food. Characteristically, he blamed the Indians for refusing to trade rather than the seasonal fluctuations of the local environment. His solution, as discussed earlier, was to limit the number of mouths at the fort and dispatch people to the Willamette Valley to fend for themselves.<sup>177</sup> With an expedition, the colonials obviously had to make a decision: instead of waiting until late spring and summer as the Native peoples of the lower Columbia did to settle disputes, they chose to head upriver without sufficient food and hope for the best. By 1814, the colonials were well aware of the kinship connections among the upper and lower Chinookans and they consulted Coalpo and his wife, the Chinookans at Oak Point, and Comcomly. According to Alexander Henry, Coalpo and the Oak Point Chinookans argued for war, but Madam Coalpo disagreed. She believed that with her brother-in-law Casino of Clackamas they could parley: offer a slave and other gifts in recompense for the two dead Native people and recover the trade goods. For a price, she would join the expedition and correctly predicted that Casino would as well.<sup>178</sup> The colonials opted for her plan, but if they could, they would try the hostage-taking approach that had worked for Cox's party the previous autumn.

The hasty expedition of sixty-nine members left the fort on January 10, and by the thirteenth, "on the eve of encountering enemies," they ran out of food. At the first village of the Cascades, Soto, which had apparently not participated in the attack, Casino and Madam Coalpo obtained a few dogs for the expedition to eat and recovered nine guns

from their relatives. Casino learned that Canook, headman of the "Cathlathlaly" village upriver had persuaded men from the neighboring "Thlamooyackoack" village to join. Per Henry's account, Canook had told them "that we never traded anything of consequence with them, but took our property further up, to their enemies, the Nez Percés, and that here was a favorable opportunity to better themselves." According to Casino's relatives, one man from each of the villages had died in the fighting, and they were not willing to surrender the guns. As the expedition would discover, bales of other trade goods still littered the shoreline. To the frustration of the colonials' plan, Canook had learned from the previous autumn also, and he refused to allow himself to be lured away from his men, smoking a calumet offered by the colonials but keeping his distance. Over the next three days, Casino slowly recovered a few guns and obtained barely enough food for the expedition to keep their feet. Henry grumbled after having to split nine dogs and a horse among all the men, consuming the intestines, blood, fat, and bone marrow that "I could have imagined we were just in from a buffalo hunt." Tired, hungry, and impatient, the colonials seized "a chief, a boy, and a woman" who Casino had brought to camp. They released the boy with word that they wanted all the stolen goods returned. Then, they put on a display to make themselves appear fearsome despite their pathetic condition and utter reliance on their erstwhile enemies for sustenance. Facing the larger cluster of eight Cathlathlaly houses on the north bank, the colonials paraded, marching back and forth, as they had practiced at the fort, occasionally firing volleys into the air. During the day, they shot some rounds from their swivel gun (a small cannon), and in the evening, fired off two sky-rockets into the night sky. Villagers from above and

below turned out to watch the show, and women arrived in two canoes with a dozen guns and some other goods; but since the colonials had taken hostages, no one would give them food and no more property was offered. Word came that more goods and guns were dispersed upriver; but by this time, none of the colonials seems to have been interested in going up to The Dalles. The expedition retreated downriver to Strawberry Island before trying the military display again. Franchere led the drill team back to Cathlathlaly but to avail. According to Henry, Canook complained "that we [colonials] must be a bad lot, to want all our property back after killing two chiefs, and they would give no more." The now desperately hungry expedition headed downriver to Soto still holding their prisoner to avert a feared attack. There, they released him to his family who had been following in a canoe, giving him two blankets, a Northwest Company flag and a few other items for his troubles. The villagers at Soto refused to trade any food and the expedition had to continue some ways downriver before finding anyone willing or able to feed them.<sup>179</sup>

The expedition could hardly be called a success given the unmet, lofty goal of retrieving all the goods. But was it a failure? Alexander Henry decided that it answered "our business ends," referring to the recovery of much property and display of both might and "humanity"; and further violence "would only have made a bad affair worse." Similarly, Franchere considered the endeavor a moderate success. By not recovering the balance of the goods, they had "covered the dead" and avoided long-lasting enmity at a crucial portage.<sup>180</sup> To have taken more lives, he figured, would have placed the colonials outside the regional norm, perhaps engendering a confederacy against them. On the other

hand, Madame Coalpo reportedly mocked the expedition's "timidity" on her return to the Clatsops, according to Henry, and said: "we ought to have killed them all." Given that it was originally her idea to avoid such bloodshed through a parley, his report seems questionable; still, she may have changed her mind after finding the innocence of her relatives at the lower rapids and recovering their nine guns. Indeed, Casino was the Native mediator who proved to have the most filial and trade connections above Soto. Whatever their assessments of the expedition, both Madame Coalpo and Casino profited handsomely from their involvement. Each received "3 half axes, 3 blankets of 3 feet. 1 blanket of 2 1/2 feet, 2 1/2 lbs. Canton beads, 3d size, 10 1/2 doz. coat buttons, 1/3 doz. P.C. glasses, 4 large knives, 1 1/2 doz. plain rings, 5 1/2 yards common blue strouds, 2 1/2 yards common red strouds, 1 common cotton shirt, 1/2 lb. gunpowder. 5 seamed copper kettles, 3 seamed brass kettles, 2 lbs. shot."<sup>181</sup>

The colonials appear to have benefited as well, as the feared raid from the Plateau occurred in early spring and the "Rogues" of The Dalles were apparently unable to defend themselves. In mid-March, rumors reached the fort from Oak Point "that the Nez Perces and Scietogas [Cayuse] have been to war on the tribes at the falls, killed a great many, and carried off a number of slaves; which has caused the natives to abandon their villages and to fly in panic." The Chinooks similarly reported that "the natives at the falls had sustained a severe defeat by a vast number of Indians from above, who attacked the village at the Dalles in the daytime, killed as many as they could, and burned women and children in their houses – in short, that the whole village was destroyed." By early April, the Clatsops confirmed that the attackers were Nez Perce, that they had killed

eighteen men, "and that many were collected at the rapids; but these had no bad intentions toward us [colonials], saying that, if we could speak well, they would do so also."<sup>182</sup> Indeed, the April brigade passed the portages without incident. Although westerners would continue to deride the "rascally" Native peoples of the middle Columbia rapids, no further hostilities occurred until the 1850s when the explosion of settler-colonialism fundamentally altered the nature of interaction and engendered violent conflict in much of the Oregon Country. For the intervening four decades, no significant violence occurred there. Although not a conquest in the western sense, Nez Perce and Cayuse peoples would continue to be a regular presence at The Dalles and may have played a significant role in preventing further raids on the fur brigades. The trading relationship between the colonials and Plateau Sahaptians grew throughout the 1810s and 1820s. By 1824, relations were so peaceful that George Simpson recommended the "neighborhood of the Cascade Portage" for the establishment of a Christian mission. The unequal distribution of guns, to which the colonials' 1814 expedition contributed, played a significant role in altering the Native dynamics of power at The Dalles and was thus an unintended success for the colonialists.<sup>183</sup>

The indigenous-colonial drama at The Dalles coincided with the outbreak of a long-brewing conflict between Great Britain and the United States, and the wake of distant events eventually reached the shores of Young's Bay and the gates of Fort Astoria. The advent of the War of 1812, as the North American theatre of the Napoleonic Wars is known, was not a surprise to the traders. The causes were well known: The American trade embargo against Great Britain, British impressment of Euro-American

sailors, and the suspected British support of Tecumseh's nativist anti-colonial movement in the Ohio River Valley were the constant gripes of several young nationalists in Congress known collectively as the "War Hawks." The mostly western and southern legislators such as Henry Clay and John C. Calhoun eventually convinced President James Madison to declare war.<sup>184</sup> After the sale, Fort Astoria did not fly colors until visiting ships were identified; its defenses were meant for Chinookans in canoes not naval frigates with canons.<sup>185</sup> As well, James Ronda has demonstrated that Astor devised his plans expecting the possibility of war, even hedging his bets by attempting a trade alliance with the nominally British Northwest Company. When war began, Astor pressed for protection by the U.S. Navy, and though Commodore Perry and the *Essex* were in the Pacific preying on the British whaling fleet, Astor's various schemes collapsed and his establishment was on its own. The Northwesters had to lie to the British Admiralty in London about the nature of Fort Astoria to get a frigate dispatched.<sup>186</sup> The Oregon Country was not a major concern for leaders of either nation. Although the "War Hawks" definitely had the conquest and colonization of indigenous lands in mind, their eyes were fixed considerably east of the Rocky Mountains for another decade.

When news of the war reached Astoria in mid-January 1813, it presented the colonials with an interesting dilemma and set the stage for one of the most humorous and ironic campaigns in the long history of imperial warfare. As the Montreal native and second-generation fur trader Gabriel Franchere put it, "We considered seriously the fact that nearly all of us were British subjects, yet we were trading under the American flag." He and his fellow Canadians "wished ourselves in Canada" and wanted nothing to do



with the Anglo-American conflict. The Astorians considered that the British would blockade American ports, which would prevent the return of Hunt and Astor's supply ship (which had indeed been detained in Canton by the British) and meant that they would have to take the furs arduously overland.<sup>187</sup> Abandonment of the settlement seemed the only option. McDougall suspended trade for furs, having more than were transportable by land already.<sup>188</sup> On April 11, 1813, John McTavish arrived with a force of several Northwest Company trappers-turned-militiamen and orders to besiege Fort Astoria and await the *Isaac Todd* and her escort, a royal frigate, the *Pheobe*. (He was unaware that the ships had not left England yet.) Given that Canadians in the employ of the Northwest Company were "laying siege" to a fort full of Canadians formerly in the employ of the Northwest Company, there was no violence. Indeed, only the fort's stores of food and grog were attacked. April 12 was a local holiday, the anniversary of Astoria's founding. Instead of fighting, most everyone got drunk for a couple of days.<sup>189</sup> After several weeks, McDougall realized that the Astorians could not manage the abandonment in time to beat the winter and decided to wait until the following spring. Consequently, he and McTavish devised a strategy to avert imperial problems; they divided the Oregon trade between them, and the Northwesters soon departed for their new monopolies at Spokane and among the Kutenais. Not everyone was amused by the failure to defend the fort, however; there were a few Euro-Americans on hand. A young New Yorker and trader-in-training Alfred Seton mocked "our Chiefs think the miseries of war are far enough extended already." He described the "siege" sarcastically in his journal: "God knows that the Great NW Co. are not to be offended with impunity. 20

men therefore under the guns of the Fort display the British colours while 60 men in a good fort surrounded with guns are fearful of offending these potent men...so great so very, very, very, great, that my feeble imagination cannot encompass epithets great enough to express...."<sup>190</sup> Similarly, when Hunt arrived aboard the *Albatross* in late August, he was furious about the abandonment plans. He had negotiated a lucrative contract with the Russians to supply them from the Columbia and purchase their sea otter furs, but he could do not convince the Canadians to alter their decision.<sup>191</sup> In October, McTavish returned to renew the siege as the Northwest Company ordered: partner Angus Shaw had received word that the *Isaac Todd* and *Pheobe* were finally on their way to the Columbia. Surprised by the Northwest brigade, McDougall and his "foe" McTavish avoided bloodshed again; they "[c]ame to an understanding."<sup>192</sup> In a decision that he would have to defend for the rest of his career (as a Northwester), McDougall sold Fort Astoria lock, stock, and barrel to the Northwest Company. In mid-November, Alexander Henry and other Northwester officers arrived, followed on the 30<sup>th</sup> by the H.M.S. *Raccoon*. As the *Raccoon* anchored across the estuary in Baker's Bay and was not flying the Union Jack, a cautious McDougall took advantage of the bi-national nature of Astoria. According to Franchere, he sent men across "with orders to call themselves Americans if the ship were American, and British subjects in the contrary case."<sup>193</sup> Though he was denied a naval victory, Captain William Black was reportedly amused by the Northwest Company's gross overstatements of the "American stronghold" on the Pacific and went through the formalities of claiming the little settlement in the name of King George. Famously breaking a bottle of Madeira wine on the flagpole, he renamed it

Fort George on December 13, 1813 and soon set sail. Such was the Oregon front of the Napoleonic Wars.

Hunt does seem to have had a sense of humor, however. In March 1814, Hunt returned to the lower Columbia aboard the *Pedlar*, an American coaster. He traded vegetables from Hawai'i at Fort George and asked for the release of the few Euro-American trappers and the Kanakas, who all "wished to see their homes." The Northwesters gladly agreed to hand over four "useless" Euro-Americans but only reluctantly "agreed to give up four Sandwich Islanders to Mr. Hunt, who had been desirous of taking them all."<sup>194</sup> According to Ross Cox, some of the Euro-Americans bore an "unnatural and acrimonious hatred to the land of their forefathers" and wanted to leave.<sup>195</sup> Henry promised the remaining Kanakas free passage home at some unspecified future date. Obviously, Hunt was upset by news of the sale and "arguments and altercations" marked the discussion of detailed arrangements. Still, the Northwesters invited him to dine at his former establishment. Hunt brought Comcomly, who he dressed in the famous "red coat" of the British Army, notably a Scots-Canadian detachment, the *New Brunswick* 104<sup>th</sup>. Henry did not appreciate Comcomly's dress or manners and complained to his journal about how the Americans and Chinooks were ruining the fur trade with their undisciplined behavior.<sup>196</sup>

Unlike many imperial war fronts in which vying colonial powers manipulated indigenous peoples into the fighting (e.g., contemporary Ohio Valley, interior Southeast, and Red River Valley conflicts), the Astorians and Northwesters initially tried to keep the Chinookan peoples completely ignorant of the dispute. In January 1813, McDougall and

McTavish had decided to keep the war and abandonment plans from the Chinookans "until it can no longer be hid." They feared that the Native traders would take advantage and play the two parties off each other to raise the prices for food. When Comcomly learned of the proposed abandonment in June, he thought it was a reaction to the theft of some of McTavish's personal effects. Not wishing to lose the fort that had helped make him wealthy and powerful, Comcomly proposed staging his own kidnapping with McTavish's property to serve as ransom. His eldest son Casackas would then recover the goods from the Chinooks. The colonials rejected the plan.<sup>197</sup> By November of 1813, the Chinookans had learned enough of the Anglo-American conflict to offer military help to the Astorians. Hunt had probably informed Comcomly during his August visit of the impending arrival of a British warship, and Comcomly offered McDougall aid to keep the *Raccoon* from landing any men.<sup>198</sup> The Chinooks were well aware of the difficulties that European boats had in negotiating the dangerous currents and eddies of the river's tidal estuary, having fished many erstwhile sailors of various nationalities out of the lower Columbia in preceding years. And Comcomly was, after all, his father-in-law, having allied the peoples through McDougall's marriage to Ilche several months earlier. McDougall, however, refused the help and Franchere did his best to explain to the lower Chinookan principals the nature of the fort's transfer.<sup>199</sup> Thanks mostly likely to Hunt, the Chinooks considered the Astorians American and the British Northwesters as interlopers. Following the transfer, Alexander Henry noted some initial opposition from the headmen who acted coldly toward him and his fellow Northwesters. He explained "they are inclined to suspect we are imposters who have supplanted their first and best

friends, as they conceive the Americans to be, in order to exclude them from the country, to which the natives say we have no right." In response, Henry claimed that "Pains are taken to make them understand the true grounds on which we stand, not as a temporary but permanent establishment, to supply them with their necessaries as long as they deserve such attention." However, the *Isaac Todd* had still not arrived by early April and they were running low on trade goods, Fort George dropped its prices; "this [the Indians] did not like."<sup>200</sup> Comcomly, Coalpo, and Coniah each pressed the new establishment, trying the patience of Henry. Comcomly complained about the fare served at Fort George, and the ensuing disagreement may explain why his sons temporarily retrieved Ilche. Coalpo reportedly "left in a pet" after having his increased prices for furs rebuffed. In mid-May, Coniah arrived at the fort with his "American writing" to stress his importance. Symbolically, Henry tried to eliminate the connection between the Americans and the Clatsops established by the Corps of Discovery in the winter of 1805-6, clothing Coniah and giving "him a writing in lieu of the American one, which I threw in the fire before him."<sup>201</sup> The "writing" Henry destroyed was a brief record of the Lewis and Clark expedition, which the captains had penned and entrusted to Coniah as proof of their achievement both for competing imperialists and in case the explorers died on the return to St. Louis.

The colonial employees did not make the transfer any easier, and their various complaints and nationalistic disputes may have fueled the Chinookans' confusion over the new state of affairs as well as their apparent jockeying for position. McDougall and several other Canadians stayed on, changing their employer from Astor's Pacific Fur

Company to British Canada's Northwest Company.<sup>202</sup> However, as Henry complained, the *voyageurs* hired by Hunt at Michilimackinac and St. Louis lacked "that sense of subordination which our business requires." Instead, they exhibited "the looseness and levity they acquire in the Indian country, tends to make them insolent and intriguing fellows, who have no confidence in the measures or promises of their employers." If the men had opted not to defend Fort Astoria, they proved themselves equally disdainful of British control. With the long-expected arrival of the *Isaac Todd*, brawls between the sailors and trappers broke out. One of the French-Canadian blacksmiths, Augustin Roussell, interrupted the officers' dinner on one occasion, drunkenly "hurrahed for the Americans...talked more nonsense, and richly deserved a beating," though Henry and McDougall refrained until he sobered. The first and third mates of the *Isaac Todd* were suspended from duty for damning "the British navy and, etc." One of them was a naturalized U.S. citizen pressed into service after his ship was seized. The Chinookans were, as ever, well aware of the happenings at the fort. As Henry complained, the men had frequent "communication with the Chinook ladies." Henry further mused that if the officers of the *Raccoon* was any indication, the reign of the royal navy, England's "wooden walls," would not last much longer.<sup>203</sup>

Over a decade of fighting had touched and terminated lives throughout the world but the Napoleonic Wars finally ended in late 1814 (with the notable of exception of General Andrew Jackson's unlikely victory at New Orleans, which occurred in early 1815 after the Anglo-American conflict officially ended.) Astor made certain that the Oregon Question, really the Astoria question, would remain open, however. He spent

years trying to use Captain Black's dramatics to his advantage: according to the Anglo-American Treaty of Ghent, all property seized in the war was to be returned. However, that McDougall had previously sold the establishment to the Northwesters complicated matters, as the sale would seem to negate the remuneration clause. Still, the British capitulated in the first joint-occupation treaty and, in 1818, American diplomat J.B. Prevost oversaw the lowering of the Union Jack and the hoisting of the Stars and Stripes over Fort George "in token both of possession and of sovereignty." Token was the operative word. That Prevost had to charter a British ship, the *Blossom*, from Valparaiso, Chile, to get to the Columbia suggests how unrealistic the American claims of "possession and of sovereignty" were at the time. Moreover, James Keith who succeeded McDougall in 1817 after the latter's promotion to Fort William continued to operate Fort George for the Northwest Company. But, like the pre-war Astoria days, the remote post was again considered a settlement of the United States. In other words, nothing actually changed on the ground level. Importantly for imperial politics, however, as Prevost wrote to the Secretary of State, Washington and London could be assured that "collisions...may be now wholly avoided."<sup>204</sup>

The national-colonial equation was complicated further by the means with which the furs were disposed. To avoid the losing profits to the East India Company, the Northwest Company traded their furs from Fort George to American ships that then traded the furs free of the imperial monopoly to Cantonese merchants. The profits were ultimately split between Boston and Montreal investors. James Keith and Boston merchants J. and T.H. Perkins made four such runs in 1817, 1819, 1820, and 1822 in

which Northwest furs were exchanged in Canton for Chinese goods for the Boston market. In 1820 alone, the *Levant's* furs translated into \$70,000 worth of Chinese manufactures bound for Boston consumers. Prevost suggested that such arrangements occurred frequently.<sup>205</sup> Fort George was not British any more than it was American. If anything, a Northwest Company flag would be all a visitor was likely to see. The demographics reported by Prevost in 1818 suggest the complexity of the situation. He listed: James Keith, 3 clerks, Surgeon, and overseer all presumably ethnically European and "17 Whites including Canadians – mechanics, 26 Natives of Owyhee [Hawai'i], 1 Native of the place, 16 Trappers & Canadian Iroquois employed in gathering & many women and children."<sup>206</sup> As for the Chinookans, Gabriel Franchere had commented that "Since the villages form so many little sovereignties, differences often arise among them, whether from chiefs or among the peoples."<sup>207</sup> He considered that this complicated political economy explained the Chinookans' tendency to parley their conflicts into settlements to avoid significant bloodshed from wars that would otherwise occur. Franchere's assessment was an apt characterization of the lower Oregon fur trade. Chinook, Clackamas, Clatsop, Fort George, the United States, Great Britain, Spain, and Russia were all, as far as the lower Oregon Country was concerned, so many little sovereignties.



Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Alfred W. Crosby Jr., *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492* (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Publishing Co., 1972).
- <sup>2</sup> James R. Gibson, *Otter Skins, Boston Ships, and China Goods: The Maritime Fur Trade of the Northwest Coast, 1785-181* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1992), 16-17.
- <sup>3</sup> The importance of the blue beads was noted by Lewis and Clark, Gary E Moulton, ed., *The Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition: November 2, 1805 - March 22, 1806* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990), volume 6, 123, 134, 164-166, 215-216. They continued in importance through the early land-based fur trade, Robert F Jones, ed., *Annals Of Astoria: The Headquarters Log of the Pacific Fur Company on the Columbia River, 1811-1813* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1999), 215; into the Willamette Valley and the "fashion" developed that only one of the three sizes were acceptable by 1814, Elliott Coues, ed., *New Light on the Early History of the Greater Northwest: The Manuscript Journals of Alexander Henry and of David Thompson, 1799-1814* (Minneapolis: Ross & Hanes, Inc, 1965), 815, 817, 888.
- <sup>4</sup> Ross Cox, *The Columbia River*, edited by Edgar I. Stewart and Jane R. Stewart, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1957), 44-45.
- <sup>5</sup> Cox, *The Columbia River*, 74; B. C. Payette, ed., *The Oregon Country Under the Union Jack: A Reference Book of Historical Documents for Scholars and Historians* (Montreal: Payette Radio Ltd, 1962), 183.
- <sup>6</sup> Gibson, *Otter Skins*, 291.
- <sup>7</sup> Jones, *Annals of Astoria*, 89-90, footnote 17, Cox, *The Columbia River*, 45, Thomas E. Fessett, ed., *Reports and Letters of Herbert Beaver, 1836-1838: Chaplain to the Hudson's Bay Company and Missionary to the Indians at Fort Vancouver* (Portland, OR: Champoeg Press, 1959), 131.
- <sup>8</sup> O. A. Bushnell, *The Gifts of Civilization: Germs and Genocide in Hawai'i* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1993), 161-171.
- <sup>9</sup> Cox, *The Columbia River*, 43.
- <sup>10</sup> Moulton, *Journals of the Lewis and Clark*, volume 6, 286.
- <sup>11</sup> James P. Ronda, *Lewis and Clark Among the Indians* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1988), 2.

<sup>12</sup> There was some effort to vaccinate Klickitats around Fort Vancouver in the mid to late 1830s, George B. Roberts, *Recollections of George B. Roberts*, MS P-A 83. The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 25; Fessett, *Reports and Letters of Herbert Beaver*, 58-59.

<sup>13</sup> For an interesting discussion that goes beyond the material contributions to U.S. history by Chinese Americans to address the ways in which they contributed to the opening of American democracy, see Gary Okihiro, *Margins and Mainstreams: Asians in American History and Culture* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1994).

<sup>14</sup> Theodore Stern, *Chiefs and Chief Traders: Indian Relations at Fort Nez Percés, 1818-1855* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 1993), 18-33.

<sup>15</sup> For the best analysis of all the machinations of Astor and his Northwester competitors, James P. Ronda, *Astoria and Empire* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990).

<sup>16</sup> The best diplomatic history of the imperial fight for Oregon remains Frederick Merk, *The Oregon Question: Essays in Anglo-American Diplomacy and Politics* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1967).

<sup>17</sup> Charles Wilkes quoted in Verne Frederick Ray, "Lower Chinook Ethnographic Notes." *University of Washington Publications in Anthropology*, 1938, 43.

<sup>18</sup> Ray, *Lower Chinook Ethnographic Notes*, 43.

<sup>19</sup> Ray, *Lower Chinook Ethnographic Notes*, 35; Yvonne P Hajda, "Regional Social Organization in the Greater Lower Columbia, 1792-1830," (Ph.D. diss., University of Washington, 1984), 135.

<sup>20</sup> Sergeant Patrick Gass in Ray, *Lower Chinook Ethnographic Notes*, 35.

<sup>21</sup> Moulton, *Journals of Lewis and Clark*, volume 6, Lewis 164, Clark 165.

<sup>22</sup> Richard Glover, *David Thompson's Narrative 1784-1812* (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1962), 361, 373-4.

<sup>23</sup> Jones, *Annals of Astoria*, 44.

<sup>24</sup> Robert H. Ruby and John A. Brown, *The Chinook Indians: Traders of the Lower Columbia River* (Normon: University of Oklahoma, 1976), 15, 17. McDougall recorded the item as "clemels," Jones, *Annals of Astoria*, 46, 77, 93, 95, 108, 130, 182, 197, 200, 208, 212, 214, 217. Alexander Henry called them "clemens," describing some of Tillamook manufacture as "war garments made of thick red deerskins [elk] dress in the

grain with urine." Coues, *New Light*, 858.

<sup>25</sup> Leland Donald, *Aboriginal Slavery on the Northwest Coast of North America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 225, 231; Hajda, "Regional Social Organization," 193.

<sup>26</sup> Thomas Vaughan and Bill Holm, eds., *Soft Gold: The Fur Trade and Cultural Exchange on the Northwest Coast of America* (Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1982), ix.

<sup>27</sup> Moulton, *Journal of Lewis and Clark*, volume 6, editor's note 1, 432.

<sup>28</sup> House, *Military Posts -- Coucil Bluffs to the Pacific Ocean. Report of the Committee on Military Affairs*, 27th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1842, Doc. 830, Serial 410, 12-13.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*; Dorothy O Johansen, *Empire of the Columbia: A History of the Pacific Northwest* 2nd ed., (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1967), 40-43.

<sup>30</sup> Gibson, *Otter Skins*. 13, 17, 260-261.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 36-61.

<sup>32</sup> Moulton, *Journals of Lewis and Clark*, volume 6, 429, 431.

<sup>33</sup> Ronda, *Lewis and Clark*, 4-9.

<sup>34</sup> Moulton, *Journals of Lewis and Clark*, volume 6, 433, 437-8, n 5.

<sup>35</sup> The word Clatsop derived for pounded salmon, but as Lewis noted, that commodity came mostly from "the river above, to the grand falls inclusive... The bay in which this trade is carried on" was in the Clatsops' territory, Moulton, *Journals of Lewis and Clark*, volume 6, 76 n 1, 201.

<sup>36</sup> For canoe theft, Moulton, *Journals of Lewis and Clark*, volume 6, 428.

<sup>37</sup> Moulton, *Journals of Lewis and Clark*, volume 6, 155 and footnote , 159.

<sup>38</sup> Moulton, *Journals of Lewis and Clark*, volume 6, 336-337.

<sup>39</sup> James Kendall Hosmer, ed., *Gass's Journal of the Lewis and Clark Expedition* (Chicago: A.C. McClurg & Co., 1904), 170; Glover, *David Thompson's Narrative*, 370.

<sup>40</sup> Moulton, *Journals of Lewis and Clark*, volume 6, 286.

- <sup>41</sup> Moulton, *Journals of Lewis and Clark*, volume 6, 234.
- <sup>42</sup> "2 cases Chinook Hats" are listed on the "Bill of Landings" from Fort George for the interior trade, April 4, 1814, in Payette, *The Oregon Country*, 172. As late as 1825, the Hudson's Bay Company priced "1<sup>st</sup> quality" Chinook hats at four large, prime beaver skins, Dorothy Nafus Morrison, *Outpost: John McLoughlin & the Far Northwest* (Portland: Oregon Historical Society Press, 1999), 151.
- <sup>43</sup> Ronda, *Lewis and Clark*, 1-4.
- <sup>44</sup> Stephen E Ambrose, *Undaunted Courage: Meriwether Lewis, Thomas Jefferson, and the Opening of the American West* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), 310.
- <sup>45</sup> Ronda, *Lewis and Clark*, 233.
- <sup>46</sup> Cox, *Columbia River*, 41-42.
- <sup>47</sup> Sylvia Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties: Women in Fur-Trade Society, 1670-1870* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980), 26.
- <sup>48</sup> Merriwether Lewis, *The Lewis and Clark Expedition*, 1814 Edition, unabridged, vol. II. (New York: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1961), 482, 530.
- <sup>49</sup> November 21, 1805 and March 15, 1806 incidents, Lewis, *Lewis and Clark Expedition*, 482, 542, Moulton, *Journals of Lewis and Clark*, 73-75, 416-418, and March 24, 1806 incident, Milo M Quaife, ed., *The Journals of Captain Meriwether Lewis and Sergeant John Ordway*, 2nd ed., (Madison: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1965), 331.
- <sup>50</sup> Moulton, *Journals of Lewis and Clark*, volume 6, 75.
- <sup>51</sup> Donald Jackson, ed., *Letters of the Lewis and Clark Expedition with Related Documents, 1783-1854* vol. 2, (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1978), 503.
- <sup>52</sup> Moulton, *Journals of Lewis and Clark*, volume 6, 75.
- <sup>53</sup> Hosmer, *Gass's Journal*, 204; the first edition was actually published in 1807.
- <sup>54</sup> Moulton, *Journals of Lewis and Clark*, volume 6, 239, 241.
- <sup>55</sup> Quaife, *Journals of Captain Meriwether Lewis and Sergeant John Ordway*, 331, Ordway's journal was "found" in 1914, 26.
- <sup>56</sup> Moulton, *Journals of Lewis and Clark*, volume 6, 120, 123, 136, 360.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 365-6.

<sup>58</sup> Hajda, "Regional Social Organization," 178, 182.

<sup>59</sup> Frederick Merk, *Fur Trade and Empire: George Simpson's Journal: Remarks Connected with the Fur Trade in the Course of a Voyage from York Factory to Fort George and Back to York Factory, 1824-1825* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1931), 101.

<sup>60</sup> Ronda, *Lewis and Clark*, 208.

<sup>61</sup> For a popular history discussion of prostitution and the maritime trade, Ruby and Brown, *The Chinook Indians*, 64-65. The authors are not critical of the source material. As Cox noted regarding exaggerated seamen's tales of wahines' sexuality, such criticism is necessary, *The Columbia River*, 42.

<sup>62</sup> Francis Paul Prucha, ed., *Documents of United States Indian Policy*, 2nd expanded ed., (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990), 16-17.

<sup>63</sup> Following the English "financial revolution" of the 1690s, which established a national bank, a national debt, and a wealthy and politically powerful class of London investors. England became increasingly oriented toward controlling overseas markets. The grants of monopolies for products such as tea and the bureaucratization and militarization of its colonies were innovative efforts to meet the challenges of expanding and maintaining its empire in the face of indigenous resistance and imperial competition. The ideology of "free trade," first apparent in the domestic economy, took hold more slowly in colonial administration. P. J. Cain and A. G. Hopkins, *British Imperialism: Innovation and Expansion, 1688-1914* (New York: Longman, 1993), 53-104.

<sup>64</sup> Ronda, *Astoria and Empire*, 42-64.

<sup>65</sup> Jones, *Annals of Astoria*, 204.

<sup>66</sup> Jurgen Osterhammel, *Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview* (Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener Publishers, 1997), 25-26.

<sup>67</sup> Rhonda writes of the fort's hierarchy in terms of labor performed and excludes the Kanakas from his calculations, *Astoria and Empire*, 209-214.

<sup>68</sup> Rhonda, *Astoria and Empire*, 218-19.

<sup>69</sup> Jones, *Annals of Astoria*, 20.

- <sup>70</sup> Robert F. Jones, ed., *Astorian Adventure: The Journal of Alfred Seton, 1811-1815* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1993), 100, 124.
- <sup>71</sup> Jones, *Annals of Astoria*, 132-133; Rhonda, *Astoria and Empire*, 218-19.
- <sup>72</sup> Coues, *New Light*, 891, 908.
- <sup>73</sup> Jones, *Annals of Astoria*, 125.
- <sup>74</sup> Jones, *Astorian Adventure*, 133.
- <sup>75</sup> Jeremie was also reprimanded for playing sick to avoid work, Jones, *Annals of Astoria*, 29. He pledged no more escapes in writing but broke the written promise, 36, Alexander Ross, *Adventures of the First Settlers on the Oregon or Columbia River, 1810-1813* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986), 93; see also Ronda's discussion of runaways, particularly Paul Jeremie, *Astoria and Empire*, 216.
- <sup>76</sup> Gabriel Franchere, *Adventure At Astoria, 1810-1814*, translated and edited by Hoyt C. Franchere (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1967), 115.
- <sup>77</sup> Glover, *David Thompson's Narrative*, 361-2, 370.
- <sup>78</sup> Robert Boyd, *People of The Dalles, The Indians of Wascopam Mission: A Historical Ethnography Based on the Papers of the Methodist Missionaries* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), 145.
- <sup>79</sup> Jones, *Annals of Astoria*, 16-17.
- <sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.
- <sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 148.
- <sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 138, 150.
- <sup>83</sup> Ross, *First Settlers*, 102-103.
- <sup>84</sup> Jones, *Annals of Astoria*, 152-3.
- <sup>85</sup> Ray, *Lower Chinook Ethnographic Notes*, 110-11.
- <sup>86</sup> Jay Zucker, Kay Hummel, and Hogfoss, Bob, *Oregon Indians: Culture, History, and Current Affairs: An Atlas and Introduction* (Portland, OR: Western Imprints, 1983), 61.

- <sup>87</sup> Coues, *New Light*, 817.
- <sup>88</sup> Franchere, *Adventure at Astoria*, 100.
- <sup>89</sup> Jones, *Astorian Adventure*, 116; *Annals of Astoria*, 186, 206-207; Franchere, *Adventure at Astoria*, 76. See also Coues, *New Light*, 831, 837.
- <sup>90</sup> Jones, *Annals of Astoria*, 216.
- <sup>91</sup> Jones, *Annals of Astoria*, 186.
- <sup>92</sup> Coues, *New Light*, 817.
- <sup>93</sup> Jones, *Astorian Adventure*, 144-45.
- <sup>94</sup> Coues, *New Light*, 862.
- <sup>95</sup> Phrase borrowed from Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties*.
- <sup>96</sup> Jones, *Annals of Astoria*, 203-4, and n 98.
- <sup>97</sup> Coues, *New Light*, 901.
- <sup>98</sup> Jones, *Astorian Adventure*, 116.
- <sup>99</sup> Hajda, "Regional Social Organization," 179-182.
- <sup>100</sup> Ross, *First Settlers*, 107.
- <sup>101</sup> Cox, *The Columbia River*, 159-62.
- <sup>102</sup> Coues, *New Light*, 790, 800, 805; Merk, *Fur Trade and Empire*, 104; McLoughlin to Donald Manson, August 18, 1829 in Burt Brown Barker, ed., *Letters of Dr. John McLoughlin Written at Fort Vancouver, 1829-1832* (Portland: Binford and Mort for the Oregon Historical Society, 1948), 46.
- <sup>103</sup> Coues, *New Light*, 891.
- <sup>104</sup> Matthew Dennis, *Cultivating a Landscape of Peace: Iroquois-European Encounters in Seventeenth-Century America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), 28, 108-9; Daniel K Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse: The Peoples of the Iroquois League in the Era of European Colonization* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 18-24, 43-44.

- <sup>105</sup> Coues, *New Light*, 891.
- <sup>106</sup> Jones, *Annals of Astoria*, 237.
- <sup>107</sup> Ross, *First Settlers*, 130-131.
- <sup>108</sup> Coues, *New Light*, 908; Cox, *The Columbia River*, 268; Jones, *Astorian Adventure*, 134.
- <sup>109</sup> Corney in Grace P Morris, "Development of Astoria, 1811-1850," *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, 1937, 417.
- <sup>110</sup> Simpson in Morrison, *Outpost*, 154.
- <sup>111</sup> Roberts, "Recollections," 15. See also Van Kirk's discussion of "daughters of the country," *Many Tender Ties*, 95-122.
- <sup>112</sup> Coues, *New Light*, 910.
- <sup>113</sup> Cox, *The Columbia River*, 158, 166, 172.
- <sup>114</sup> Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties*, 53-74.
- <sup>115</sup> Fessett, *Reports and Letters of Herbert Beaver*, 35, 40, 50, 54, 57, 86, 117-121.
- <sup>116</sup> Jones, *Annals of Astoria*, 89-90, n 17; Cox, *The Columbia River*, 45.
- <sup>117</sup> Fessett, *Reports and Letters of Herbert Beaver*, 42, 54, 85, 131.
- <sup>118</sup> English settler-colonialism dated back to the 1780s, but migration increased in the 1840s as did the colonization of New Zealand. Like the Far West of the United States, emigration was spurred by a gold rush. Cain and Hopkins, *British Imperialism*, 229-31, 243-58.
- <sup>119</sup> Fessett, *Reports and Letters of Herbert Beaver*, 140, 145, 147-8.
- <sup>120</sup> Cox, *The Columbia River*, 166.
- <sup>121</sup> Coues, *New Light*, 754, 849.
- <sup>122</sup> Gass likely started the observational trend with his 1811 publication, Hosmer, *Gass's Journal*, 176; see also Ross, *First Settlers*, 106.



- <sup>123</sup> Glover, *David Thompson's Narrative*, 362.
- <sup>124</sup> Cox, *The Columbia River*, 87.
- <sup>125</sup> Glover, *David Thompson's Narrative*, 357, 376.
- <sup>126</sup> Cox, *The Columbia River*, 156.
- <sup>127</sup> Coues, *New Light*, 908-9.
- <sup>128</sup> Cox, *The Columbia River*, 156, 158.
- <sup>129</sup> Coues, *New Light*, 890, 891, 806, 859.
- <sup>130</sup> Franchere, *Adventure at Astoria*, 117.
- <sup>131</sup> Coues, *New Light*, 825-6.
- <sup>132</sup> Jones, *Annals of Astoria*, 140, 141.
- <sup>133</sup> Coues, *New Light*, 835-6.
- <sup>134</sup> Jones, *Annals of Astoria*, 2, 10, 31, 39, 66, 108, 133, 153, 158, 159, 191, 201.
- <sup>135</sup> Coues, *New Light*, 836, 911, 859.
- <sup>136</sup> Jeremie's medical experiment, Jones, *Annals of Astoria*, 136-7.
- <sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*, 141-2.
- <sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*, 26-30.
- <sup>139</sup> Glover, *David Thompson's Narrative*, 366-67.
- <sup>140</sup> Cox, *The Columbia River*, 190-2.
- <sup>141</sup> Leslie Spier, "Klamath Ethnography," *University of California Publications in American Archaeology and Ethnology*, 1930, 51-53; Theodore Stern, *The Klamath Tribe: A People and Their Reservation*, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1966), 24.
- <sup>142</sup> Richard C Trexler, *Sex and Conquest: Gendered Violence, Political Order, and the European Conquest of the Americas* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997); Evelyn

Blackwood, "Sexuality and Gender in Certain Native American Tribes: The Case of Cross-Gender Females," *Signs*, 1984, 27-42; Will Roscoe, "The Zuni Man-Woman," *Ethnographic Studies of Homosexuality*, edited by Wayne R. Dynes and Stephen Donaldson, (New York: Garland, 1992), 385-70, 136, 143. See also Sue-Ellen Jacobs, Wesley Thomas, et. al., *Two-Spirit People: Native American Gender Identity, Sexuality, and Spirituality* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997) and Walter L. Williams, *The Spirit and the Flesh: Sexual Diversity in American Indian Culture* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992).

<sup>143</sup> H. G. Barnett, *Indians Tribes of the Oregon Coast: Field Notes* vol. 1, 1934, 4, 85.

<sup>144</sup> H. G. Barnett, *Indians Tribes of the Oregon Coast: Field Notes* vol. 2, 1934, 24, 26.

<sup>145</sup> Philip Drucker, *Field Notes* vol. 4, 1934, 47.

<sup>146</sup> Glover, *David Thompson's Narrative*, 372.

<sup>147</sup> Barbara Belyea, ed., *Columbia Journals, David Thompson* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994), 160; Glover, *David Thompson's Narrative*, 367.

<sup>148</sup> Franchere, *Adventure at Astoria*, 130-1, and editor's note 5, 133.

<sup>149</sup> Stern, *Chiefs and Chief Traders*, 46-47.

<sup>150</sup> James Mooney, *The Ghost-Dance Religion and the Sioux Outbreak of 1890* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1896).

<sup>151</sup> Jones, *Annals of Astoria*, 24.

<sup>152</sup> Jones, *Annals of Astoria*, 33, 37; Franchere, *Adventure at Astoria*, 56.

<sup>153</sup> Jones, *Annals of Astoria*, 42, 44.

<sup>154</sup> Jones, *Annals of Astoria*, 191-5, Ronda, *Astoria and Empire*, 235-7.

<sup>155</sup> Belyea, *Columbia Journals*, 162.

<sup>156</sup> Moulton, *Journals of Lewis and Clark*, volume 7, 104-110; Ronda, *Lewis and Clark*, 216-7.

<sup>157</sup> Philip Ashton Rollins, ed., *The Discovery of the Oregon Trail: Robert Stuart's Narratives* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1935), 55-59.

- <sup>158</sup> Jones, *Annals of Astoria*, 81, 113.
- <sup>159</sup> Rollins, *Discovery of the Oregon Trail*, 61, 54; also see Ross, *The First Settlers*, 129.
- <sup>160</sup> Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991).
- <sup>161</sup> Jones, *Annals of Astoria*, 105-114.
- <sup>162</sup> Raccoon, at one point, convinced McDougall that the Chinooks planned "to take away" the *Dolly*, and though they could not sail a sloop, McDougall considered it a "probable" plot. Jones, *Annals of Astoria*, 115.
- <sup>163</sup> Jones, *Annals of Astoria*, 103-114.
- <sup>164</sup> Henry noted their presence as common, Coues, *New Light*, 879.
- <sup>165</sup> Jones, *Annals of Astoria*, 104-5, 107, 110.
- <sup>166</sup> Rollins, *Discovery of the Oregon Trail*, 34-37.
- <sup>167</sup> Belyea, *Columbia Journals*, 162.
- <sup>168</sup> Rollins, *Discovery of the Oregon Trail*, 53.
- <sup>169</sup> Jones, *Astorian Adventure*, 105.
- <sup>170</sup> Glover, *David Thompson's Narrative*, 363.
- <sup>171</sup> Jones, *Annals of Astoria*, 197.
- <sup>172</sup> Cox, *The Columbia River*, 122, 124-5.
- <sup>173</sup> Coues, *New Light*, 785.
- <sup>174</sup> Payette, *Oregon Country Under the Union Jack*, 24-25.
- <sup>175</sup> Coues, *New Light*, 785; Cox, *The Columbia River*, 148-149; Franchere, *Adventure at Astoria*, 93-95.
- <sup>176</sup> Coues, *New Light*, 785, 788-9; for Seton's description of "Fort Calipuyaw," Jones, *Astorian Adventure*, 133-4.
- <sup>177</sup> Jones, *Annals of Astoria*, 83, 149, 156, 178.

- <sup>178</sup> Coues, *New Light*, 793, 797.
- <sup>179</sup> Coues, *New Light*, 798-809; Franchere, *Adventure at Astoria*, 98-99. Cox or his editor gave a literal meaning to "covering the dead," writing that the goods were burial wealth; however, Henry and Franchere do not support this rendering, *The Columbia River*, 148.
- <sup>180</sup> Coues, *New Light*, 821.
- <sup>181</sup> Coues, *New Light*, 820, 824.
- <sup>182</sup> Coues, *New Light*, 853, 856, 879.
- <sup>183</sup> Stern, *Chiefs and Chief Traders*, 32-33; Merk, *Fur Trade and Empire*, 106.
- <sup>184</sup> Donald R Hickey, *The War of 1812: A Forgotten Conflict* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989). The Native struggles against settler-colonialism in the Ohio Valley actually were more indigenous than British-inspired, though the British would try to manipulate Tecumseh and the followers of his brother's nativist movement, Gregory Evans Dowd, *A Spirited Resistance: The North American Indian Struggle for Unity, 1745-1815* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992).
- <sup>185</sup> Their little ship *Dolly* flew the Northwest Company flag, hoping to appear neutral. Coues, *New Light*, 848.
- <sup>186</sup> Ronda gives a full discussion of Astor's machinations and "Astoria at War," *Astoria and Empire*, 243-76; see also Franchere, *Adventure at Astoria*, 86-87.
- <sup>187</sup> Franchere, *Adventure at Astoria*, 74.
- <sup>188</sup> Jones, *Annals of Astoria*, 150.
- <sup>189</sup> Jones, *Annals of Astoria*, 172-3.
- <sup>190</sup> Jones, *Astorian Adventure*, 128-9.
- <sup>191</sup> Franchere, *Adventure at Astoria*, 79.
- <sup>192</sup> Jones, *Annals of Astoria*, 219-220.
- <sup>193</sup> Franchere, *Adventure at Astoria*, 89.
- <sup>194</sup> Coues, *New Light*, 852.

- <sup>195</sup> Cox, *The Columbia River*, 119.
- <sup>196</sup> Coues, *New Light*, 850.
- <sup>197</sup> Jones, *Annals of Astoria*, 174, 188.
- <sup>198</sup> Cox, *The Columbia River*, 147-8.
- <sup>199</sup> Franchere, *Adventure at Astoria*, 90-91.
- <sup>200</sup> Coues, *New Light*, 866-7, 878.
- <sup>201</sup> Coues, *New Light*, 902, 905, 907, 912-915.
- <sup>202</sup> Franchere states "most," *Adventure at Astoria*, 87.
- <sup>203</sup> Coues, *New Light*, 889-90, 902, 906-7.
- <sup>204</sup> Payette, *The Oregon Country Under the Union Jack*, 177-8. See also Ronda, *Astoria and Empire*, 308-15.
- <sup>205</sup> Payette, *The Oregon Country Under the Union Jack*, 180, 660, 662, 666, 668.
- <sup>206</sup> Payette, *The Oregon Country Under the Union Jack*, 183.
- <sup>207</sup> Franchere, *Adventure at Astoria*, 115.

## CHAPTER III

"Disastrous times we had...":

## EXPANSIONS AND EPIDEMICS, 1821-1834

On an international level, the muddy imperial claims to the Oregon Country began to clear somewhat with the United States signing treaties with Spain and Russia. Despite the dubious nature of the United States victory over Great Britain in the "second American Revolution" of 1812-1814, the young republic emerged with an expansionist vigor to colonize the Indian Country from the Mississippi to the Pacific. A new generation of political leaders such as John Quincy Adams and Thomas Hart Benton replaced Jefferson's revolutionary generation and, consequently, displaced the old fears that rapid colonization of the West would destroy the democratic-republican experiment through diffusion of the population and polity. The new generation's imperial rhetoric challenged the old European powers still recovering from the Napoleonic Wars. Spain, a crumbling empire that was losing its tenuous grip in the Americas to independent-minded *creoles*, ceded its claims north of Alta California in 1818 to the United States in exchange for recognition of its claims to the south. In 1824, the United States successfully pushed Russia into withdrawing to the 54<sup>th</sup> parallel in exchange for recognition of its northern claims, although the Russians did maintain Fort Ross in Mexico's California for several more years. According to Russian historian Nikolai Bolkhovitinov, St. Petersburg had interpreted the Monroe Doctrine as a specific challenge to the Russian America colonies, though the formulation of the "non-colonization clause" was actually written to challenge

the British who claimed much of North America, India, Africa, and "a piece of the moon." Envoy P.I. Poletika wrote to St. Petersburg in 1819 that Euro-American settler-colonists were swarming across the Mississippi in a "general mania," and the Russians would not be able to prevent them from ultimately occupying the Columbia River country. Tsar Alexander I was much more concerned with his continental colonies in Eurasia and the threat of the Ottoman Empire on his southern borders than the vastly distant Oregon Country and Hawai'i.<sup>1</sup> The official withdrawals of Spain and Russia left the United States and Great Britain as the remaining competitive imperial powers of the Pacific Northwest.

While the United States was further uniting through the conquest and colonization of Native lands in the trans-Appalachian West, neighboring British Canada was dividing into warring factions that featured different visions of empire. Despite United States sectionalism, the Missouri Compromise of 1820 promised to keep western colonization from being divisive by "solving" the slavery dilemma. To the north, the Hudson's Bay Company, the official trading monopoly and imperial representatives in the Canadian West, had worked out a relatively peaceful coexistence with the independent mercantilists of the Northwest Company. The HBC maintained forts and traded for furs delivered by subarctic Native peoples. The HBC officers were employees. The Northwest Company, by contrast, sent trapping parties into the field led by traders who held stock in the Montreal-based enterprise as partners. Astor had copied this arrangement with his Pacific Fur Company, and as mentioned, his officers had been mostly former Northwest Company men who returned to that status following the sale of

Fort Astoria. In the Red River Country of today's southern Manitoba, northern Minnesota, and parts of the Dakotas, the HBC and Northwesters operated in close proximity, both claiming rights to the far west of the Athabasca Country and Pacific Slope. The precarious balance fostered by the rivals' different business methods was upset by the introduction of a third vision. Lord Selkirk, chief stockholder of the HBC, decided to plant a settler-colony in the Red River Country with Scottish tenant-farmers who had been displaced by English land speculators over the previous half-century. Selkirk's colony began to take shape in late 1812. By 1815, the Northwesters, fearing the loss of their investments, resisted the colony and convinced their Native and Metis allies to join them, pointing to the threat to their lands and resources, particularly the buffalo herds. Selkirk recruited Swiss mercenaries and captured the Northwest field quarters, Fort William. In the late 1810s, the battles were fought in the field, the courts, and in taverns across Canada. The situation deteriorated to the point where, in 1821, London forced its combative colonials to merge. In actuality, the HBC swallowed the Northwest Company, reducing the independent "wintering partners" of the field to employees of an imperial monopoly.<sup>2</sup>

Far from the Canadian Plains and London boardrooms, the lower Chinookans would soon feel the effects of imperial politics. In 1821, the board of the reconstituted Hudson's Bay Company named George Simpson to govern the newly created Pacific Department, and he employed a former Northwest wintering partner John McLoughlin as Chief Factor of Fort George in 1824. The new leadership made some significant changes to the operations of the trade to cut expenses and counter feared attempts by Americans



to reestablish a presence in the region. When Simpson toured the lower Columbia in 1824, he complained that Fort George had "an air of... grandeur and consequence which does not become and is not at all suitable to an Indian trading post."<sup>3</sup> To the chagrin of the frugal Simpson, Northwesters Duncan McDougall and his successor James Keith still relied on food supplied by Native traders and American and European ships to a considerable and expensive extent. The Northwesters at Fort George had been largely left to their own devices while their parent company scuffled with the HBC in the Red River Country. As well, the fort was technically a possession of the United States since Prevost's ceremonial flag raising in 1818, and the British retained occupation at the whim of the president. With the consolidation of Canada's fur companies and the arrival of Simpson and McLoughlin, British "empire and order" returned.<sup>4</sup> McLoughlin moved the principal fort upriver to the north bank opposite the mouth of the Willamette River, and he established a farm and purchased some livestock to cut expenses. The new establishment was named Fort Vancouver; the English explorer's name reflected the Company's effort to reaffirm the British imperial claim.<sup>5</sup> Significantly, McLoughlin completely abandoned the much-disputed little settlement of Fort George in 1825. In 1826 or 1827, Indians, presumably Clatsops or Chinooks, burned the fort, leaving only a single chimney standing, "a melancholy monument of American enterprise and domestic misrule," according to one Euro-American observer.<sup>6</sup> Anthropologist Yvonne Hajda has observed that the death of Comcomly in 1830 symbolized "the end of Indian social dominance on the Greater Lower Columbia."<sup>7</sup> One could also point to the significance of the burning of Fort George a few years earlier, symbolizing the declining influence of the

lower Chinookans in the fur trade. Perhaps the conflagration was a statement by the aging Comcomly or his eldest son Casackas who saw his chance for power depart upriver with the colonial fort to the domain of rival Cassino and the Clackamas village at the confluence of the Columbia and Willamette rivers.

Under McLoughlin, the Company continued to trade on the lower and upper Columbia posts but also expanded northward along the coast and south into Snake River country and the southwest Oregon – northwest California borderlands. The northern expansion as far as the Russian settlements is mostly outside the scope of this discussion, but the decision relates to the uncertain future of British tenure on the Columbia. Although the indefinite extension of the joint-occupation treaty in 1828 eased McLoughlin's fears that London would suddenly relinquish its claims and abandon Fort Vancouver, the northern expansion into modern British Columbia indicates the widespread assumption that the United States would eventually secure dominion, perhaps to include the prized Puget Sound. The Company intended to maintain a presence on the Northwest Coast and hoped to forge a link to its interior Athabasca trade and so established Fort Langley on the Fraser River; thus, the northern expansion was a long-term business investment. Navigating the upper Fraser turned out to be a death-defying experience for canoeists, but Fort Langley did serve well as a British Pacific port and exporter of packed salmon and timber for markets in Monterey, Acapulco, and Lima.

The southern expansion, by contrast, was meant to challenge Euro-American expansion of the Rocky Mountain fur trade into the Oregon Country. By the mid-1820s, Euro-American brigades from St. Louis had established supply depots in modern New

Mexico and Utah – both were Mexican possessions, but neither the American nor British brigades paid much attention to the Latin republic's territorial rights in its northern interior.<sup>8</sup> The Euro-Americans were within striking distance of the Oregon Country and had international rights under the joint-occupation agreement to enter and trap. To inhibit the entry of the Euro-Americans, the Company discontinued methods that encouraged a sustainable harvest of furs and chose instead to trap-out or exterminate the beavers, making a "fur desert" as a buffer zone between the lower Snake River and the Columbia. The Company had long maintained such an extermination policy along its frontiers with competitors such as the Northwest and XY Companies in Canada, but the Snake River "fur desert" had the added imperial dimension of enhancing Britain's treaty negotiating position as sole occupants if they could stall American colonization.<sup>9</sup> Former Astorian and Northwester Alexander Ross led a brigade from Flathead in 1823 into the Snake Country but soon found himself transferred to the Red River mission school because, after meeting up with Euro-American trappers under Jedediah Smith, he took them back to visit his post. Thus, he effectively introduced them to the region west of the Rocky Mountains. Reportedly, Ross also boasted of the Snake River Country's productivity. Indeed, Smith would lead the first Euro-American trapping expedition into the Oregon Country a few years later in 1827. One of Simpson's first orders in the Oregon Country in 1824 was to replace the "empty headed" Ross with Peter Skene Ogden as leader of the Snake River brigade.<sup>10</sup> Astorians and Northwesters had been trapping in the region for a decade, but their goals and procurement of furs had been limited. By the late 1820s, the Snake brigades expanded west across the Great Basin to the Klamath Basin and into the

southwestern Oregon – northern California border country. A second prong of fur brigades went south from the lower Columbia through the Willamette Valley into the Umpqua and Rogue River drainages and across the Siskiyous into the Sacramento Valley of northern California. Together the southern brigades carried the trade into interior and coastal river valleys previously unknown to colonialists, and their actions often brought them into conflict with Native peoples who depended on the fur-bearers for food and who feared the newcomers.

Ultimately, Ogden would lead six Snake River expeditions between 1824 and 1830, expanding the range increasingly south into Mexican territories and westward into the Great Basin of the upper Oregon Country. In the winter of 1826-1827, his brigade traveled west across the Great Basin to the Klamath Basin through the region that would become the "southern route" of Euro-American emigrants in the mid-1840s. The Klamath peoples were hospitable but not terribly interested in helping Ogden find beaver and did their best to usher his brigade from their country. Ogden wrote that "one of the Chiefs of [Lost] River informed us that some distance in advance there was a small river in which there are Beaver, but having been forbid by our Guides as well as other Indians to inform us of this."<sup>11</sup> The headman, probably from one of the Modoc bands, escorted the brigade to Tule Lake and down the Klamath River to the border of their lands with the Shasta peoples across the Siskiyou Mountains. The guide indicated that his people "are at present at war with" those on the other side of the mountains and indeed they later reached a "spot formerly a [Shasta] Tribe of Indians resided but have all been destroyed by the Clammett Nation."<sup>12</sup> The Klamath and Modoc peoples were certainly not a

coherent nation any more than the “little sovereignties” of the lower Columbia, but they spoke dialects of the same Luatamian language and maintained enough interaction across the several autonomous bands for colonials to view them as a “tribe.”<sup>13</sup> A week later in the end of January 1827, Ogden entered “an Indian hut” and met three Shasta widows of men his “Klamath guide had killed...the previous summer.”<sup>14</sup> The violence among the Native peoples of the Oregon-California borderlands deserves some attention, as it reflected the ways in which the effects of colonialism often preceded any imperial agents, and their distrust of the fur brigades would color the Native peoples’ reputations thereafter.

Although Ogden was, among the colonials, the “first over the Siskiyous,” as historian Jeff Lalande has put it, the ripple effects of colonialism and the expanding Columbia fur-trade preceded him. The peoples of the Klamath Basin were already suffering the introduction of horses and firearms into the Native world. Just as Plateau Sahaptians raided The Dalles villages by the mid-1810s and contemporaneously fought with Shoshone “Snakes” in the valleys of the Blue Mountains, both Sahaptian and Shoshone-Paiute horsemen struck at the Klamaths and Modocs of the borderlands of south-central Oregon and adjacent California. The Klamaths embodied these initial raids into a lament-chant recorded a generation later in 1880: “*Kó-i ak a nā’pka gatpam’noka*,” which Victorian-era linguist Albert Gatschet translated as “Disastrous times we had when the Northern Indians arrived.”<sup>15</sup> Ogden noted that the Klamath peoples were anticipating a raid from Nez Perce and Cayuse horsemen from the north when he arrived in late 1826 and, as they had only one horse and no firearms that he could see, the Klamath peoples

were at an obvious disadvantage. They also had to repel the Shoshone-Paiute raids from the Great Basin to the east. In turn, the Klamath peoples lashed out at the neighboring Shasta, Takelma, Achumawi, and Atsugewi peoples; initially they may have intended to replace some of their lost population taken in slave raids by doing the same to their neighbors. The raiding became a way of life between the 1820s and 1850s and, as discussed in chapter four, would earn the Klamaths a more equitable position vis-à-vis the northern Indians by the late 1830s. Anthropologist Theodore Stern described the time as “an almost endemic condition of warfare” in the region.<sup>16</sup> This is the situation colonialists unwittingly entered. Chiloquin, a Klamath headman, credited the Shoshones with introducing the raids, stating that “[w]hen the Snakes made war on us that made us keen to fight other Indians and we made war without provocation on the Pit Rivers, Shastas and Rogue Rivers, but they never made willing war on us.”<sup>17</sup> Similarly, David Hill (*Wawa'liks*) a “sub-chief” of the Klamath Lake band boasted to Gatschet: “Never [did other Native peoples of the Oregon-California borderlands make] slaves of the Lake tribe conquering by war those from tribes all-around; the Lake men alone enslaved all surrounding Indians in this country....”<sup>18</sup> Understandably, the Ikirakutsu Shastas, Takelmas, and Latgawas of interior southwestern Oregon were trepidatious when Ogden’s brigade entered their homelands from the Klamath country. As Ogden descended the Siskiyou along Bear Creek in February 1827, he entered the region that is today called the Rogue Valley or, until the mid 1850s, the “Rogue’s Valley.”<sup>19</sup>

Colonialists would echo Ogden’s initial assessments of the land and its people for decades: “this is certainly a fine Country and probably no Climate in any Country equal

to it." The Native peoples were, however, enigmatic, and reports of them were frightening: "here we are now amongst the tribe of Sastise or (Chastise) it was this Tribe that was represented to our party of last year and also to us as being most hostily inclined towards us..."<sup>20</sup> To his credit, the experienced Ogden meant to judge for himself, writing that "so far we cannot say what their intentions may be...we have not seen more than 30 and their conduct has been friendly." As the brigade descended Bear Creek to the main branch of the Rogue River, he received reports from the Ikirakutsu that Latgawa Indians who "they are at variance with" were assembling to attack the trappers. Still, Ogden noted that such intelligence was "like all other Tribes I am acquainted with" in which Indians "represent [enemies] as hostily inclined towards us...from all this I am inclined to believe it was a false report." He noted that "Our [Shasta] Guides informed us that they did not intend to proceed any further with us..." The Bear Creek Valley was a bloody border area with Klamath bands raiding from the basin to the east and Shasta bands encroaching across the Siskiyou Mountains from the south.<sup>21</sup> Molly Orton, a Latgawa informant for John P. Harrington, stated that the northern band of Shastas "all the time fight, take away wife." Conversely, Shasta informants probably gave the upland Takelmans their name, as they referred to a principal Latgawa village as "Lawaya," meaning, "knife in belly."<sup>22</sup> Anthropologists compiled many Takelma and Shasta place names well within the other's territory. These place names have contributed to the confusion regarding indigenous territorial boundaries, which were probably never very stable or definite. Regarding the disputed Bear Creek valley and Table Rock area of the upper Rogue Valley, descendants of both peoples gave names suggestive of aboriginal

ownership and residence.<sup>23</sup> We cannot know how many times indigenous peoples contested with each other for the region and its riverine resources, but clearly, the early nineteenth century was one such period, and the impact of new factors introduced by western colonization seems evident.

Ogden would soon agree with the Ikirakutsu Shastas' assessments of the Latgawa and lowland Takelma peoples. Camped at the Rogue River in mid-February with his brigade "scattered in different directions" to trap and scout the new country, one horse was killed and three wounded by arrows. Ogden decided that local Indians "certainly evince a most malicious disposition towards us and if not checked and that soon our Scalps will soon share the fate our Horses." The following day the country and its people were steadily losing their appeal as trappers complained "of the unsteady state of the Water and Natives most numerous bold and Insolant...they appear determined to oblige us to leave their Country." Slowly, however, over the next few days, Native representatives began visiting and "wished to make peace with us." Ogden "consented" and they had "a Ceremony" in which he gave two dozen buttons and the Latgawas performed a dance. The brigade finally reached its first goal of a thousand beaver pelts, indicating the success of the "fur desert" effort, as earlier expeditions had taken over four thousand on the Snake tributaries alone. Ogden griped that he had only eight skins towards his second thousand. The Latgawas, like the Klamath peoples, do not seem to have been eager for the brigade to remain in their country and informed Ogden that beavers could be had downstream in Takelma country not upstream in their own.<sup>24</sup>

As the brigade proceeded down the Rogue River then north into the valleys of the



Umpqua drainage – the path to the Willamette and Fort Vancouver – the effects of raiding among the Indians and the fur trade became increasingly obvious. Takelman Indians fled as the trapping expedition approached. At the village of Dilomi near modern-day Gold Hill, “upwards of 100 Indians...left and ascended the hills with their Children and property....” Ogden entered the nearly deserted village and found a few fur-trade goods “a Sickle and two China bowls” left behind. The sickle was being used as a knife while the bowls “are preserved as ornaments.” Ogden was not able to determine the source of the goods, but soon reached another village in which at least one of the Takelmas could speak “the Umpqua Language.” From him, they learned that the Umpqua River was still some distance away but that it was from the Umpqua Indians that they bartered for “Knives and Axes” in exchange for beavers. Indeed, as had often been the case since leaving the Klamath Basin, the area seemed previously trapped out. The Umpquas had already introduced the Takelmas to the fur trade, as company brigades had recently ascended the Willamette and crossed into the Umpqua country. Also, in what was becoming something of a pattern, the locals told Ogden that if he moved on, “at no great distance,” he would find a “large River well stock’d in Beaver.” As they traveled, the Takelmas seemed “numerous and troublesome” and the country was unknown and not particularly productive. Ogden confessed “I feel at a loss how to act” and “the greater part” of his brigade “would wish themselves out of this Country.” The brigade safely reached Cow Creek and the south Umpqua. After learning from some Takelmas that McLeod had recently trapped the area clean, they headed north to Fort Vancouver. Ogden, however, left Jean Baptiste Gervais and four trappers to work the rivers

downstream and "open a communication between this quarter and Fort Vancouver which ought to have been affected many years since."<sup>25</sup> Alexander McLeod, Gervais, and others would affect working relations with the upper Umpqua peoples and the Company would establish Fort Umpqua in 1836.

Relations with the Native peoples to the south, however, would remain strained and poorly developed through the colonial wars of the 1850s. As indicated by the place names "Rogue River" and "Rogue Valley," the several bands of Takelmas, Latgawas, Shastas, and Athapaskans had earned a lasting reputation with the early trappers. The mostly French-Canadian trappers gave the Native peoples the name "les Coquins" or the rascals or rogues. Because the historical record is so poor, one could argue that the geographic name may have originated from a cartographer's misspelling of the French *Rouge* or the Spanish *Rio Rocque*. However, colonialists associated the moniker with the supposedly natural roguery of its Native inhabitants and that was the meaning that achieved lasting significance.<sup>26</sup> The appellations of rogue and rascal for Indian groups had a long history in the Oregon Country and elsewhere. During the Corps of Discovery initial experiences on the lower Columbia, Sergeant Patrick Gass referred to Bakers Bay as "Rogue's harbor" in November 1805. The "Rogues" were the people who "call themselves the Chin-Ook nation."<sup>27</sup> Nearly a decade later in 1813, Astorian Alfred Seton noted that the trappers called the headman of the Tushepa band of Nez Perce "Les Grande Coquin," the Great Rogue, for his and his band's "rascally behavior."<sup>28</sup> The trappers also commonly complained of the rascally and roguish behavior of upper Chinookan and Sahaptian bands between the Cascades rapids and Celilo Falls for the

often-tense relations that marked the 1810s. Indeed, Alexander Ross considered The Dalles "the general theatre of gambling and roguery."<sup>29</sup> Such names and references are common in fur trader writings across time and space; generally, any Native group refusing to play by the mercantilist rules set by the colonials was guilty of roguery.<sup>30</sup> Not surprisingly, some trappers referred to the numerous bands of Shastas, Takelmas, and Athapaskans of southwestern Oregon as "les coquin" or the Rogues when they began exploiting the region in the 1820s.<sup>31</sup> However, unlike other Native groups such as the Chinooks or the peoples of The Dalles, the name stuck and contributed to the fervent hostility against these peoples including, by the late 1840s, calls for their extermination by settler-colonists.

Probably the incident that cemented the "Rogue" reputation for southwest Oregon Native peoples in the minds of colonialists was the Kalawatset massacre of the Smith party in July 1828. As feared by British traders, Jedediah Smith led a party of Euro-American trappers across the Rocky Mountains into the Oregon Country, and eventually made their way west to northern California and up the southern Oregon coast. In his journal, Smith noted a similar experience to Ogden's the year previous. From the "Buenaventura Valley" or the Sacramento Valley to the southern Oregon coast, Indians fled their villages upon his party's approach. Trade took place only when the Euro-Americans made camp and the Indians apparently had an opportunity to look them over before approaching them with food or other items for trade. The pattern held as the Euro-Americans passed through the Sacramento Valley and the successive river mouths of the Chetco, Rogue, and Coquille. Smith was curious about the Indians' actions, but it does

not seem to have occurred to him that a group of seventeen men on horseback leading a couple hundred horses and mules and heading directly for a village could be viewed as threatening by the local population. Only upon reaching the Coos River did the villagers remain at home, likely the Hanis Coos had been forewarned of the party's approach and description. Earlier at the nearby Coquille River, a group of Miluk Coos or "lower Coquilles" had fled northward, demolishing their canoe before the galloping Smith could reach them, and abandoning a young, male Kalapuya slave whom the trappers subsequently named Marion. The retreating Miluks likely notified their neighbors just up the coast. The Hanis Coos or "Cahoose" Indians received the party and ferried them across the river. Nevertheless, a few individual Coos took the opportunity to fire arrows into the backsides of eight horses and mules. The expedition did not linger. Continuing up the coast, the Smith party reached the lower Umpqua where a party of Kalawatsets met them about four miles upriver from the mouth. It is probable that word had again preceded them, as the Coos and Kalawatsets intermarried extensively and maintained good relations, and runners could easily outdistance the expedition's lumbering train of pack animals. As well, the Kalawatsets were familiar with HBC trapping parties that had come downriver recently in 1826 and 1827. Smith noted that the Kalawatsets had British trade goods and were familiar with the leaders' names at Fort Vancouver. Thus, unlike their neighbors south of the Coos villages, the Kalawatsets did not flee the eighteen strangers.

The Kalawatsets were also aware of the division between the Americans and the British, deeming Alexander McLeod, leader of the recent expedition, and the HBC their

new allies and trading partners. As a Kalawatset man later explained to Michel LaFramboise, "We did not take them [Euro-Americans] to be the same people as you."<sup>32</sup> In the eyes of the Kalawatsets, Smith's party of seventeen trappers and the slave Marion had no local standing. Consequently, they were in a precarious position, particularly considering the Kalawatsets' interpretation of Anglo-American competition in the Oregon Country. Indeed, Smith and his party told the Kalawatsets that Oregon Country belonged to the United States; this proclamation did not go over well with the indigenous people. As indicated by Alexander Henry's address to the Native principals of the lower Columbia, the British traders represented themselves as permanent occupants in the country but not as the owners.<sup>33</sup> The situation called for restraint and humility on the part of the Euro-Americans, but such was not to be. The initial problem seems to have begun when one Kalawatset man helped himself to an axe. Smith's company tied up one Kalawatset, and another Native man defused the situation by convincing his mates to return the axe. However, one of the Kalawatsets, perhaps the one who had prevented the confrontation and had arranged for the axe's return, attempted to take a joyride around the trappers' camp on one of their horses. Indignant, one trapper Arthur Black "compelled him to dismount." The rider apparently became upset with Black's vehement reaction, and the Smith party lost an advocate.<sup>34</sup> As well, according to McLoughlin and Simpson, one of Smith's men tried to rape a Kalawatset woman that night at their camp. Some scholars doubt that the attempted rape occurred since it is noted only in the two British officers' later reports; these scholars see the accusation as an intentional slur against Euro-Americans during a period of imperial rivalry. The case against the

accuracy of the rape charge is based on an assessment of the character of the alleged perpetrator, Harrison Rogers, as related in Smith's journal.<sup>35</sup> As discussed in some detail in chapter five, however, rape of Native women occurred too frequently to dismiss the report so easily. The next morning a group of Kalawatsets assailed the camp, slaughtering most of Smith's men. Black managed to sneak away and was the only survivor of the men in camp. Smith and two others had been upriver scouting and also survived. Separately they worked their ways up the coast to Tillamook villages. The Tillamooks delivered the Euro-Americans to Fort Vancouver and presented McLoughlin with a quandary over how to respond to an attack by his new Native trading partners against his imperial and commercial adversaries. Opening a trade with the southern region and establishing a land-route to northern California were crucially important, and both necessitated amicable relations with the Native people of southwestern Oregon.

McLoughlin did not want to sacrifice either pursuit for the sake of avenging the Americans, but he feared the precedent the Kalawatsets' successful raid might establish as news of it passed among the Indians of the Oregon Country. Worse McLeod, the trader who had secured relations with the Kalawatsets and who Indians as far away as the Rogue River Valley had taken to calling "Chief of the Umpqua," was then on an expedition in northern California and not due to return through southwestern Oregon for several months.<sup>36</sup> McLoughlin wrote McLeod urging his speedy return and dispatched the former Astorian and Northwester Michel LaFramboise down to the Umpqua, as he had trapped there during McLeod's expedition and the Indians knew him. He was to speak with the Kalawatsets, ascertain their side of the story, and determine the fate of the

Smith party's property. LaFramboise found that the goods were dispersed irretrievably among the bands and villages of the area and that the unapologetic Kalawatsets felt their raid was legitimate. They determined that the Americans were a distinct group of interlopers who offended them and the HBC had no right to demand the return of the gifts that they had distributed. McLoughlin conveyed the information to Smith and explained that everyone would have to wait for the return trip of McLeod. McLoughlin felt that he alone could determine whether retribution was possible and whether it would be beneficial or harmful for the future. To his traders, McLoughlin was more thoughtful on the subject than he had been with Smith and seems to have considered the Kalawatset position. "[W]e have no right to make war, on the other hand if the business is drop[p]ed, will not our personal security be endangered wherever this report reaches[?]"<sup>37</sup> McLoughlin awaited his most experienced trader in the region to determine a response.

By 1829, there was certainly a precedent for violent retribution from Fort Vancouver. The Clallams of Hood River on the western shore of the Puget Sound had attacked a brigade from Fort Langley in June 1828 and killed five trappers and one of their Native wives. Another woman, the daughter of an important Native trade ally, had been captured. McLoughlin responded harshly, ordering Alexander McLeod to lead a punitive expedition. With the aid of the *Cadboro's* cannons, the colonials killed about twenty Clallams and burned their village and all their property, including forty-six canoes, the lifeblood of the people. The surviving Clallams turned over the woman. Such a response was far more brutal than the expedition to the Cascades in 1814 and, notably, ignored Native practices of attempting a settlement. McLoughlin wrote to

Simpson and the board attempting to explain and justify the massacre. His rationales were undermined by one of his clerks Francis Ermatinger who had taken part in the assault and penned a highly critical report of the men's overzealous conduct. According to Ermatinger, the Clallams had not been informed of the reason for the expedition nor was any attempt made to secure the woman's release through settlement, which could have been done "at the price of a few blankets."<sup>38</sup> Spurred by Ermatinger's criticisms, on one side, and the many men who supported the vengeful action, on the other, the Clallam massacre remained a contentious and much-discussed topic among the colonials.

Wintering at Fort Vancouver in 1828-1829, Jedediah Smith was well aware of the Clallam expedition and pressed for a similar action on the lower Umpqua. The Chief Factor wrote to McLeod via a California-bound ship that "Mr. Smith's affair has a more gloomy appearance than I expected...we must either make War on the Murderers of his people to make them restore his property or drop the business entirely." In the end, he deferred to McLeod to make decisions "on the spot" but indicated that he wanted him to avoid violence if possible, thinking it unnecessary based on their intercourse with LaFramboise.<sup>39</sup> The experienced trader McLeod eventually took Smith back to the lower Umpqua in 1830 and retrieved some of his party's horses and goods from the south coast villages without bloodshed. Among Euro-Americans, in particular, the Native peoples of southwestern Oregon never overcame the stigma of the Smith massacre, though Kalawatset elders would later unsuccessfully implore Methodist missionaries to help them rectify that dangerously provocative image in 1840.<sup>40</sup> The HBC, on the other hand, maintained their relations with the Kalawatsets, establishing a trading fort above them in



1836, which they maintained until 1851 when a fire razed their establishment for the second time and Euro-American settlements fueled by the California Gold Rush largely displaced the enterprise.

Retributive expeditions were not simple matters of "whites versus Indians" or total wars of conquest. As a commercial enterprise, McLoughlin felt he needed to calm relations in temporarily "unsettled" regions, and his fighting force was his labor force pulled from pursuits such as trapping, farming, felling, and milling. They were no more an army than the Native bands and villages with whom they occasionally conflicted. In the midst of recent and pending problems on the lower Columbia, Puget Sound, the Plateau, and the lower Umpqua in March 1830, McLoughlin complained that "it is but justice to all in charge of such Expeditions to state they are the most disagreeable Duty to which a person can be appointed..." His decisions regarding when to attempt revenge in light of future profits and realistic considerations of power were agonizingly complex partly because the actual raids were so unpredictable. As Alfred Seton had stated, fur trade employees were of "divers nations & languages,"<sup>41</sup> and they reflected equally diverse interests. McLoughlin complained the expeditions were "extremely difficult to manage Composed as they are of Canadians Iroquois a few Europeans Owhyees [Kanakas.] and native Indians whose language we do not speak nor they ours and even hardly understand us of hired servants who consider themselves bound to defend our persons and property when attacked but conceive it no part of their duty to go to war and merely go to oblige and of freemen [seasonal-contract trappers] who may be led but will not be commanded."<sup>42</sup> Historians continue to debate the justness of his punitive

expeditions, but none can dispute that McLoughlin took them seriously and had limited control of their actions once they left the fort.<sup>43</sup>

McLoughlin's decisions in 1829 were further complicated by the loss of one of the Company supply ships, the *William and Ann*, a resulting conflict with the Clatsops, and the arrival of two American coasters, which anchored in the lower Columbia as floating trade posts, offering better prices than Fort Vancouver. When the *William and Ann* sank in early March 1829 in the mouth of the Columbia River all hands drowned and approximately one-third of Fort Vancouver's annual supplies spilled into the surf. The Clatsops, ever watchful for gifts from the sea, salvaged barrels of rum and hats among other articles. Some items they traded or gave away and others they retained. Because McLoughlin had abandoned Fort George four years earlier, no colonials witnessed the tragedy or had first-hand knowledge of the Clatsops' subsequent actions. A Native man at Fort Vancouver, who according to McLoughlin had a grudge against the Clatsops, spread a rumor that the crew had actually survived the wreck but had been killed for the cargo. Predictably, cries for revenge erupted around the fort community, which was still divided over the Clallam massacre less than a year before. McLoughlin did not believe the rumors but sent five of his traders and sixty Canadians, Indians, and Kanakas downriver to confront the Clatsops and reclaim the property. Although McLoughlin argued that the Clatsops were of "well known savage disposition," he noted that the sailors' bodies had washed ashore in various locations and showed no evidence of having been massacred.<sup>44</sup> Still, his decision to send so large a contingent from the fort invited and produced violence.

The spring 1829 clash with the Clatsops resulted from McLoughlin's fear that an appearance of weakness would create further troubles; similar reasoning had produced the Clallam massacre. He believed that "the Indians considered the property as ours and after receiving particular information of what had been collected by the different Indians if we had not made a demand of it we would have fallen so much in Indian Estimation that whenever an opportunity offered our safety would have been endangered."<sup>45</sup> The company therefore must demand "restitution" to save face. His was not an ignorant calculation; the Indians in the region acted similarly in sending a sizable force to ensure adequate settlements among themselves. The colonialists had witnessed several such occasions on the lower Columbia since 1811 in which different villages pressed each other for settlement, often after some brief fighting or posturing typically dismissed as "petty war."<sup>46</sup>

Indeed, the Clatsops appear to have respected McLoughlin's decision and met the show of force by offering a settlement. They requested that the HBC contingent remain onboard their ship and offered some salvaged articles, which had not yet been appropriated, as well as slaves to cover the company's losses to their stores and esteem. Yet William Connolly, leading the HBC expedition, took offense at the "insult" and "Contemptuous reply" and ordered his men ashore. As soon as they began entering the skiffs, the Clatsops opened fire, then fled to the safety of the forested hills. Connolly and company killed four people and "Burnt their village and all their Property." McLoughlin was much satisfied because he agreed that the Clatsops had responded haughtily and in the violence, "not one of our people got the slightest wound."<sup>47</sup> The assault on Clatsop

was similar to the earlier one on the Clallams, a definite departure from the actions of the Northwesters when Franchere and company seemed well aware of the Native norm of avoiding unnecessary bloodshed to secure a mutually acceptable settlement; but those days were over.

Although colonialists were still a minority in racial terms, such were meaningless categories to the Native peoples who did not yet consider themselves a distinct group. It is misleading to consider as McLoughlin did that colonials were outnumbered: "one white man to 200 Indians."<sup>48</sup> There was no comparable "Indian" identity among the Native peoples to "white" among colonials, which bound them across nationalities.<sup>49</sup> As diverse as the fur-trade personnel were and as unpredictable as their retributive expeditions were, the Hudson's Bay Company had a coherent identity, unmatched resources, and Fort Vancouver was the most powerful "little sovereignty" in the lower Oregon Country. (The Plateau was another matter entirely.) The 1814 expedition from Astoria had been half-starved and so concerned with fitting into the Native world as a means of self-preservation that Madame Coalpo and Cassino were the two most important leaders, and Henry, Franchere, and others viewed the Cascades settlement as a success. McLoughlin was not as concerned with the safety of his forts in the lower country as McDougall had been. Rather, he was worried about the individual trapping parties alone in the field, particularly as he expanded their range into new territories in the north and south. The retributive expeditions of the next decades, particularly with the rise of the Euro-American presence, would be increasingly violent, and the avenue of arranging settlements would decline steadily.

McLoughlin seems to have recognized the error of abandoning Fort George, as the company could not see ships to help pilot them across the treacherous bar. Besides, the relations with the Clatsops had clearly deteriorated. He ordered Donald Manson to open a new post near the old site in March 1829. Madame Coalpo, still a leading figure in the lower Columbia trade, began leaning towards the Americans' floating trade posts, and McLoughlin feared he might "lose the Chinooks" and consequently, the lower Columbia trade in a similar way. Instead of buying out the American coasters at the outset, McLoughlin decided to undercut their prices, operating at a loss, and "as to Madam Calpo you [Donald Manson] may give her any present you think proper." He was successful and the American coasters departed. Fort George consisted of Manson's tent, eventually replaced by a house and a few outbuildings. Observers noted the presence of about six Indian dwellings. These individuals likely salted and packed salmon, a commodity that McLoughlin was experimenting with in the Latin American markets of California, Peru, and Chile.<sup>50</sup> When George Birnie took over as clerk of "Fort George," he planted a sizable potato crop, but the little settlement did not approach its former "grandeur and consequence" until Euro-American colonists later revived Astoria as a port town.<sup>51</sup> Significantly, after the return of colonial traders, there were no more conflicts with the Clatsops. The reaffirmation of the Clatsops' ongoing, if decreased, importance to the trade seems to have quelled further problems.

The year 1830 would prove to be a more disastrous than 1829 for all in the Oregon Country. Malaria made its first deadly visit to the lower Columbia, wreaking havoc in Native villages and in the fort. Obtaining sufficient horses and cattle from

Plateau Sahaptians was a constant problem, and McLoughlin faced potential violence on the lower Umpqua and at Fort Nez Perce near the mouth of the Walla Walla River on the middle Columbia. On the Plateau, a Cayuse man of significant standing had killed a company slave, Shasty, presenting McLoughlin with a classic fur-trade scenario pitting divergent beliefs of society and justice. Shasty was likely a Hokan-speaking Shasta Indian or, at least, a Native of the southwest Oregon-northwest California border region, whom the Chinooks and consequently the colonialists generically referred to as Shastas or Shastys. Chinook women allied with the company obtained such slaves via trading and raiding expeditions into the lands south of the lower Columbia: the upper Willamette, Umpqua, Rogue, and Shasta valleys.<sup>52</sup> To the consternation of Fort Vancouver's short-lived Anglican chaplaincy, the company gladly exploited these slaves via the control of the Native women who were married by "custom of the country" to their traders and trappers.<sup>53</sup>

Fur expeditions were complicated family affairs not straightforward business pursuits and reflected perhaps as many indigenous attributes as European. Native American women had proven crucial to the fur trade since the seventeenth century. In the Oregon Country, elite Chinook women's control of labor marked another significant contribution. Equally important, they derived power from leading fur expeditions and increasing wealth and status for their families and home villages. As elsewhere in the trade, a minority of headmen such as Comcomly and Cassino emerged with new forms of power and prestige among Native communities, but some women of the lower Columbia also used the trade to enhance their positions.<sup>54</sup> "Madame Coalpo," who successfully

played the American coasters off the HBC is simply the most famous. However, fur expeditions often had a Native woman at the helm; though the actual power they had varied considerably, all legitimated the colonialists' presence to the local Native population in any given area. And, as mentioned, they provided the slaves. Slavery both enabled power and exhibited it. Slave raiding and trading spread with the fur trade, and by the late 1820s, people from the southern periphery were increasingly common among the slave population of the lower Columbia as well as points north and east where Chinooks traded them.<sup>55</sup>

The use of slaves in the fur trade presented problems, however: McLoughlin and the HBC wanted to project a united, perhaps "tribal" image, but the standing of their slaves in the eyes of Native peoples inhibited that desire. Shasty was sent with the 1830 expedition to the Snake River, which was headed eventually to his home in the borderlands of northwestern California and southwestern Oregon. However, the expedition left Fort Vancouver with the initial malarial "fever and ague" raging and Shasty and a handful of others were too ill to continue by the time they reached Fort Nez Perce. While recuperating and under the order of fort trader Simon McGillivray, Shasty shot a cow that belonged to a local Cayuse man who had apparently refused to sell it to McGillivray. To the Cayuses and WallaWallas, McGillivray was responsible and repaid the loss of the cow with the loss of a company slave, Shasty. The matter should have been settled, according to the Cayuse. McLoughlin decided to transfer McGillivray, at the trader's request, telling him to warn the local Cayuse and WallaWallas "that they will get a bad character among the White Chiefs and none will be willing to remain on their

lands," unless they learn to be more conciliatory.<sup>56</sup> The Sahaptians around Fort Nez Perce were probably unimpressed. McGillivray's successor Pierre Pambrun did little to advance company authority. Like all experienced traders, he balanced accommodation and resistance as best he could. The Plateau Sahaptians had been competing with Shoshones and Blackfoot for decades and were fully capable of forming large, effective war parties that could strike quickly and decisively; of this the colonials were quite aware.

Transferring McGillivray was a good business decision, but McLoughlin was unclear as to how to proceed regarding Shasty's death. As he understood the situation, he had two systems of justice to weigh, and both seemed inapplicable. Given the distance from colonial seats of authority and the company's decidedly limited power on the Plateau, he could not administer English common law. Yet, noting his sense of Christianity and conveniently putting aside the company's exploitation of slaves and its increasing violence against their fellow men and women, he could not quite bring himself to abide Native beliefs. Although "the killing of Sasty is murder yet with these Indians it is considered no greater offence than killing a horse; and perhaps not so bad as the shooting the Cow." McLoughlin wrote to McGillivray in apparent resignation and wistful idealism, "if a Chief among us was to Kill a slave that Chief would be killed. But as you have not the means of putting this command in execution you will leave it to the Almighty who [may] punish the murderer." Reporting to his company superior, Governor Simpson, he amended this view to include the ever-present concerns of commerce and the realities of Native inter-ethnic communication lines. "But even if we



did Kill [the Cayuse man], it might be the cause of deranging all our business along the Communication" of the Indians of the upper Oregon Country. Worse, punishing the man might lead to war with the Cayuse "if the tribe are willing to defend him." Given "the disposition of those [Sahaptian Indians] about Walla Walla," McLoughlin refused to take the chance. McLoughlin concluded by arguing that McGillivray did nothing to provoke the killing, but was "thrown off his guard and did not act with that caution so necessary to be observed in dealings with" the Cayuse and Wallawalla Indians.<sup>57</sup>

McLoughlin was forced by circumstance to abandon retribution for the killing of the slave Shasty and put himself in the awkward position of having condoned a Native practice with which he disagreed. That summer, in July 1830, McLoughlin had the opportunity to clarify for his traders and trappers that he supported killing as retributive policy to be effected either by a company vengeance expedition or hiring Indians. Apparently, William Kittson "had offered two Horses to get an Indian Killed" over some dispute. The traders were aware that such contract killings occurred among Indians of different bands and ethnicities and were an accepted, though probably rare, practice in much of the Oregon Country and northernmost California.<sup>58</sup> McLoughlin wrote to his local trader William Connolly, asking "will you have the Goodness to state to Mr Kittson that the Company will not allow such proceedings and that it must not be done." He was not against hiring a killer, but that "[i]t is only when Indians have murdered any of the Companys Servants or any person belonging to the Establishment that we can have a Right to Kill the Murderer or get him Killed."<sup>59</sup> Kittson's dispute did not qualify.

In the spring of 1832, McLoughlin again had the unfortunate opportunity to refine

his ideas about retribution, this time in a case involving two Eastern Indians in the company's employ who had been killed while trapping in the Coast Range south of the Columbia by an unknown group of Tillamooks. Apparently feeling more secure in the lower country than upriver on the Plateau, he advised LaFramboise to embark on a punitive expedition to the "Killamook [sic] country for the purpose of punishing the atrocious murder of Pierre Kakarquion and Thomas Canasawrette," probably two Iroquois trappers given their surnames. As with McLeod and the Umpqua expedition, he deferred to LaFramboise's local knowledge and experience. McLoughlin relied on him to produce the "least effusion of blood...some innocent beings may in such cases unavoidably become victims as well as the guilty the severity necessary, for own safety & security may always be tempered with humanity and mercy." LaFramboise and his party killed six people. McLoughlin congratulated Labramboise on his accomplishment: "I think it but right that you send word to these sauvages...that we do not wish to hurt the innocent we expect that themselves will Kill the remainder of the Murderers of our people." McLoughlin considered extermination as the next possible step, "if they do not [kill the murderers of Kakarquion and Canasawrette] we will return and will not spare one of the tribe." He confided to one of his clerks that "I desired [LaFramboise] to Kill a few men only of the first party of that tribe that he fell in with and tell those he allowed to escape that we did this to let them see what we could do...and that they themselves must Kill those who had been concerned in the murder of our people." He concluded, "we wished to be on good terms with them – we never allowed any of our men do them the least harm – and it is they who brought this punishment on themselves."<sup>60</sup>

The introduction of extermination as a means of colonialist retribution was still some years off, but McLoughlin's comments suggest its growing appeal. Earlier in the 1827-1828 Snake River expedition, Ogden was clearly becoming frustrated with the decreasingly productive duty of creating a "fur desert" and advocated the extermination of the local Shoshone Indians not the beaver. He wrote in his journal that if it were his decision, "I would willingly sacrifice a year or two to exterminate the whole Snake tribe, women and children excepted. In so doing I could fully justify myself before God and man." Ogden conceded that: "Those who live at a distance are of a different opinion. My reply to them is this: Come out and suffer and judge for yourselves if forbearance has not been carried beyond bounds ordained by Scripture and surely this is the only guide a Christian sh'd follow."<sup>61</sup> He did, however, merely vent in his journal. Historian Lewis Saum took Ogden's self-justification to mean that he did not truly believe his own tirade. Perhaps, though Saum's may be an overly generous reading.<sup>62</sup> Ogden would not be the last colonialist to advocate extermination of Oregon Indians in frustration with economic pursuits and to offer similar rationales.

The disasters of 1830 mounted. Another supply ship, the *Isabella*, sank in nearly the same spot near the Columbia's treacherous mouth as had the *William and Ann* the previous year, but the crew and cargo were recovered. Normally a shipwreck was the worst possible news, but in 1830, the loss of the *Isabella* was insignificant compared with an unintentional passenger aboard another of the year's ships, malaria. Anthropologist Robert Boyd, who has done the most extensive epidemiological and demographic work on the subject, has provided a probable scenario for the malaria outbreaks. A carrier of a

malarial parasite likely arrived in 1830 at Fort Vancouver, which was linked to the trans-Pacific trade routes, and was bitten by a local mosquito. The newly infected mosquito then spread the disease to the blood of other people through previously innocent bites: the Indians had no exposure to or knowledge of malaria before 1830. For years after, during the mosquito breeding season in the late summer when Indians gathered at seasonal lakes and wetlands to collect wapato and other edible roots, the survivors of the last year became the infectious carriers of the new year, as mosquitoes mingled the blood of unsuspecting victims. As one company officer recalled, "it affected us all from the root eating Indian to the carnivorous English seamen."<sup>63</sup> The crucial difference, however, was that the Europeans and Euro-Americans recognized the "fever and ague" as malaria and administered an apparently short supply of quinine among themselves, sending to Hawai'i for as much as the posts there could spare. In 1830, the company lost one Iroquois trapper and "nine women, two children, and several of the Indians about the place," but no more personnel then or in succeeding years.<sup>64</sup> Among the Indians, according to Boyd, only a depleted supply of victims ended the annual death cycle.<sup>65</sup> Anthropologist Yvonne Hajda notes that worst damage was done within the first four years on the lower Columbia and credits the epidemics of 1830-34 with breaking the power of Indians vis-a-vis the HBC in the region.<sup>66</sup> Many contemporaries described the gruesome toll on the Native peoples of the lower country, noting abandoned villages that had bustled with human activity shortly before and bodies being piled high on the isles of the dead or *memoloose illahee* on the lower Columbia River. One mission layman claimed that "In one day's ascent of the Willamette in a canoe, I have counted nine

depopulated villages: in some instances whole tribes were nearly annihilated, and the few desolate survivors fled from the abodes of death, and identified themselves with their less unfortunate neighbors."<sup>67</sup>

Thanks in large measure to John Work's trapping expedition of 1832-33, the malaria epidemic spread up the Columbia River, across the Plateau, into the Great Basin, across the Sierra to the Sacramento Valley and California's north coast, then northward through southwest Oregon back to the Willamette Valley. Work left Fort Vancouver while the fever was "raging." When he reached Fort Nez Perce, near the confluence of the Columbia and Snake rivers, he left some trappers who were too sick to continue. He then continued on his circuit to Alta California and back northward to the Willamette Valley unwittingly spreading death by the tens of thousands throughout the Oregon Country and neighboring northern California.<sup>68</sup> Together with previous epidemics, Boyd estimates that from 1805 to 1841 the lower Chinookan and Kalapuyan peoples declined from 15,545 people to 1,932 (88%).<sup>69</sup> Demographic information for Indians who lived south of the lower Willamette centers of Fort Vancouver, the Willamette Mission, and the settlements as well as those of the Coast Range Mountains is much less reliable. For example, the Tillamooks of the northern Coast Range were said to have numbered anywhere from 200 to 1,500 in the 1840s.<sup>70</sup> Subsequent epidemics of smallpox, measles, and influenza similarly followed the trade routes in the late 1830s and were evidenced among the peoples of northern California and the Umpqua; it seems doubtful that the peoples in between in southwest Oregon were not similarly ravaged. Indeed, on Oregon's south coast, the Port Orford Indian agent noted pocked facial scars on many

adult Tututnis years later in 1854, and the Indians advised him that they had twice been ravaged within a generation.<sup>71</sup>

As happened elsewhere, Native curative practices often unwittingly helped along the so-called "virgin soil" epidemics in which human populations with no exposure to certain microbes consequently develop no immunities to them and suffer enormously when finally exposed. For example, sweats followed by plunges into cold water further weakened or drowned fevered victims. And malaria carried off many elders and traditional leadership, having both short and long term consequences on Native communities.<sup>72</sup> Further, throughout the Oregon Country Indians considered disease to be human caused, creating distrust and friction. Certain individuals were credited with spiritual powers that could conjure and project illness-causing agents. Reverend John Frost would later note this common belief as a reason for his refusal to administer medicine among sick Clatsops, fearing retribution if the treated person died. He reported his inaction as an official policy of the Oregon Mission.<sup>73</sup>

Indeed, the Indians often fixed the blame for disease on Europeans and Euro-Americans. One widely disseminated story among the Indians blamed the American coaster, the *Owyhee*, which had plagued Fort Vancouver's business, for initiating the "fever and ague" or malaria in 1830.<sup>74</sup> Notably, the Indians' explanation for the epidemic's beginning does not differ substantially from Boyd's epidemiological scenario. Indians claimed to have seen Captain Dominus of the *Owyhee* release the pathogens from a vial in a pouch that he wore around his neck because he was upset with the trade. Others claimed trade beads or "power sticks" (survey markers) produced the disease.

The story has several versions, recorded by different Europeans and Euro-American contemporaries, but the core elements remain consistent. The survey markers may have become part of the explanation in subsequent years when Euro-Americans dispossessed Indians through forced land cessions. In 1854, an Indian agent recorded a Chinook version in which a Euro-American captain bewitched a channel marker. Although "medicine men and prophets" determined the stick's guilt and ritually defeated it, the malevolent spirit had already left and gained a foothold among the people. Boyd notes that the theme of the non-Indians' ability to produce disease from a bottle dates back to 1811, when McDougall supposedly threatened to unleash smallpox from a vial among the Clatsops and Chinooks.<sup>75</sup> However, this story of McDougall as the "smallpox chief" is from Washington Irving; no contemporary records of Astoria support it. Ross Cox's narrative may have been the source, but he seems to have slurred events that he did not witness: namely, the brief stay of the transgendered prophet Kauxima-nupika and the smallpox scare in the summer of 1811.<sup>76</sup> In the 1830s, Dominus and other American sailors apparently relayed the tale of their smallpox powers northward to intimidate Makah traders at Cape Flattery, and it was commonly retold around Puget Sound.<sup>77</sup> The pervasiveness of the tale is further evidenced by the Kalawatsets of the lower Umpqua in 1840 and their concern regarding missionary Jason Lee's shot pouch, which he wore around his neck. According to the missionaries' translator, the Kalawatset wife of company trader Jean Garnier, the Indians thought he bore deadly magic. Still, the Kalawatsets refrained from their supposed plot to kill the missionaries preemptively.<sup>78</sup> The Native peoples generally opted not to take traditionally justified retribution until

1847 when a handful of Wallawalla, Cayuse, and Shoshone men took revenge in the infamous Whitman massacre.

By 1834, malaria's devastation of the Native population slowed, and that same year a new population began to arise in the lower country. Retiring trappers sought lands to cultivate in the Willamette Valley, and Euro-American Nathaniel Wyeth led a group of his countrymen to attempt a salmon-export business and settle in the area. McLoughlin, whose promising career as a wintering partner had been terminated by the rise of the Red River Colony, feared what settler-colonialism would do to the fur trade. Initially, he resisted efforts by retiring company trappers to remain in the region as farmers, but they pressed and he gradually acquiesced. Because of the joint-occupation treaty, McLoughlin could not prevent Wyeth and his group of "Rocky Mountain men" from settling, but he could refrain from helping them, which would likely doom their enterprise. Significantly, however, he befriended Wyeth and established a commitment to helping Euro-Americans. Later, when Wyeth led the Methodist missionaries overland, and the increasing stream of "pioneers" followed in their wake in the 1840s, McLoughlin continued to help.<sup>79</sup>

In his 1831 publication, Ross Cox had mused about the differences between Anglo and American colonization of North America. Although Irish, Cox did not espouse much anti-British sentiment in his book and chided Euro-Americans for their "unnatural and acrimonious hatred to the land of their forefathers...." He considered himself British, but he did reserve some criticism for the English who had colonized his native land. He regretted that the English and Americans only paid attention to the



Indians during wars with each other, and with the growing power of the United States, Christianization seemed to have fallen from the ideals of colonialism: the spread of civilization and Christianity. Indeed, he considered the United States' "anti-republican love of aggrandizement, by the continual extension of their territorial possessions" un-American. And like some Euro-American critics of Jeffersonian political theory, he felt that imperial expansion "must sooner or later destroy the unity of their confederation." But the Euro-American settler-colonists' treatment of the indigenous people was the "subject deeply to be lamented." With the "gradual encroachments on the Indian lands," Cox credited Euro-Americans with expounding "extermination, instead of regeneration...[as] their motto."<sup>80</sup> With the decline of the fur trade in the lower Oregon Country and the arrival of the Methodist missionaries and Euro-American settler-colonialism, we have an opportunity to view the merits of Cox's thesis.

Notes

<sup>1</sup> Nikolai N. Bolkhovitinov, "Russia and the Declaration of the Non-Colonization Principle: New Archival Evidence," *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, 1971, 104-106, 110.

<sup>2</sup> The Red River colony and the fur-trade wars have been covered numerous times by historians. For two monographs that make explicit connections with the Oregon Country, see Dorothy Nafus Morrison, *Outpost: John McLoughlin & the Far Northwest* (Portland: Oregon Historical Society Press, 1999); John S. Galbraith, *The Hudson's Bay Company as an Imperial Factor, 1821-1869* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1957).

<sup>3</sup> Simpson in Frederick Merk, ed., *Fur Trade and Empire: George Simpson's Journal; Remarks Connected with the Fur Trade in the Course of a Voyage from York Factory to Fort George and Back to York Factory, 1824-1825* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1931), 65.

<sup>4</sup> The rationale for Britain's imperial monopolies was to provide clear order far from the metropol, a rarely achieved ideal but one for which Simpson and his contemporaries strove. For treatments of the ideals and changing practices of the British empire, James Muldoon, *Empire and Order: The Concept of Empire, 800-1800* (New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc, 1999); P. J. Cain and A. G. Hopkins, *British Imperialism: Innovation and Expansion, 1688-1914* (New York: Longman, 1993); Robert G. Wesson, *The Imperial Order* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967).

<sup>5</sup> Gov. J.H. Pelly to Hon. George Canning, London, December 9, 1825, in Merk, *Fur Trade and Empire*, 258.

<sup>6</sup> John K. Townsend quoted in Grace P. Morris, "Development of Astoria, 1811-1850," *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, 1937, 422.

<sup>7</sup> Yvonne P. Hajda, "Regional Social Organization in the Greater Lower Columbia, 1792-1830," (PhD. diss., University of Washington, 1984), 46.

<sup>8</sup> Galbraith, *The Hudson's Bay Company*, 91.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 89.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 88.

<sup>11</sup> Jeff LaLande, ed, *First Over the Siskiyou: Peter Skene Ogden's 1826-1827 Journey Through the Oregon-California Borderlands*, (Portland: Oregon Historical Society Press, 1987), 13.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 15, 34-35.

<sup>13</sup> Theodore Stern, *The Klamath Tribe: A People and Their Reservation* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1966), 3-21.

<sup>14</sup> Lalande, *First Over the Siskiyou*, 39, and endnote on 134.

<sup>15</sup> Albert Samuel Gatschet, *The Klamath Indians of Southwestern Oregon* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1890), 192.

<sup>16</sup> Stern, *The Klamath Tribe*, 22-24.

<sup>17</sup> Chilouquin quoted in Stern, *The Klamath Tribe*, 23.

<sup>18</sup> Gatschet, *The Klamath Indians*, volume 1, 16.

<sup>19</sup> The relevance of the spelling with and without possessive "s" is discussed more completely in chapter four.

<sup>20</sup> Lalande, *First Over the Siskiyou*, 59-60, and Lalande notes that Ogden's reference may have been to Finan McDonald's trapping expedition to the Klamath River the previous year, 135.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 59-60, 64, 122-123.

<sup>22</sup> Dennis J. Gray, *The Takelma and Their Athapascan Neighbors: A New Ethnographic Synthesis for the Upper Rogue River Area of Southwestern Oregon* University of Oregon Anthropological Papers, 37 (Eugene: University of Oregon, 1987), 40, 73.

<sup>23</sup> Gray, *Takelma and Their Athapascan Neighbors*, 88-92; Robert F. Heizer and Thomas Roy Hester, "Shasta Villages and Territory," *Contributions of the University of California Archaeological Research Facility: Papers on California Ethnography*, (Berkeley: Contributions of the University of California Archaeological Research Facility, Department of Anthropology, 1970), 119-130.

<sup>24</sup> Lalande, *First Over the Siskiyou*, 65, 69-71.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 79-91.

<sup>26</sup> See also Lewis A. McArthur, *Oregon Geographic Names* (Portland, OR: Oregon Historical Society, 1992), 719-720.

<sup>27</sup> James Kendall Hosmer, ed., *Gass's Journal of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*

(Chicago: A.C. McClurg & Co., 1904), 177-178.

<sup>28</sup> Robert F. Jones, ed., *Astorian Adventure: The Journal of Alfred Seton, 1811-1815* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1993), 109, 113-14.

<sup>29</sup> Alexander Ross, *Adventures of the First Settlers on the Oregon or Columbia River, 1810-1813* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986), 129.

<sup>30</sup> Lewis O Saum, *The Fur Trader and the Indian* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1965), 40, 47.

<sup>31</sup> Father Blanchet wrote of the Rogue Valley, "its name from the Indians whose territory it waters, and whose predatory habits have acquired them the rather unpleasant *sobriquet* of the "Rogues." Blanchet lumped the coastal Athapaksan "Port Orford Indians" with the Rogues: "[t]he similarity of their language, the friendly intercourse that exists between them, their disposition and decided taste for plunder, are strong proofs that they form but one tribe." *A Comprehensive, Explanatory, Correct, Pronouncing Dictionary and Jargon Vocabulary, To Which is Added Numerous Conversations, Enabling Any Person To Speak The Chinook Jargon* 2nd ed. (Portland, O.T.: S.J. McCormick, 1853), 60. Reprinted in appendix of Thomas Vaughn, ed., *Paul Kane, The Columbia Wanderer: Sketches, Paintings, and Comment, 1846-1847* (Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1971). See also, Overton Johnson and Wm. H. Winter, *Route Across the Rocky Mountains*, reprint of 1846 ed., (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1932), 50; and an early "scientific" classification of "the Rogue or Rascal Indians," Horatio Hale, "Ethnography and Philology," *United States Exploring Expedition. During the Years 1838, 1839, 1840, 1841, 1842. Under the Command of Charles Wilkes, U.S.N.* (Ridgewood, New Jersey: The Gregg Press, 1968), 221.

<sup>32</sup> Letter McLoughlin to Smith September 12, 1828 in Maurice S Sullivan, ed, *The Travels of Jedediah Smith: A Documentary Outline, Including the Journal of the Great Amerian Pathfinder* (Santa Ana, CA: The Fine Arts Press, 1934), 109.

<sup>33</sup> Coues, 867.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 109.

<sup>35</sup> For the rape charge, Nathan Douthit, "The Hudson's Bay Company and the Indians of Southern Oregon," *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, 1992, 44; and for a discussion refuting the charge, John Phillip Reid, "Restraints of Vengeance: Retaliation-in-Kind and the Use of Indian Law in the Old Oregon Country," *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, 1994, 72-73.

<sup>36</sup> Lalande, *First Over the Siskiyou*s, 91.

<sup>37</sup> Letter McLoughlin to McLeod, September 12, 1828 in Sullivan, 109.

<sup>38</sup> Morrison, *Outpost*, 176-178.

<sup>39</sup> Letter McLoughlin to McLeod, September 12, 1828 in Sullivan, 109.

<sup>40</sup> Gustavus Hines, *Life on the Plains of the Pacific* (Buffalo: George H. Derby and Co. 1851), 104-5.

<sup>41</sup> Robert F. Jones, ed., *Astorian Adventure: The Journal of Alfred Seton, 1811-1815*. (New York: Fordham University Press, 1993), 134.

<sup>42</sup> Burt Brown Barker, ed., *Letters of Dr. John McLoughlin Written at Fort Vancouver, 1829-1832*. (Portland: Binfords and Mort for the Oregon Historical Society, 1948), 83.

<sup>43</sup> Douthit, "The Hudson's Bay Company," makes the case that the colonial traders instigated the violence in the southern Oregon trade. Reid developed a sophisticated legal history for the clashes in John Phillip Reid, *Patterns of Vengeance: Crosscultural Homicide in the North American Fur Trade* (Sacramento Ninth Circuit Historical Society: Ninth Circuit Historical Society, 1999).

<sup>44</sup> Barker, *Letters of Dr. John McLoughlin*, 18-26, 41, 118-119.

<sup>45</sup> Barker, *Letters of Dr. John McLoughlin*, 41.

<sup>46</sup> The Astorians were keen observers of the various conflicts of the lower Columbia Native peoples, always watchful of alliances that might turn against them. Robert F. Jones, ed., *Annals Of Astoria: The Headquarters Log of the Pacific Fur Company on the Columbia River, 1811-1813* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1999), 37, 109-110, and 206-9; Elliott Coues, ed., *New Light on the Early History of the Greater Northwest: The Manuscript Journals of Alexander Henry and of David Thompson, 1799-1814* (Minneapolis: Ross & Hanes, Inc, 1965), 855, 867, 879-881; Gabriel Franchere, *Adventure At Astoria, 1810-1814* translated and edited by Hoyt C. Franchere (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1967), 115-117; Ross, *Adventures of the First Settlers*, 102-103.

<sup>47</sup> Barker, *Letters of Dr. John McLoughlin*, 21.

<sup>48</sup> McLoughlin quoted in Morrison, *Outpost*, 175.

<sup>49</sup> For European constructions of the "Indian," Robert F. Berkhofer, *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1978). For the developing Native notions of Indian identity, Alexandra

Harmon, "Lines in the Sand: Shifting Boundaries between Indians and Non-Indians in the Puget Sound Region," *Western Historical Quarterly*, 1995, 429-453; Alexandra Harmon, *Indians in the Making: Ethnic Relations and Indian Identities around Puget Sound*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998). For racial constructions of "white" colonialists, Audrey Smedley, *Race in North America: Origin and Evolution of a Worldview* 2nd ed., (San Francisco: Westview Press, 1999).

<sup>50</sup> Barker, *Letters of Dr. John McLoughlin*, 46, 163, 170, 181.

<sup>51</sup> Morris, Development of Astoria, 421.

<sup>52</sup> Robert Boyd, *People of The Dalles, The Indians of Wascopam Mission: A Historical Ethnography Based on the Papers of the Methodist Missionaries* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), 156-157; Leland Donald, *Aboriginal Slavery on the Northwest Coast of North America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 140-142, 224-228, 232-233; Hajda, "Regional Social Organization," 191-195.

<sup>53</sup> Thomas E. Fessett, ed., *Reports and Letters of Herbert Beaver, 1836-1838: Chaplain to the Hudson's Bay Company and Missionary to the Indians at Fort Vancouver*, (Portland, OR: Champoe Press, 1959), 132.

<sup>54</sup> Hajda, "Regional Social Organization," 179-180, 195.

<sup>55</sup> Donald, *Aboriginal Slavery on the Northwest Coast*, 229-231.

<sup>56</sup> McLoughlin letters to McGillivray February 27, 1832 and to Simpson March 15, 1832, in Barker, *Letters of Dr. John McLoughlin*, 254-5, 258.

<sup>57</sup> McLoughlin to McGillivray March 15, 1832, in Barker, *Letters of Dr. John McLoughlin*, 258.

<sup>58</sup> Theodore Stern, *Chiefs and Change in the Oregon Country: Indian Relations at Fort Nez Percés, 1818-1855* vol. II, (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 1996), 150-151; Boyd, *People of The Dalles*, 78.

<sup>59</sup> McLoughlin to William Connolly July 2, 1830 in Barker, *Letters of Dr. John McLoughlin*, 109.

<sup>60</sup> McLoughlin to Laframboise April, 1832, May 9, 1832, to James Birnie, May 15, 1832 in Barker, *Letters of Dr. John McLoughlin*, 268, 272-273

<sup>61</sup> T. C. Elliott, "Journal of Peter Skene Ogden; Snake Expedition, 1827-1828," *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, 370.

- <sup>62</sup> Saum, *The Fur Trader and the Indian*, 42.
- <sup>63</sup> George B Roberts, *Recollections of George B. Roberts*, MS P-A 83. The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 14.
- <sup>64</sup> Morrison, *Outpost*, 209-210, 211.
- <sup>65</sup> Robert 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), 109.
- <sup>66</sup> Hajda, "Regional Social Organization," 35-46.
- <sup>67</sup> P. L. Edwards, *Sketch of the Oregon Territory or Emigrants' Guide* (Liberty, MO: The Herald Office, 1842), 15-16.
- <sup>68</sup> Boyd, *The Coming of the Spirit*, 97-99.
- <sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, 84, and see tables, 323-329.
- <sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 329. Reverend John Frost was responsible for the lower estimate, and as discussed in the next chapter, his reasons for undercounting the Native population related to his desire to leave his mission post.
- <sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 131-34.
- <sup>72</sup> *Ibid.* 109; Pipes, "Journal of Frost," 140-1; and more generally, Alfred W. Crosby Jr., "Virgin Soil Epidemics as a Factor in the Aboriginal Depopulation in America," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 33, no. 2. (1976), 289-299.
- <sup>73</sup> Pipes, "Journal of John H. Frost," 363.
- <sup>74</sup> Roberts, "Recollections," 14.
- <sup>75</sup> Robert 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), 46-47.
- <sup>76</sup> Ross Cox, *The Columbia River*, edited by Edgar I. Stewart and Jane R. Stewart, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1957), 170. Irving's narrative was originally published five years after Cox's in 1836. Washington Irving, *Astoria, or Anecdotes of an Enterprise Beyond the Rocky Mountains* (Philadelphia: Carey, Lea, & Blanchard, 1836).

<sup>77</sup> George B. Roberts, *Recollections of George B. Roberts*, MS P-A 83. The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 14; Robert Boyd, *People of The Dalles, The Indians of Wascopam Mission: A Historical Ethnography Based on the Papers of the Methodist Missionaries* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), 173; Boyd, *Coming of the Spirit*, 46, 109, 112-15.

<sup>78</sup> Hines, *Life on the Plains of the Pacific*, 105-112.

<sup>79</sup> These events have been much covered by historians, for a recent discussion, see Morrison, *Outpost*, 231-241.

<sup>80</sup> Cox, *The Columbia River*, 119, 167-8.



## CHAPTER IV

A "vital experimental religion":

## THE POLITICS OF MISSION AND COLONY

## IN THE LOWER OREGON COUNTRY, 1834-1845

"Ask of Me and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possessions"

– Psalms 2:8

"Hiyack wah-wah Sakalatie. Quick speak to God."

– Margaret Smith, Oregon Mission

American Methodists had an ambivalent relationship with colonialism and race in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. As evangelical Christians, they believed that the Gospel applied universally for all humanity. At its core, Methodism was a missionary enterprise: "convert the world" was a popular slogan of the early nineteenth century. The itinerants who rode into Satan's realm of "moral and intellectual darkness" understood what God wanted from his people, and they were committed to making his word, the Gospel, the way of the world. Religious and cultural chauvinism, like missionization, were hardly the restricted purview of antebellum Methodists. But the Mission Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church was a leader among American Protestant missions and they, unlike the transnational Jesuits with whom the Protestant missionaries felt themselves locked in a millennial struggle, could never separate their divine purpose from Euro-American colonization of the West and the Pacific. In 1830, to the dismay of southeastern tribes and its own missionaries, the Methodist Episcopal Church opted to

support the citizenry of Georgia and sanctioned Andrew Jackson's Indian Removal Act. During the Gold Rush, Reverend Charles Maclay, sent from Pennsylvania to the San Jose circuit in southern California, instead became a prominent colonial entrepreneur and led the economic development of the San Fernando Valley. From the 1820s through the century's end, Protestant missionaries played crucial roles in the conquest and annexation of the Oregon, Hawai'i, and the Philippines, with the Methodists figuring prominently.<sup>1</sup>

While the Methodists and other Protestant sects were not *conquistadores*, they never separated themselves or their Christian Mission from United States imperialism. As Reginald Horsman has convincingly argued, the American Mission was inseparable from Manifest Destiny during the nineteenth century.<sup>2</sup> As this chapter will demonstrate, however, the relationship was anything but neat and predetermined. In the Oregon Country, Methodists both instigated colonization by United States citizenry and became ensnared in the colonial politics of property and race that eventually undermined their moral authority and destroyed their mission experiment. In the 1820s and 1830s, Protestant missionaries had imagined themselves in a race with time to convert and civilize the dying remnants of once powerful Indian tribes of the lower country before they were overrun and hopelessly corrupted by Euro-American colonists. Two centuries of Anglo-American conquest and expansion made the prediction seem an inviolable natural law. By the early 1840s, the Oregon Mission faced property disputes with emigrants and Hudson's Bay Company personnel and internal strife among disgruntled missionaries and laymen of the last and largest mission reinforcement of 1840. In 1844, the Mission Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church conceded defeat and set its sights

on the converting people of Manifest Destiny, closing its doors on the Indians.

The Indians, already battling the multiple effects of disease epidemics in the 1830s, confronted an arriving population that dismissed their ways of life, their sovereignty, their future survival, and ultimately their humanity. Native beliefs and actions, to the extent that they can be teased out of typically biased and problematic sources, were diverse and complex. Some Native people, particularly during initial interactions, attempted to work the missionaries into pre-existing fur trade relations, a practical piecemeal form of indigenization (the incorporation of new ideas or technologies without the underlying cultural assumptions of Christianity.) Others treated the interlopers respectfully but generally ignored them. Still others "converted" to Christianity for varying lengths of time and for equally varying reasons. I have tried to avoid treating conversion as a simple process of either supplanting one belief system with another or presenting conversion as a syncretic practice of blending the best of both worldviews.<sup>3</sup> Individual converts seemed to see Christianity as a means of accommodative resistance – actions that might not, at first glance, seem to be resistance but, insofar as they open new ways to survive as Indians, should be viewed as such.

In the 1830s, the Indians, together with the diverse non-Native population, lived in a complicated colonial world in which all choices seemed to be ineffective. They were unable to affect the opinions of Euro-Americans in a manner beneficial to themselves, despite the overwhelmingly peaceful and tolerant nature of their interactions. Before the extensive colonization of their homelands in the mid-to-late 1840s, the diverse Chinookan, Sahaptin, Athabaskan, and Kalapuyan peoples did not resort to violence.

From 1834 to 1847, as tens of thousands died, their persons, speech, and traditions denigrated, and their lands and resources usurped, no Indian harmed a missionary. Such was not miraculous, as might be asserted by the Christians, but a matter of choice.

Antebellum Methodism coexisted with the profane realities of nineteenth-century racial inequality and dominance, most notable in the conquest of indigenous peoples and the enslavement of Africans and their American descendants. Indeed antebellum Methodism, particularly the Oregon Mission of 1834-43, is perhaps best understood in terms of the attempts to find a tenable balance between spreading the word and imposing white supremacy or "civilization." The epic of Jason Lee, the Superintendent of the Oregon Mission, has become a staple in the historiography of Oregon because he is credited with "saving" Oregon from British claims by establishing a fixed Euro-American presence.<sup>4</sup> In reality, however, Lee's primary goal was to create a mission that could cater to both Indians and Euro-American emigrants. To view his efforts strictly in terms of Euro-American nationalism loses the complexity of his and contemporaries' perceptions of mission and colony.

Lee sought to recreate a place. He wanted to make the Oregon Country a seat of Christian American civilization, a place dominated by the power of the Gospel not the secular citizenry of the United States. In so doing, he actively colonized parts of the lower Willamette Valley during the period of joint occupation between the United States and Great Britain in the 1830s and early 1840s. His so-called temporal or secular efforts have completely overshadowed his project of Christian mission largely because contemporaries and historians have consistently misunderstood the connection between

mission and colony. Antebellum Protestants considered the two enterprises complementary; they were the earthly link between Christianity and civilization in the Oregon Country. However, the position of the Indians within the Oregon Mission points to the inherent contradictions of the antebellum era: Lee created a mission to "save" a people whose disappearance was generally assumed to be unavoidable and not particularly lamentable. Indeed, that disappearance marked the superiority of Christian American civilization and its "Anglo-Saxon" citizenry of the United States.

Yet the Gospel compelled the missionaries to change, convert, and civilize the Indians. Indigenous peoples existed outside the Kingdom of God; they were heathens in the wilderness like the Gentiles of the 1<sup>st</sup> century. And like Matthew and the other original Evangelists from whom American evangelicals drew inspiration, antebellum missionaries were to bring the light to the heathens. However, as the Oregon missionaries complained, the challenges of the "lower country" (the Columbia River region below the Cascade Mountains) seemed to exceed those of their progenitors. Matthew spoke and wrote Aramaic, the language of the Jews among whom he evangelized. Mark, John and others could rely on the imperial lingua franca, Greek, to articulate complex religious ideas. More importantly, the heathen populations of the initial theaters of evangelism were demographically stable, accepted monotheism, were sedentary and agricultural or, at least, pastoral. In other words, the Evangelists and the heathens could communicate effectively and generally shared a way of life. The Native peoples of the lower country met none of these criteria; the Gospel may have been the Truth to the Christian missionaries, but it was surely no practical guide to converting

Indians. The Oregon Methodists followed a traditional, exclusivist mode of religious conversion, which religious scholar Antonio Gualtieri, has termed "theological imperialism," wherein Native spiritual beliefs are repudiated in "a strategy of radical displacement."<sup>5</sup> The project was as basic as it was flawed.

Language was consistently a problem: the missionaries had to rely on Chinook Jargon, a polyglot trade lexicon, which if it contained the linguistic subtleties necessary for discussing theology, the missionaries (and Euro-Americans generally) were ignorant of them. Although Lee, in defense of the Oregon Mission, claimed that the Jargon was serviceable for sermons, Reverend John Frost expressed the more popular sentiment when he described it as "altogether insufficient, by which to make known to [Indians] religious truths."<sup>6</sup> Herbert Beaver, the Anglican missionary at Fort Vancouver from 1836-1838, felt similarly that "it is too defective for the conveyance of Christian ideas."<sup>7</sup> The Euro-Americans' few remaining examples of Chinook Jargon sermons would seem to support Frost and Beaver. Margaret Smith, the girls' teacher at the mission's Indian school in 1838, related the following "sermon I sometimes preach to one or more [adults] when they happen in my path.

Mican tum-tum Cloosh? (Your heart good?) Mican tum-tum wake cloosh. (Your heart no good.) Alaka mican ma-ma lose. (Bye-and-bye you die.) Mican tum-tum cloosh mican clatamy Sakalatie. (Your heart good you go to God.) Sakalatie mamoke hiyas cloosh mican tum-tum. (God make very good your heart.) Hiyack wah-wah Sakalatie. (Quick speak to God.)<sup>8</sup>

Smith's reductionist sermon suggests the obvious limitations of conveying Christianity's core beliefs regarding death and the afterlife. Notably, while she may have intended for "hyack" to confer a sense of suddenness as with euphoric revelation, the word commonly

connoted speed or haste.<sup>9</sup> Her insistence on haste, whether a probable interpretation or a targeted meaning, likely reflects the colonial climate of disease, depopulation, and dispossession in which the Indians lived and the Mission family worked and which likely affected comprehension of the sermons.

But if we accept that Chinook Jargon was sufficient for the basics of evangelism, we still have to ask what the Indians heard and understood. Even if Frost and other missionaries were fluent in local dialects, it is unlikely that Christianity, as a body of completely alien concepts, would have been grasped. As it stood, a mechanical problem arose because Native translators often passed the sermons from Jargon into two or three more languages before the full audience heard the Gospel. The multi-lingual interpretations further complicated preaching. According to Reverend Gustavus Hines, the Kalawatsets of the lower Umpua River thought the missionaries talked to God, an ill-understood display that they eagerly anticipated and crowded around to witness.<sup>10</sup> Some Clatsops, according to Frost, believed that the missionaries were "being[s] of a different sort"<sup>11</sup> who could "pray," an alien practice which the Clatsops did not believe Indians capable of and which had no relevance for them. At one point, the Clatsops dismissed convert Celiast (Helen Smith) and her claims of a praying ability and worried that following her lead would offend the crucial spring-run of Chinook salmon.<sup>12</sup> According to William Kone and Daniel Lee, Indians at both the Willamette Falls and up the Columbia River at the Wascopam expected payment for prayer, viewing their participation in camp meetings as a service to the missionaries.<sup>13</sup> Indeed, throughout the Oregon Country and northern California, many Native first-fruits and puberty ceremonies

necessarily included visitors who helped ensure the success of the various rites. The visitors, often from distant villages and crossing linguistic and ethnic lines, were given gifts for their participation and assistance in dancing and conjuring. It could be that some Indians tried to fit the newcomers into existing categories of meaning as occurred elsewhere in the Americas, an informal process of indigenizing the newcomers and their ways. As well, a new syncretic form of Christian and Native beliefs was clearly evident by 1836 when a Hudsons Bay Company official witnessed the first recorded *Washat* ceremony, which evidenced both Plateau Sahaptin spiritual beliefs and elements of Christian services and hymnal cadences.<sup>14</sup> Unfortunately, evidence of indigenization and syncretism in the 1830s is limited, particularly in western Oregon, due partly to the inability of the Methodists to communicate effectively with the Native population and thus effectively record their voices.

For the Methodists, the lower country housed a daunting number of Native languages, none of which was spoken by a majority. The scholarly Jesuits and their legendary linguistic feats among Iroquoian and Algonkian speakers in the Northeast could not be emulated in a region where villages separated by a few miles spoke languages as different from each other as Swahili, Mandarin, and Swedish.<sup>15</sup> That the missionaries had no linguistic training or much inclination to try certainly did not help matters. As Frost bemoaned, even if the missionaries had the time to learn one local language, the dialectical variations among bands would make the effort almost useless.<sup>16</sup> And even when the Indians went beyond their typical attitudes of initial, polite curiosity to learn more and perhaps experiment with mission life, the missionaries found that the



Gospel presupposed an economy antithetical to the indigenous cultures and the ecological realities of parts of the region: sedentary agriculture. This is to say nothing of the continued cultural differences that would have meant that even "converted" Indians had very different understandings of "the Gospel" than were intended.

Christianization was inseparable from "civilization." In the antebellum United States, civilization included the host of secular republican, agrarian ideals by which Euro-Americans defined themselves. The American Methodist Episcopal Church was a product of centuries of European-American history and hence could not be separated from the cultural underpinnings of private property, hierarchy, profitable enterprise, and agriculture. To create what Robert Berkhofer called "temples in the forest," the Protestant missionaries had to repudiate and alter completely the Native economies and the cultures that gave them meaning. Berkhofer explained, "[t]he spread of the true faith...could only come at the expense of traditional native life." For "[r]eligion in addition to being a philosophy of the unknown is a system for ranking basic values, and thus a new religion implies new behavior...true Indian conversion meant nothing less than a total transformation of native existence."<sup>17</sup> Oregon Methodists became aware quickly of the dilemma that evangelical Christianity required civilization but that the secular task of "civilizing" the Indians distracted both missionaries and potential Native converts from concentrating on the Gospel. The missionaries in the field had to figure out how to colonize sufficiently to support a mission but without evoking suspicion of either unaffiliated settlers or mission donors. In the early nineteenth century, they had little experience upon which to draw; the rise of Methodism among Anglo-Americans

offered a poor guide.

The American Methodist Episcopal Church grew from John Wesley's variant of the Anglican Church, which he and others carried from the ivy halls of Britain's Oxford University to the muddled byways of the rural North American colonies in the 1730s. Theologically, an Arminian, Wesley preached that humans were religious free agents – salvation was a personal choice, unlike Calvinism in which God predetermined one's fate after death. For Wesley, Christianity was an intimate relationship between a person and God, overshadowing all other concerns. People had simply to accept the Gospel (the canon of apostolic writings of Christ's life and teachings) as the divine truth to be saved; though, a life of temperate, honest farming – civilized life – was both the precondition for salvation and its subsequent guarantor. Adherence to the Gospel by individuals responsible for their own piety and reinforced by the piety of their community would produce a steadfast and thoroughly "social church," in Wesley's words.<sup>18</sup> Despite their common moniker, no universal systematic approach to world conversion developed among Methodists. Rather, American Methodism is perhaps more notable for its creative enterprises in the field. Still, Wesley's travels and his teachings in North America did give rise to the distinctive pattern of the "circuit": itinerant preachers actively missionized among the population and returned intermittently for camp revivals at which the faithful were inspired to renew their spiritual and emotional ties with God and the Christian community.

In the 1760s, the politics of colonialism and race clearly intruded upon the ideals of Methodism, reflected first in the schism between Wesley's staunch Toryism and his

many erstwhile followers who favored independence from Great Britain. By the 1780s, a distinctly American Methodism arose with the Christmas Conference of 1784. In the 1830s, at the same time as supporting Indian removal, the Methodists supported the United States' brief flirtation with removing African Americans to Africa through the American Colonization Society. Thereafter, the Methodists operated a mission in the newly founded nation of Liberia. Their support of the ACS can rightly be viewed as supporting the racist notions of separation and the United States as a white man's country, but their support was also an effort to prevent a schism between southern and northern episcopacies. The church's support of the Indian Removal Act had similarly reflected the politics of seeking the most inoffensive course through a sea of interdenominational competition, aggressive colonial expansion, and the ideals of evangelism. The united Methodist Church was soon undone by the slavery question and sectionalism, however; and in 1844 officially split in two, following the familiar sectionalism of the era with southern and northern institutions.<sup>19</sup> The Oregon missionaries were northerners and were, like many of their peers, ardent abolitionists.

In 1820, following the so-called Second Great Awakening of evangelical revivalism, the Methodists formed a Missionary Society to go forth and convert the world. Although Wesley had personally failed in a brief experiment to missionize among the Cherokees from 1735 to 1737,<sup>20</sup> Methodists and rival Baptists of the nineteenth century were more successful after several decades of acculturation by the Indians of the Southeast, for which the so-called "Five Civilized Tribes" are famous. After the removals of the 1820s and 1830s, the missionaries followed their Native flocks to the

Indian Territory. The "civilizing" effects of acculturation, loss of homelands, displacement of matriarchal clans by male-dominated legalism, and the cessation of traditional subsistence activities benefited the missionaries' cause. Faced with few options, many Indians assimilated aspects of Anglo-American civilization such as commercial farming in order to survive. Indeed some Choctaw leaders, according to Clara Sue Kidwell, pressed the Protestants for agricultural education of their children, seeing the merits of civilization over those of Christianization.<sup>21</sup>

The Native peoples whom the Methodists confronted in the Oregon Country in the 1830s had experienced profound changes and devastating diseases since the late eighteenth century, but they remained in their homelands, and though they lacked the institutions created by the Cherokees, they were in a stronger position to resist the American Mission than the banished tribes of Indian Territory. Indeed, they had more in common with the Cherokees who had rebuffed Wesley in the 1730s than their contemporaries of the "Five Civilized Tribes" in the 1830s. Still, many Native men, women, and children of the Columbia Plateau and in the lower country of western Oregon were interested in the missionaries, often soliciting their attentions. Although the written record of their opinions is sparse, their actions suggest a period of experimentation with the evangelicals, after which they decided whether to remain or leave. Mission schoolmaster Cyrus Sheppard related a representative example: "Another [Indian child] whose [Tillamook] father came here last spring, and desired brother [Lee] to take his son, expressing a strong desire that his son might be educated in the way of the white men, after staying with us two months, and having made laudable progress in

learning, that same father came and took him away."<sup>22</sup> Of course, as Jason Lee mentioned in his diary, the evangelists were involved in their own experiment, "an extremely hazardous one," but "vital experimental religion" was imperative to the antebellum missionary.<sup>23</sup> The Indians and the missionaries would simply have to experiment to find their way through the complexities of mission and colony.

Protestant missionaries played an important, early role in the American colonization of the Oregon Country and have occasionally drawn the ire of critics for seemingly being more concerned with this secular project than the sacred effort of Christianizing the Indians. The standard narrative of the Oregon Mission credits the famed 1831 visit by a group of Nez Perce and Flathead Indians to Indian Superintendent William Clark (formerly of the Corps of Discovery) in St. Louis. During their stay, the Indians supposedly requested knowledge of the white man's God. Word spread through Christian publications and, by 1834, the Mission Board had dispatched Jason Lee to answer their call. By the early 1840s, the Methodist Mission in the lower Willamette Valley had emerged as the first American colonial institution to challenge the regional power of the Hudson's Bay Company headquartered at Fort Vancouver. Under Lee, the mission built and operated mills, cultivated significant acreage (and to the chagrin of emigrants claimed significantly more without occupation or improvements), constructed dwelling and schoolhouses, and possessed substantial livestock. As Lee – the recipient of the most criticism from contemporaries and historians – stated, the mission introduced "all the necessaries ... of a civilized colony." Ghostwriting for Hubert Bancroft, Frances

Fuller Victor began the condemnation of Lee in her nineteenth-century portrayal derisively calling him a "missionary-colonizer." Through the twentieth century, the histories of Oregon colonization and missionization have variously condemned either Lee's active promotion of Oregon colonization or Bancroft (inaccurately) and "his foolish slander."<sup>24</sup>

Notably, however, Jason Lee did not originate the idea of a mission-colony in the Oregon Country. As well, the Protestants' interest in the region did not suddenly materialize from a vacuum with the "Macedonian Cry" of the Flatheads in 1831. Rather, the New England Protestants followed the wake of Yankee whalers to the so-called "Sandwich Islands" to convert the Native Hawai'ians. From the Hawai'ian mission, established in April 1820, American Protestants became increasingly curious about the possibilities of "the Oregon," a country linked to the South Pacific Islands by the shipping routes of the fur trade. In September 1821, *The Missionary Herald* attempted to stir up the mission spirit among its northeastern readership. It published a report from two Euro-American ship captains who traded along the Northwest Coast and subsequently visited the Oahu Mission claiming that "[s]ome of the savages when they heard of missionaries being sent to teach the Sandwich Islanders, inquired why they were not sent to *them*." The Herald attempted to counter a prior anonymous claim that "it is impossible to propagate the Gospel there." Citing the universal applicability of the Gospel, the paper noted it is "for every heathen nation, however barbarous and inaccessible.... The energy of the Holy Spirit is irresistible, and can as easily transform the roaming savage of the north into a humble child of God, as a persecuting Saul into the

zealous Apostle of the Gentiles." The Herald prophesized "[t]he Gospel can be propagated on the N.W. Coast. It *must* be; it *will* be."<sup>25</sup> Similar notices appeared intermittently over the next few years concerning the upper Northwest Coast of modern-day coastal British Columbia and southeast Alaska, emphasizing the welcome of evangelists by Russian leaders and Native headmen.

By the mid-1820s, the Prudential Committee of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM),<sup>26</sup> like the Methodists and an increasing number of Americans, sought a foothold in the Far Northwest. By July 1827, the Prudential Committee began planning for a Northwest mission, seen as a logical extension of the Hawaiian Mission.<sup>27</sup> Yet the committee spoke of the inevitability of the westward "tide of emigration," and worried about the influence of "dissolute" settlers who would prejudice "the natives of the wilderness" against the Gospel. The committee proposed a solution in the form of a mission-colony "to convey the inestimable treasure of divine truth to pagan tribes ... and to prepare the way for future settlers from the Atlantic coast and the valley of the Mississippi." They wanted to provide a moral base for the inevitable colonization of the Oregon Country by the chosen nation, the United States. "In a word, thus may be sent forth *another Plymouth Colony*... with all the advantages, which two centuries of unexampled progress in arts and knowledge have put into the possession of the church, and with all the encouragements which can be derived from the Providence of God, as displayed before our admiring eyes with the last thirty years." Despite conjuring the Pilgrim spirit, the committee apparently did not desire a theocracy or wish to bear the expense of the colony: "[S]uch a colony ... would be

founded in religious principles and undertaken from religious motives, yet it would be a secular establishment, governed by its own constitution, and not under the direction, or at the expense, of any Missionary Society." And they were well aware of the need for a degree of separation of their dual operations: "The mission to the natives, closely united with the colony in affection and motive, would derive essential aid from it; and thus both enterprises would strengthen and encourage each other."<sup>28</sup> According to the initial vision, secular colony and mission were to be linked into one divine national purpose but exist as separate, complementary institutions.

The ABCFM sent Reverend Jonathan Green from Hawai'i to investigate the Northwest Coast in 1829 for a possible mission-colony site. Green visited San Francisco, the Puget Sound, and modern-day coastal British Columbia and southeast Alaska, but the weather prevented his venturing up the Columbia River or anywhere in modern-day Oregon. Green disappointed the Prudential Committee by reporting that the Indians were already corrupted: "Indeed, to seek a place on the coast where the Indians have not suffered in consequence of their intercourse with foreigners, will be, I am persuaded, a fruitless attempt." Still, "a counteracting influence might and should be exerted." Throughout Green's report, he provided information regarding arable lands for possible small-scale colonization to support the mission but clearly desired an area that was marginal enough to discourage "land speculation" and Euro-American settlers.<sup>29</sup> For the most part, the northern Northwest Coast was too wet and too rugged. Without first-hand exploration, Green stated that instead the lower Columbia would be "desirable" for a centralized mission and a colony. However, he still awaited news of the ill-fated



Jedediah Smith exploration of the Umpqua River where the environs were rumored to be better than the Columbia. He noted that an Oregon mission colony would aid the "Sandwich Islands mission," supplying it with "[t]imber, fish, and other necessities" as well as providing a respite for missionaries "whose strength had withered beneath the influence of a tropical sun." (The sniffing, shivering missionaries who would later flee the soggy bluster of western Oregon winters for the sun of Oahu would have found this notion amusing.) Despite the apparent promise for a Protestant American mission-colony, the ABCFM did not take action, probably because of the expense and distance from settlements.<sup>30</sup> Cost seems rightly to have been foremost in Green's and the Committee's decisions, but the lower Columbia region seemed best suited for its ability to support a cost-saving colony. Nevertheless, the monetary investment would require extensive fund raising from the Christian citizenry of the Northeast. Such donations needed a tremendous spark. That spark would come with the reports of the Flathead visit in 1831, though the false sense of wealth from the era's notorious land speculation schemes probably helped open a number of purses as well.

In March 1833, the *Christian Advocate and Journal* published a letter from a Christian Wyandot Indian named William Walker written to a Methodist Mission Board member: Walker proclaimed that the "Flathead" Indians had requested religious instruction. Like many Protestants, Wilbur Fisk was excited by the news but, as president of Wesleyan University, he was positioned to urge the Mission Board to action. Still, neither the Board nor any northeastern Methodists knew who the Flatheads were or where they lived. After consultation with Washington, D.C., they determined that the

War Department, in charge of Indian affairs, was equally ignorant. Regardless, the Board created a sufficiently vague "Aboriginal Mission west of the Rocky Mountains" and wrote to the adventurer turned bureaucrat William Clark for more information. By July 1833, Jason Lee was appointed missionary to the Flatheads, whoever they were.<sup>31</sup>

Drawing on prior Methodist mission experiences, Nathan Bangs of the Board immediately recognized the need for "building houses and cultivating land; and in establishing a school."<sup>32</sup> The Board appropriated \$3000 to be spent at Lee's discretion; initially, his only required accounting seems to have been a diary of his overland travels and the expectation that he would subsequently send letters with updates. Such writings were presented to the Missionary Society and typically published in Christian publications such as the *Christian Advocate and Journal*, the *Zion's Herald*, and the *Missionary Herald*. Importantly, these newspapers allowed missionaries and the donating lay public to stay abreast of recent developments throughout the increasingly far-flung Protestant American Mission. That the missionaries' journals were bound for the Society and Christian publications makes them somewhat problematic source material for historians, and I have used them with their initial intent in mind. Lee spent the remainder of the year in preparation for his mission and exhibiting his legendary fund-raising abilities. By the late spring of 1834, Lee embarked "to plant the standard of the cross in that barbarous land."<sup>33</sup>

Per his instructions, Lee traveled to the Shawnee mission in modern-day Kansas after departing St. Louis and, as he moved westward, surveyed the Great Plains for future mission stations. The Board's plan was to establish "a line of missionary operations

among the several tribes who inhabit the intermediate places between the frontier white settlements and the Rocky Mountains."<sup>34</sup> Lee and the Board were painfully aware of the difficulties of communication and supply that would result from locating their Oregon Mission two thousand miles overland from St. Louis or nearly ten thousand by sea from the Northeast Coast, the missionaries' base. The interim plan was for Lee to establish a sustainable mission, which could at some point exist free of monetary support from the Society. The Oregon Mission would function as the western-most extension of Christian American civilization, connected by subsequent Plains missions to the East. In retrospect, it seems a poor logistical plan, but the "Flatheads" had called and the northeastern Methodists were answering.<sup>35</sup>

Late in the summer of 1834, Wailapulikt, a Cayuse man, accompanied the first wave of Christian missionaries, Jason Lee's small band of Methodists, from the buffalo country of the Great Plains to his home in the eastern section of what Euro-Americans called the "Oregon Country." According to Lee, Thomas McKay, a mixed-blood Iroquois trapper, explained to "his" Indians "what we are and our object in coming to this country and they were very much pleased...more so when told there was a prospect of our locating at [HBC Fort] WallahWallah." That night Indians visited Lee with "an interpreter who could speak but little of their language and told us they wanted to give us two horses." McKay told Lee to be wary because the Indians might want an exorbitant price, so Lee explained he had nothing to offer. The Native men left the horses with Lee, apparently a gift. The following day, two more men presented Lee with horses. For Lee,

this seemed to indicate “the hand of Providence” and augured “well for our ultimate success among these generous red men.” Soon after, at the Grande Ronde Valley, Wailapulikt’s and his fellow Cayuse “informed the chief [Tawatoy] that we were there and our object in coming to this country.” The missionaries met with Tawatoy “but we were sadly puzzled to understand each other.” Lee states that the chief of the Wallawallas, Piupiumaksmaks (Yellow Serpent), joined the group and presented Lee with “some old papers with scraps of writing on them...I then, in red ink, wrote my name and Daniel’s, stating what we were, dated it and gave it to him and he seemed pleased with it.” Contract in hand, the veteran fur trader Piupiumaksmaks then led Lee outside and presented him with “an elegant horse and one of the Kioos presented Daniel [Lee’s nephew and fellow missionary] a fine horse.” The missionaries invited Piupiumaksmaks and Tawatoy to their tent, presented them with tools and fishing gear of no “great value” and “smoked with them, sang a hymn, and commended them to God.” Later Piupiumaksmaks took Lee into his lodge, fed him, and presented a sick girl to him. “He wished to try my skill in medicine...I gave him some camphor, with directions how to use it.” Indians’ testing of missionaries’ healing powers – their spiritual powers – was a common form of early interaction; Lee, however, did not seem aware that he had likely just been tested.<sup>36</sup> Leaving the Grande Ronde Valley, Lee ruminated about the seemingly Providential exchanges. “Who would have supposed that these Indians would have shown such kindness and generosity towards strangers on account of their religion? And yet this is the cause of their taking so much interest more in us than in others.” presumably McKay’s mixed-blood and Indian trappers.<sup>37</sup>

Some years later, the Cayuse and Wallawallas would complain about Lee's failure to honor their trade relationship and demanded remuneration for the horses. Despite McKay's advice, Lee was completely unaware that he had just attached himself to those bands of Cayuse and Wallawalla Indians. While the first meetings between these peoples does fit the "mutual misunderstanding" model so often cited by historians of Indian-white relations,<sup>38</sup> the Cayuse and Wallawalla men were clearly aware that Lee claimed to offer spiritual power in addition to the promise of temporal power through material trade. Piupiumaksmaks even tested Lee's ability to make medicine. Having accompanied the Methodists to his home, Wailaptulikt was among other Columbia Plateau Sahaptins who subsequently experimented with Lee's ways, with horrific results.

Not long after entering the Oregon Country, Lee shifted away from his original intent to establish a mission among the Flatheads. Upon reaching Fort Wallawalla, the trader Pierre Pambrun advised Lee not to accept the invitation of a Wallawalla elder to return to his village. Indeed Lee, from his diary, seemed intent on reaching the principal HBC establishment located on the lower Columbia, Fort Vancouver. He made no mention of the Flatheads who lived northeast of Pambrun's fort in modern-day western Montana. The annual report of the Board mentions simply that "On the arrival of the missionaries it was ascertained that the real Flat Head Indians were few in number; and had no settled habitations. The missionaries therefore proceeded on to Fort Vancouver." During a fund-raising trip to the East in 1839, Lee explained that he had decided instead to locate among the "real Flat Heads," as he termed the Chinookan and Kalapuyan Indians of the lower Willamette and Columbia Rivers. As he carefully explained to his

Mission Society audience, they actually practiced head-flattening unlike the misnamed northern-interior tribe to which he had been dispatched. He had abided by the letter if not the spirit of the Board's directions. "Besides," he reminded them in self-defense "...it was left with us to locate where, in our opinion, after having surveyed the ground, we could do the most good." Hundreds of miles from the Flathead homelands, the Chinook's country with its "beautiful river ... delightful valley ... beautiful groves of timber," mild climate, fertile ground was "a central situation, advantageous for a principal station."<sup>39</sup>

Lee's nephew and fellow missionary, Daniel Lee, explained further in his 1844 publication that the Flatheads had not desired missionaries. Apparently William Walker had erred in his representation of the famed St. Louis visit or the Indians had changed their minds. Having never visited the Flatheads, he did not elaborate on this point or the source of his knowledge: Probably he relied on the opinions of John McLoughlin at Fort Vancouver and trapper-turned-guide Nathaniel Wyeth who were both consulted about the Methodists' prospects. The younger Lee offered additional points to defend the missionaries' decision to forgo the Flatheads. He explained that the Flatheads were too few for missionaries to bother with, that they were fast disappearing – a claim that Methodist missionaries would later make regarding the Clatsops, Chinooks, Kalawatsets, Umpquas, and Kalapuyas to explain their lack of conversion efforts in western Oregon. But Lee saved his worst condemnation of the prospects for a Flathead mission for the cultural and physical landscape. Their lands were inhospitable to Euro-Americans because of the brutal environment of northern-interior Oregon Country and the close

proximity of the widely feared Blackfeet Indians.<sup>40</sup> The Flathead mission would have been unwanted, unnecessary, and doomed to fail, while the Willamette Valley's Oregon Mission was full of promise and, not coincidentally, more suitable for an American colony.

In September 1834, the Methodists arrived at Fort Vancouver and began the vexing search for the site of their mission. Jason Lee pleaded, "O, My God, direct us to the right spot where we can best glorify thee and be most useful to these degraded red men...My mind is much exercised in respect to our location. I know not what to do." The missionary found some solace in preaching to "a mixed congregation" that hints at the notable diversity of people already living in the lower country. His first "hearers" were "English, French, Scotch, Irish, Indians, Americans, half breeds, Japanese, etc.. some of whom did not understand five words of English." The "etc" may have included some of the Kanakas who were still commonly employed as sailors, trappers, and laborers. The Japanese were fishers who had been blown across the Pacific by a storm. Having survived their miraculous voyage and come ashore, they were promptly enslaved by Makah Indians near Cape Flattery on the tip of the Olympic Peninsula. The HBC took pity on them or, more likely, saw them as a diplomatic opportunity, purchased their freedom, and tried to get them home via England. Japan, however, refused to accept them and they spent their lives exiled in China. Lee's frustration with the language gap between his delivery of the Gospel and his hearers had been obvious since first entering the Oregon Country, lamenting, "O, that I could address the Indians in their language." His complaints about language extended to the mostly French-speaking settlers of the

Willamette as well, "few of whom understood what I said." Nonetheless, he assured himself and his readers, "God is able to speak to the heart." By early October 1834, he was building on the first site of the Oregon Mission which calmed his mind and he looked forward to more preaching "though the congregation will consist mostly of persons who will not understand the discourse."<sup>41</sup>

By late 1835, the Board was able to boast that the Oregon Mission included a farm and a school for "reclaiming these wandering savages, who are in a very degraded state, to the blessings of Christianity and civilized life." The Board reported favorably on Lee's decision to locate centrally in the lower Willamette Valley and then presumably establish an evangelical circuit among the Oregon Indians "and those emigrants who may hereafter settle in that vast and fertile territory."<sup>42</sup> Additionally the Board responded favorably to an increased outlay of \$1000 and to send a reinforcement of additional missionaries, who sailed from Boston in the summer of 1836.<sup>43</sup> Two more Methodist preachers, their families, and a teacher sailed in early January 1837, making the "mission family" total 23 members. The Board reported that "[t]his mission promises great usefulness to the rising colony in that part of the country, and therefore demands the vigorous support of the Society."<sup>44</sup>

Native peoples' experiences with the missionaries suggest the complexity of the missionaries' twin goals of conversion and civilization. Wailaptulikt apparently did not accompany the Methodists down the Columbia to Fort Vancouver in 1834. In the summer of 1836, however, he made a fateful decision to bring his family to the new mission over the Cascade Mountains in the Willamette Valley. Like a handful of other



Native parents, Wailaptulikt put his children under the care of Cyrus Sheppard, the lay schoolmaster. Wailaptulikt's daughter, Tshecooitch, and a son became Clarissa Perkins and James Charponke respectively. Wailaptulikt temporarily became John Linsey. Thus, Wailaptulikt, his daughter, and son all received different surnames. The bestowal of these names diverged from the fundamental basis of identity, patriarchy, and property ownership in western civilization and, by extension, United States law – all of which would presumably be at the center of the civilizing missionary project. Instead, the names conveyed Lee's hopes for the mission as a spiritual enterprise: if he intended that the Indians become "civilized" and hold property, this was an odd beginning.

Piupiumaksmaks, a Wallawalla leader who had risen to substantial power and influence with the Plateau fur trade, also visited and entrusted the mission with his eldest son, Toayahnu. Toayahnu became Elijah Hedding, signifying Lee's hopes that the boy would become the Native Elijah who would someday return to his people and spread the Gospel. The "real" Elijah Hedding was a leading light of the Methodist Church and the Bishop who chaired the Mission Board.<sup>45</sup> Naming, then, reflected the desire to shed Indians of their individual Native identities and set the path for their conversion first and civilization second.

Tragedy struck the mission quickly and often. Within the year, Wailapulikt's youngest son, "Samuel," died of the "fever and ague," which ravaged the valley annually in the 1830s, and horribly Tshecooitch followed her baby brother soon after. Wailaptulikt and his surviving family members left the Willamette mission; he reappears in the Oregon historical record some years later as a war leader of the Taigh band of

Deschutes River Sahaptins. Shoshone raids, horses, the fur trade, and intermittent disease outbreaks had radically changed the lives of most Native peoples in the Oregon Country; the diverse paths chosen by Wailaptulikt offers the briefest glimpse into the realm of choices available to some Indians. Individuals sought power in a shifting landscape, and some of those who experimented with the missions also emerged later as leaders of multi-ethnic bands who militantly resisted colonization.<sup>46</sup> The Indians who abandoned mission life foreshadowed the fate of the Oregon Mission.

Lee and his fellow Methodists had imagined a simple dichotomy of dark and light. They would offer the Gospel to Indians living in darkness, who would opt to accept Christ over death and decay, the inevitable conclusion of the Native's "degraded" and "heathen" existence. Reality was to prove far more complex. Lee and company soon learned that they would have to make their mission much more extensive. The Indians would have to be taught the benefits of civilization, and such an enterprise would require a larger degree of colonization than first supposed to be independent of both the Hudson's Bay Company and the treasury of the Mission Board. Lee realized the need for entrenchment and reinforcements within a short time, calling for the first wave in 1835, and began down the path to the Great Reinforcement of 1840 that would end his career as a missionary and terminate the Methodist mission activities among the Indians of Oregon.

The Mission Board of the Methodist Episcopal Church condoned Lee's colonial activities from the outset. Except for a period of frustration in 1841-43 when Lee failed

to account for his massive expenditures amidst swirling accusations that he was speculating with the Board's funds for personal gain, the Board backed his decisions. By placing the Oregon Mission within a larger context of Christian colonization, we can gain a fuller understanding of Lee's activities. Interest in a mission-colony was not limited to the Prudential Committee of the 1820s. Before Lee left on his overland journey his 1834 fund-raising speeches had excited "the spirit of Christian enterprise" among many Christians in the Northeast. In the hearth of the so-called "burned over district," the 1834 Genesee conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church met in Rochester, New York, and discussed "the propriety of establishing colonies in heathen countries, for the introduction and more general diffusion of Christianity," particularly in "Africa and the Oregon." The conference failed to produce a colony but, like the earlier meeting of the Prudential Committee, points to the direction of Protestant thinking: colonization. A few years later, the short-lived publication, *The Oregonian and Indian Advocate*, went into print from October 1838 to August 1839. The Oregon Provisional Emigration Society, founded by Methodist ministers and laymen, published the tract from their base in Lynn, Massachusetts, in a failed attempt to organize and send Methodist colonists overland. The emigrants were to found settlements that would have a civilizing effect on surrounding Native populations. The editor emphasized that six white women (of the ABCFM's Whitman-Spaulding party) had already made the arduous overland trek safely; thus, families could go together. Critics charged that they planned to overwhelm the Oregon Country with thousands of northeastern Methodists. The quick collapse of the venture prevents our knowing their true intent, but the proposals of these evangelical

groups demonstrate that Lee and the Board were hardly alone in their mix of colonization and Christianization.<sup>47</sup>

Moreover, the Methodists were not the only evangelical Protestant denomination in the Oregon Country that favored the mission-colony relationship. Although rarely condemned by historians in the manner of Jason Lee, Henry Spaulding and Marcus Whitman of the ABCFM also called for colonists to support their missions on the Columbia Plateau. Contemporaneously with Lee's initial call for the Great Reinforcement in 1838, Spaulding wrote to the ABCFM requesting a massive reinforcement of 220 mission-colonists: "30 ordained missionaries, 30 farmers, 30 school teachers, 10 physicians & 10 mechanics, with their wives."<sup>48</sup> As well, during his first trip back East in 1838-39, Lee exchanged letters with David Greene of the ABCFM in which Greene tacitly condoned the Willamette mission-colony and requested Lee's recommendations on mill designs for the expansion of their Columbia Plateau missions.<sup>49</sup> The historiographical tendency to either praise or vilify Lee seems to ignore the intellectual climate of antebellum evangelism, which seems clearly to have included colonization as a matter of course.

Protestant America saw little difference between taming and colonizing the "wilds" and converting "savages." According to the popular ideologies of the American Mission and Manifest Destiny, both untamed entities came together as "Indian wilderness," and both must in some way fall to Christian American civilization. In Jason Lee's words, "[w]e have put our hands to the plough to break up the fallow ground of heathenism...at the call of our heavenly Master."<sup>50</sup> Traveling between the Willamette

settlements and The Dalles, missionaries complained about a particularly troublesome and dangerous waterfall on their route, declaiming the "wild heathen country" and looking forward to the future of Christian American civilization, which would apparently make the obstacle to progress vanish. Alternatively, one mission layman hoped to harness the savage landscape of the Willamette Falls, "one of the finest water-powers in the world." In an official survey-spy mission in the winter of 1836-37, Lieutenant William Slacum of the United States Navy made the connection between colonization of the wild land and the wild Indians explicit. He commended Lee's successes at converting "children, who, two years ago, were roaming their own native wilds in a state of savage barbarism, [and] now...[were] becoming useful members of society, by being taught the most useful of all arts, agriculture." The society into which the Native children (the ten survivors of the initial class of fifteen) were being assimilated was the growing Euro-American farming community; the missionaries were grooming them for their eventual attachment to "the civilized parts of our country."<sup>51</sup>

The Methodists were not so clear about their method, however; they were not sure whether to civilize or Christianize first. Agricultural instruction or, more accurately, manual labor had been a technique employed by Protestant missionaries among the Cherokees, Choctaws and other eastern Indians since the turn-of-the-century. But according to Clara Sue Kidwell, the southern Methodists had rejected the schools in favor of camp revivals among the Choctaws in the 1820s. And only after considerable debate did Lee's group from the Northeast opt for "civilization" first and conversion second. As Henry Spaulding of the ABCFM put it, "no savage people, to my knowledge, have ever

been Christianized upon the wing."<sup>52</sup> On the other side of the debate, Gustavas Hines favored the power of the Gospel and described the children's agricultural "education" in 1837 in unfavorable terms, lamenting that "the amount of labor to be done took many of them away from their studies much of the time."<sup>53</sup> Although the Anglican Herbert Beaver at Fort Vancouver considered the Americans' conversion efforts among the Indians largely wasted, he also believed it "erroneous" to think Christianity could precede civilization and conceded that a civilizing school for Indian children might make "some slow progress."<sup>54</sup> By 1841, the "civilize first" missionaries had won out and named their school to reflect its purpose, the "Oregon Mission Manual Labor School."

Lt. Slacum was impressed with the Methodist colony and backed his praise with a five hundred-dollar donation and free passage aboard the U.S.S. *Loriot* to San Francisco for representatives of the "California Cattle Company." The Euro-American venture sought Mexican cattle to break the colonists' dependence on the Hudson's Bay Company and to improve the colony's economic stability. There was no effort to separate the needs and desires of the Euro-American colonists from those of the Willamette mission. Representing the coalition of Euro-American investors, P.L. Edwards, a mission layman, and Ewing Young, a colonial entrepreneur, embarked and returned together with their jointly purchased herd in 1837. Jason Lee had added \$600 of the Mission Board's funds to the total cost of \$2480 for the eight hundred cattle and forty horses. In microcosm, the cattle venture signified the relationship among the Methodist missionaries, Euro-American colonists, and a facilitating United States government. The limited official actions of the United States can be explained by the cloudy diplomatic climate of the

“Oregon Question.” Congress refused to support the Oregon Mission monetarily, though they had been supporting the general “civilization fund” for decades and contributed directly to other Methodist missions. Slacum’s personal donation seems quite large and was perhaps unofficially reimbursed. Rather than being simply dismissed as secular and therefore a betrayal of his cause, Lee’s missionary efforts should be considered within the context of interrelated spiritual, economic, and imperial interests that blended and complemented each other during the early Euro-American colonization of the Oregon Country.<sup>55</sup>

Still, the Oregon Mission was first and foremost a spiritual institution, and Lee considered his “temporal” activities in that light. As evidenced by his 1839 sermon-report to the Mission Board, Lee considered conversion and colonization linked in an overarching and divinely sanctioned project to Christianize both people and place: “[l]et no Christian think his work done, till the world is converted.” Lee’s favorite refrain of converting the world and his emphasis on agriculture strongly suggest the implicit connection between people and place, savage and wild, converted Christian and agrarian civilization. Outside of Christian America, roughly anywhere not between the Atlantic coast and the Mississippi River, Satan ruled his empire, according to Lee’s divine hyperbole. He called for the Great Reinforcement to buttress the Oregon Mission. The Board’s practice of dispersing a few, unmarried missionaries would only lull Christian civilization to sleep like an “opiate,” continuing the “delusion” that world conversion can result from the “small means” of scattered, under-populated missions in the heart of darkness. Instead, pious Christian families would convert the world by moral-

agricultural education, hard work, and example such as the ever-increasing acreage under cultivation by the Oregon Mission.<sup>56</sup>

In 1834, Lee had chosen the Willamette Valley for its fertile potential for the equally important seeds of conversion, crops, and Christian American civilization: Native conversion was only one aspect of his and God's work and, it appears, not necessarily the most important. Addressing the issue of why the Methodists expended most of their energy creating a Christian community among the approximately fifty Euro-American men and their Native wives in the lower Willamette Valley, Lee explained that such was a necessary first step to converting the surrounding Indians. Lee boasted of his work among the former mountain men of the short-lived American entrepreneurial period of the late fur trade in the 1820s and 1830s. Lee was not including the Metis trappers-turned-colonists from the British Red River settlement; they mostly emigrated to the Willamette Valley after 1842 and preferred the Catholic Mission established in 1838. As well, because of the language gap, Lee had mostly given up trying to convert the French-Canadian and Metis "Papists" who had earlier settled in the lower Willamette Valley. Of the Oregon Mission's success with the Euro-American former trappers, who were among the first non-Native settlers of the Willamette Valley, he trumpeted, "we have thrown a moral influence around that settlement of white people" and kept them from being "a bad influence" on the Indians.<sup>57</sup>

In 1843, he again appeared before the Board, this time defending himself from criticisms "that our object is principally money," a charge that stemmed from the mission's extensive colonial activities and Lee's failure to account for his expenditures,



which by then exceeded \$100,000.<sup>58</sup> Following the financial Panic of 1837 and consequent collapse of the stock market, mission funds had become increasingly difficult to obtain, and by 1840 the Board felt the pinch. But Lee attempted to dispel the Missionary Society's "unbelief which seemed to pervade many minds in relation to the expediency of the large appropriation necessary for founding this expensive mission in view of our embarrassed treasury."<sup>59</sup> Reports of an unprecedentedly large revival at the Wascopam in 1839 temporarily quelled complaints from the Mission Society, though the event actually had no relevance for their major complaint against Lee. Lee turned the discussion to his great success and again lauded his accomplishments among the "Rocky Mountain men" whom he saved from liquor by closing Oregon's first distillery, sinful sexual relations with Native women by encouraging marriage, and poverty by assisting nascent homesteads. Indeed, he exclaimed with his trademark bombast, "[n]ever, never since the world commenced has a Settlement of such men been so benefited by Christian influence as the Oregon Settlement." Laboring on the frontier of Satan's empire at God's Willamette Valley stronghold, Lee spread Christian-American civilization to all who would accept it – if not the Native communities then the Euro-American former trappers. The colonial activities of the mission were simply part of converting the world.<sup>60</sup>

The active promotion of Euro-American colonization may have been more sacred to some Protestant American missionaries than converting the supposedly ill-fated Indians to Christianity. In his scouting tour of the Far West in 1835-1836, Reverend Samuel Parker of the ABCFM was terribly concerned that the United States possess the "Oregon country," not Great Britain or the Indians. Although the era's curious and well-

documented mixture of the nationalist and the divine – Manifest Destiny – render his preference for American over British sovereignty obvious, more illuminating was the missionary's discussion of Native sovereignty. Parker turned to an argument nearly as old as European colonialism in the Americas. The indigenous "claim is laboriously, extensively, and practically denied; for authorities, both of written law, and the opinion of living judges and expositors of law, sanction the principle that 'unsettled habitation is not true and legal possession, and that nations who inhabit fertile countries and disdain or refuse to cultivate them, deserve to be extirpated.'" By "extirpated," Parker must have meant extermination not removal because he also stated that "there being no further west to which [the Oregon Indians] can be removed, the Indian race must expire, and in vain will the voice of humanity enquire, what has become of the aborigines of this country." Parker clearly thought Indian extinction inevitable and removal impractical given that the Jacksonian policy had been predicated upon removing Native populations westward away from Euro-American settlement in the East. The proposed racial barrier of the Mississippi River was unrealistic by the mid-1830s. Even as the United States enforced its removal policy in 1838 against the Cherokee Nation, for example, the increasing Euro-American presence in the trans-Mississippi West, particularly on the southern Plains, made a mockery of the future integrity of Indian Territory. Originally encompassing modern-day Oklahoma, eastern Kansas, and southeastern Nebraska, the territory reserved "in perpetuity" for eastern Native peoples steadily decreased into oblivion over several ensuing decades, even as the inclement region functioned as a veritable dumping ground for Indians from throughout the United States and its

territories. Parker's was not a mere restatement of conventional nineteenth-century wisdom that Indians would naturally fade into history with the advancement of a superior race of Anglo-Saxons. This erstwhile savior of Indian souls called for an immediate colonization of the region in which Euro-Americans forcibly displaced the Native population.<sup>61</sup> Still, Parker, Jason Lee, and the numerous other Protestant missionaries who flocked to Oregon between 1834 and 1840 made exception for the survival of individual, acculturated Indians. Lee sought to save "a remnant, as trophies ... to serve" God. However, as a "race," the Native Oregonians were predestined to extinction.<sup>62</sup>

The Clatsop Mission was emblematic of the missionaries' schizophrenic attitudes towards their potential Native converts. Near the Columbia's mouth, the Methodists claimed the Clatsop Plains, a thin valley proximate to the coast; contemporaries were certain that a commercial center would arise there at the gateway to the Oregon interior. The mission entertained a few Indians who were mostly disinterested in learning the Gospel, but the missionaries made little attempt at active recruiting; the "stupid and superstitious" Clatsops were degraded and disappearing according to their missionaries William W. Kone and John Frost.<sup>63</sup> Still, one Clatsop family did move into a mission house, built for Indian occupants, next to the Frost family abode, but these Clatsops did not convert either. Frost and Kone had constructed the house because visiting Indians sometimes overstayed their welcome and bunked with the mission family, which the missionaries found both frightening and distasteful.

Ironically, the missionaries built the Indian house at the Clatsop Mission to retain a degree of separation between the races, thus discouraging contact and hence conversion

and civilization. As Frost put it, "[t]his we deemed to be the most prudent way as by turning them out of doors might have offended them, and then our lives and property would have been in danger."<sup>64</sup> Frost complained when the Clatsop family took up residence there during the spring and remained through the winter; the rest of the nation had retreated to their winter village in the southern part of the valley. Frost endeavored to teach the father something of civilization and offered food for work, but the effort devolved into a power struggle over the men's social status. After a few days of the arrangement, the Clatsop man complained that Frost was making a slave of him. Frost asked "if I was not rather the slave, having furnished him the boards that covered him and his family, and Mrs. Frost had carried them food almost every day during the winter." The Clatsop man reportedly answered, "What of the boards? [W]hat do [you] do with them? [T]hey simply lie there!!"<sup>65</sup> If the men had a more fruitful discussion – about the Gospel perhaps – Frost did not record it.

Frost seldom evangelized among the Clatsops. Frequently, he blamed the distractions of manual labor, foisted unexpectedly upon him by the Mission Society's apparent short-sightedness in sending too few skilled laymen. Predictably, however, he saved his worst condemnations for the Clatsops, who he saw as often polite though non-committal listeners. During one of his rare attempts at conversion, Frost asked "the oldest man among them where he thought he would go after death." With apparent frustration, Frost related that the Clatsop elder replied: "he did not know, and when I asked him if he did not want to know, he said no, and soon very deliberately filled his pipe for a smoke." Frost proceeded to tell him "what would be the condition of different

characters of men in a future state," but the Clatsops seemed uninterested in the supposed fate of Indians in heaven.<sup>66</sup> On another occasion, Frost claimed that one of the few Christian Clatsops, Celiast, had a religious debate of sorts with other Clatsops.<sup>67</sup> Supposedly, she was trying to prevent the live burial of a dying Clatsop man. The Clatsops were intent on abiding a "custom" related by Frost whereby a death above ground would offend the salmon and cause them not to return. Smith said "that if they would leave him until morning she would pray with him and if he died, they would bury him in a proper manner; but they told her that she [k]new nothing about praying, a minister could pray, but she could not, and scolded her for being so heedless with reference to their obtaining a supply of salmon." Frost stated, "The man was buried alive and no doubt, as they had a great abundance of salmon, they felt satisfied that they had a good work."<sup>68</sup> I have not found any information that corroborates such live burials among the lower Chinookan peoples in relation to salmon taboos or otherwise. Indeed, only slaves were said to have been buried in the ground and then only if they were killed and placed beneath the elaborate above-ground interment of their master's corpse.<sup>69</sup> Frost may have misunderstood or embellished the tale for effect, but his point remained that Christianity was not reaching the Clatsops. Frost insisted that they regarded him and other whites as "being altogether different from themselves, and all they expect from his being among them is temporal benefit... They...consider a white man as a being of a different order."<sup>70</sup> In their dismissal of Celiast's ability to access the Christian God through prayer, the Clatsops may have regarded the Gospel as inapplicable to themselves and not particularly valuable. Their treatment of Frost and their apparent assessment of

“whites” suggest that although the Clatsops welcomed change, they were not interested in fundamentally altering their beliefs or identity; that is, converting.

The Clatsops' dismissals and the soggy western Oregon winters soon drained Frost of his missionary fervor. “To be housed up through such a gloomy season is exceedingly trying,” he complained to his journal. “And the prospect with regard to christianizing these few Indians is so exceeding unpromising that it is difficult not to murmur.” Not even early spring with the renewal of “the vegetable kingdom,” and the spring run of Chinook salmon, which Frost put against any Manhattan culinary delight, could alter the missionary's perception. “The Indians are beginning to take a few salmon, they will soon be supplied with enough to eat. But alas for them, they feel no need of the bread of life.” On his 37<sup>th</sup> birthday, Frost drearily summed his feelings about the Oregon Mission. The missionaries worked hard, the Gospel was sufficiently powerful, but the Methodist church expected too much “because of the material to operate upon.” He rattled off a litany of increasingly common complaints about the Indians of western Oregon. “These...mere dregs of former tribes, so much dispersed and so migratory in their habits, and so much diseased and withal having so many different languages, which are so imperfect as a medium of communication, that nothing encouraging can be expected.”<sup>71</sup> Frost, it seems, began to panic about his failing service to God. On one occasion, he wailed, “O! what degradation do we witness every day. What wretchedness have we seen since we have sojourned in this wilderness! O Lord hasten to come and take possession of the purchase of thy blood. Turn and overturn, until the wickedness of the wicked shall come to an end, and when righteousness and truth shall universally

prevail."<sup>72</sup> Frost was also worried about the health and safety of himself and his family. Indeed many individuals associated with the Oregon Mission had been injured or killed in various accidents, often by drowning in the infamous rapids of the lower Columbia and Willamette Rivers. There were other worries as well. Frost's young son, though "in very good health and spirits," displayed a disconcerting affinity for Chinook Jargon, "which he acquires much more readily than I could wish."<sup>73</sup> Not only was his mission a bust but his son appeared to be going Native!<sup>74</sup> Frost pressed Lee for reassignment to his home conference, "[t]he name of the Lord be praised that I am yet alive, and that my family are still with me."<sup>75</sup>

As with the Clatsops, other western Oregon Indians similarly rejected the missionaries' overtures at Christianization. Civilization efforts fared no better among the Kalapuyas of the lower Willamette Valley. They preferred their own housing technology to the abodes of civilization built for them by the mission and their proposed educational farm reverted to Euro-American settlers. Visiting the Hudson's Bay Company's Fort Umpqua, Lee and his peers determined that the Kalawatsets were also too few and supposedly too degraded. This determination came despite the claim from Kalawatset headmen that their people would welcome the missionaries. One Kalawatset headman actually seemed interested in forging a relationship with the missionaries to improve his peoples' image in the minds of Americans in the years following their clash with Jedediah Smith and his trapping party.<sup>76</sup>

The missionaries' opinions of the western Oregon Indians and their possible conversion seems to have been a curious mix of fatalism and optimism: the Native

majority, supposedly degraded and disappearing, was possibly a lost cause, but individuals could be saved in soul and perhaps in body. Even individual converts were hard to come by, however. In 1836, after a year in Oregon country, Lee explained that "[t]he truth is, we have no evidence that we have been instrumental in the conversion of one soul."<sup>77</sup> In his 1839 sermon-report, he railed against the Native practices of slavery, gambling, vengeance killings of accused witches, and infanticide; and though he described such behavior, the missionary affectedly exclaimed, "I cannot describe the wretchedness of these Indians. They are poor and miserable, blind and naked."<sup>78</sup> Still, conversion would save their souls if not their lives, and for the effort Lee claimed to need more Euro-American families to act as laymen. During his trip to the northeast, Lee delivered several promotional devotionals, seeking donations and encouraging the emigration of upright, Christian families as missionaries and lay people. Notably on one occasion, he invited Lt. Slacum, returned from his exploration of the coastal Far West, on stage to share the pulpit and offer his scientific appraisal of the Oregon Mission and the agricultural promise of the land. (Lee also delivered a petition for territorial acquisition that both men had helped draft, but for appearances did not sign, to Oregon-booster Senator Lewis Linn on this trip.) The recruitment effort worked and the ranks of the missionaries swelled after 1840. Still, the number of Indian students only ranged from ten to thirty, thanks to a combination of ill health at the mission, runaways, and the recalcitrance of Native parents, undoubtedly due to the missions' high mortality rate. Disease spread easily at the Willamette Mission with the "mission family" – missionaries, laymen, their families and the Indians – crowded together in tight quarters.



Although the Willamette Mission's Methodist colleagues at The Dalles could occasionally gather large Native congregations, especially during exciting camp revival meetings, the western Oregon missions could not claim as many successes. Indeed the large gatherings at The Dalles or Celilo Falls probably owed more to the bountiful and accessible salmon runs and seasonal trade fairs of the Indians, who had been gathering there for ten thousand years, than the appeal of the Gospel.

True to evangelical beliefs about personal redemption, Daniel Lee lauded the "happy deaths" among his small converted flock of Indians who found God in their final, purportedly euphoric moments.<sup>79</sup> He had little else about which to boast for his occasional efforts at spreading the Gospel among Indians in the Willamette Valley, and it was considered better that the Indians die in God's grace than live in moral darkness. Lee's "happy death" mentality was hardly exclusive to him. The *North American*, a Philadelphia newspaper, provided the following eulogy of one of Oregon's few celebrated converts, William Brooks. The obituary described his favorable attributes "[b]ut best of all is, he died an experienced Christian." The comments then turned to the Oregon Mission and this apparent success: "If brother Lee receives, in this life, no other reward for his labors and sufferings in that distant territory, the conversion of this youth is sufficient. One native Indian, at least, of Oregon, is saved, as the fruit of missionary labor."<sup>80</sup>

The missionaries' seemingly odd attitudes about converting the Indians were an essential part of the politics of mission. The Mission Society established the Oregon

Mission and donated huge sums of money with Indian conversion in mind, though the image of the "degraded and disappearing Indian" was well understood and widely accepted at home and in the field. Lee established his mission with the long-term view of an American colony in Oregon in mind: save remnants of the fading Indians to obtain trophies for God and convert the settlers to the Truth. Still, Lee and the Board had to justify the massive expenditures of donated money in terms of Indian converts, but they could not. For the most part, the Indians of western Oregon refused Christian civilization in the 1830s and 1840s. Worse, some of the Great Reinforcement of 1840 matched the Indians' disinterest in the Oregon Mission. Some, such as Frost and Gustavus Hines, wrote derisively of the enterprise and the Native population. Euro-American emigrants began to trickle then pour into the region bearing complaints of their own about the usual frontier topics of land hoarding and speculation. Less usual, the Oregon Mission, as the largest Euro-American landholder, was at the heart of their complaints. Rumors resulting from the settlers' fear of a mission monopoly on "free land," disputes with layman Dr. Elijah White, and HBC Chief Factor John McLoughlin fueled suspicions of Lee's efforts. Perhaps feeling himself above the fray, Lee did little to quell these problems until too late. In 1843, the Board appointed a special agent to investigate and to supercede Lee as superintendent. In 1844, the Board's selection, Reverend George Gary, discharged mission property for three principal reasons: too few Indians, a racist-pessimistic view of their human potential, and the suspicions of the settlers, which put the MEC in a bad light. He also acted in accordance with the wishes of the donors; implicitly, the Oregon Mission was not funded to Christianize settlers, particularly the "heathen riffraff" of the

Middle Western frontiers.

The Oregon Mission's history followed a course of divine speculation, reacting to emotional interpretations of poorly understood events. In the late 1820s, the Indians of the Oregon Country were considered corrupted and, though a salvage operation was perhaps merited, the cost was too high. A few years later, the Flathead visit to St. Louis spurred donors to loosen their purse strings, culminating in Jason Lee's initial venture. Lee soon realized the devastating effects of disease on the lower country Native population, but he had a mission plan that included the surviving Indians, the former trappers, and the widely predicted arrival of Euro-American emigrants. In 1835 and 1836, he convinced the Board to increase both their expenditures and Methodist personnel. By 1837-1839, the Mission Society had heard sufficient evidence of the lack of conversions among the Indians to doubt increasingly the usefulness of the Oregon Mission. However, Lee and fellow staunch-believer Henry Perkins (of the 1837 reinforcement) broadcast the large attendance at an Indian revival at the Wascopam in 1839. Despite the expense and the continuing failure of Lee to account for his expenditures, the Society celebrated the revival and backed off temporarily. Lee visited the East in 1838-39 and succeeded in getting the Society excited enough to back an unprecedentedly large investment of money and people known as the "great reinforcement of 1840."

By 1840, Lee's recalcitrance in accounting for mission expenditures was becoming a problem again and the Board was forced to make excuses to the Society. The Board assured them that "thousands and tens of thousands of Indians [would be] gathered

into the fold of Christ, when the fires of civilization and the lights of Christianity shall everywhere illuminate the shores of the Pacific Ocean and reflect their holy beamings until the darkness of heathenism shall be driven from that portion of our western continent." In 1842, still with no details of Lee's growing expenditures and amidst rumors of his colonial activities, the Board expressed "regret [for] the want of specific information" but continued to make excuses for Lee and looked "forward to no distant period when that wilderness land shall 'bud and blossom as the rose.'" In 1843, instead of an accounting, the Board received a letter from Lee assuring them that "the day of eternity will reveal that the good effected here in Oregon will ten thousand times repay the labor and expense of this mission." To buttress the Society's zeal, he quoted from a letter from Henry Perkins of the Wascopam station. Perkins' impassioned exclamations called for the continuance of the mission regardless of rumors of secularization and speculation: "Oregon will be saved," he cried. Perkins quoted from the second Psalm to express the mission's purpose, "[a]sk of Me and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possessions." Perkins excluded the Psalm's subsequent martial line: "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron, thou shalt dash them in pieces like a pottery vessel." He apparently wanted to make clear with whom he was at war. Drawing instead on Exodus, "Satan will doubtless try to hold on to these old possessions; but the Lord is a man of war; the Lord is his name." Lee concluded with a tone to match Perkins: "we must not cease to labor and pray for the salvation of Oregon, until the conquests already won shall be repeated." Despite the pleas of the two Oregon crusaders, the Board had had enough and appointed Reverend

George Gary as special agent for "a thorough and impartial investigation of [the Oregon Mission's] conditions and prospects."<sup>81</sup>

Gary's appointment came on the heels of critical testimony and condemning letters from Reverends Gustavus Hines, William Kone, John Richmond, and John Frost, as well as Euro-American laymen and emigrants to the Willamette Valley. The latter cumulatively owed \$30,000 to Lee for start-up costs on their homesteads.<sup>82</sup> Loans to emigrants had not been part of the mission instructions, and the Missionary Society was likely surprised to learn of their role as colonial investors. Gary took his charge quite seriously, attempting to dispose of all secular investments promptly and then return to the comforts of New York. Lee, having received word of the pending investigation, left for the East to disarm it. Without Lee present to challenge him, Gary sold off the mills, cattle, farms, thirty-six sections of unoccupied land claims, and sundry improvements. As much as possible, he used these holdings as severance in dismissing the numerous mission laymen and a number of missionaries. Mission clerk and future provincial governor George Abernathy became Oregon's first loan shark when he purchased the Society's outstanding loans from Gary at a profitable discount.<sup>83</sup>

An important factor in closing the mission was the image of the mission to arriving emigrants, "that it presented more the appearance of a design to establish a colony than of an associated effort to promote true Christian evangelization."<sup>84</sup> Hines had complained of this image to the Board the year before: "it is exceedingly difficult from the multiplicity of business among us to convince the Oregon public that our object here is not principally of a pecuniary character."<sup>85</sup> Gary claimed that "[t]he emigrants of

1843 brought with them a strong prejudice against the Mission as a powerful monopoly, especially in view of the number and location of sections of land to which it had already laid claim." An infamous land dispute between the Mission and John McLoughlin of the HBC accentuated the "jealousy and prejudice." "In this state of affairs our claims in some places are being 'jumped,' as it is called." And in this climate, "the public feeling will sustain the jumpers."<sup>86</sup> The Board was pleased with Gary's actions and claimed to have learned their lesson: "it will be the policy of the Board, in future, to confine ourselves strictly to their proper calling." They would continue to defend the piety of their intentions for years, admitting only that the "great reinforcement of 1840" and additional appropriations had been mistakes. The Board reassured the Society that "Whether we regard its colonization, civilization or evangelization, the Methodist missionaries have been its most influential and successful pioneers." In time, "the indebtedness of the colony to our mission, we doubt not, [will] be generally acknowledged."<sup>87</sup>

The worrisome image of Methodist colonization indicated that the real issues were land ownership and speculation. Emigrants of the 1840s came for the "free land" of the Oregon Country; instead, they found potentially valuable and unoccupied farmland to be unfairly locked up by mission claims in the lower Willamette Valley. Indeed, the Mission claimed an entire township of 23,040 acres or six square miles in the heart of Willamette farmland (modern Salem) in the initial provisional government's land-law of 1843.<sup>88</sup> As detailed in subsequent chapters, emigrants wielded charges of speculation with the force of two centuries worth of westward colonial expansion to legitimate their

claims to the land. The Board clearly took such charges seriously and questioned returning missionaries and laymen, including Jason Lee, about the accusations of speculation. Joseph Whitcomb, Oregon Mission farmer from 1837 to 1843, testified that while Lee never speculated in land or cattle, such was not necessarily true of other missionaries. Susan Whitcomb, his wife and fellow mission layperson, testified of Reverend David Leslie: "I should think it might be better for himself, as well as for the mission, if he were less taken up with world[ly] things."<sup>89</sup> For his part, as early as January 1839, Lee formally declared to Nathan Bangs and Orrin Howard of the Board that his land claims were taken "in the name of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church...with a view to aid it in spreading the Gospel among the Aborigines of that country, and others who have settled there or may hereafter settler there." He disavowed any personal ambition and was holding the claims in trust until the United States gave him title, and he "hereby...relinquish[ed] all title to said property." Bangs and Howard were apparently pleased and in June 1839, the Mission Society took legal steps to make preemption claims to the Mission lands.<sup>90</sup> The complaints against missionary land ownership were not limited to Lee, although he bore the brunt of the attacks. William Kone testified to the Board that "Some of the missionaries [himself included] had taken up land in their own name, while others have purchased improvements of settlers." He assured them that "the land, stock, &c. in the possession of the Members of the Mission family was purchased out of money saved from their salaries."<sup>91</sup>

The Board responded directly with their instructions to their agent Gary. Gary

was directed to determine if mission funds were being used by missionaries and laymen and to cut their salaries to discourage the use of their own funds for "their own personal emolument." Similarly, Gary was instructed to "dispose of any property belonging to the Missionary Society, which in his judgement...is useless to the Mission."<sup>92</sup> The Board's reversal from 1839 when it sought to legitimize their claims reflected their attempt to protect their public image. All the letters of complaint and testimonies were forwarded to Gary in November 1843 along with final instructions to give "to our Mission as far as practicable, a strictly spiritual character."<sup>93</sup> Faced with public outcries about land claims, a cadre of disaffected missionaries and laymen, and the apparent decline, degradation, and disinterest of the Native population, Gary rid himself and the Board of the headaches of a mission-colony and disposed of the Society's real property in Oregon.

While the experimental Methodist colony was falling to the politics of mission, the fate of the manual labor school suggests that the whole enterprise of attempting to convert a "degraded race" had also been a mistake. At a cost of \$6334 annually by 1843, the school was the most expensive operation. The newly completed school building alone had cost \$10,000 to construct and was, by far, the most impressive structure north of the Alta California border. Unlike mission schools in the United States and its territories, Congress contributed nothing. Gary estimated the cost of room and board for the Indian children at over \$3400 and it was to them that he directed much of his criticism. With a touch of sarcasm and echoing Daniel Lee's "happy deaths," he noted that "nearly all the good" done for the "scholars" was that some "had experienced religion here and died when in school and hopefully had gone to heaven." But, for the



most part, “[i]f they have distinguished themselves in any way it is for their depravity.” He blamed the boys for destroying their tools through neglect, thus wasting the Society’s funds.<sup>94</sup> Worse, the girls and a male laborer gave away mission supplies as gifts to visiting Indians; the latter charge further evidenced their retention of “savage” ways despite the lessons of civilization. In redistributing mission supplies, the girls were apparently changing the school for Indians into an Indians’ school, and this was clearly unacceptable.<sup>95</sup>

Gary explained their actions in the unalterable (thus unconvertible) terms of biology, noting the “peculiar trait in the Indian character.”<sup>96</sup> Although scientific racism was still relatively young, connections between physical appearance and behavior were common among the missionaries. Frost even demonstrated his familiarity with the fledgling pseudo-science craniometry, explaining the Tillamooks’ supposed greed in terms of their “bump of avariciousness being very prominent; caused...by their custom of flattening the head.”<sup>97</sup> And, although Gary compared the “animal propensities” of the Indian children to “pigs in the street,” he did demonstrate some compassion for them. He rightly condemned the school’s practice of treating runaways criminally, describing the barbaric punishment: “when [runaways are] found [they] have been brought back, put in chains, severely whipped...guarded and kept within a high enclosure...”<sup>98</sup> The children may have been beasts to Gary, but apparently they were of a higher order and did not deserve to be beaten and penned.

Gary attributed the high mortality rate and generally poor health of the children to “venereal scrofula,” a lymphatic condition supposedly inherited from “their degraded and

[sexually] depraved ancestors."<sup>99</sup> Neither he, nor any contemporary, offered any evidence that the children's chronically swollen lymph glands resulted from venereal disease. Like the dreaded "fever and ague," scrofula was vague, antebellum medical terminology. The tubercular bacillus was eventually isolated in the 1880s and scrofula became the term for the lymphatic form of tuberculosis (as opposed to the lung form or "consumption.") In the 1840s, however, scrofula was still mysterious and referred to any number of medical problems displaying swelling of the neck, particularly among children, and could result from numerous factors associated with poor standards of living, like that of the mission school, and various contagious infections easily passed in the dormitory. As well, Jason Lee who had lived among sick Indian children in Oregon for ten years – a brutal reality of the epidemic-filled 1830s – disputed that the swelling was accompanied by "sores" or that scrofula was so extensive. Lee denied seeing any scrofula or venereal disease among the "several hundred" Kalapuyas of the upper Willamette Valley and Umpquas above and below Garnier's fort. And, among the Indians of the lower Willamette and Columbia Rivers, scrofula prevailed "to a great extent...[but] it is very far from the truth that scarcely an exception is found."<sup>100</sup> Indeed Lee seemed to take great exception to the conclusion of inherited venereal disease held by Gary, Frost, and Hines. Each of these missionaries, he explained, wanted to leave Oregon as soon as possible and readily cited the supposedly hopeless condition of Indian health to buttress their appeals for reassignment to Euro-American conferences in the Northeast.

The children's condition could just as likely have been an infection of the

histamine tract that spread easily into the respiratory system, given a subsequent description that noted the disease often spread from the neck to the lungs, at which point the children rarely recovered.<sup>101</sup> There was a more likely cause of this common condition among the children. According to Gary and other missionaries, the children spent a large amount of time being “educated” in manual labor at the farm/school throughout the long, wet, chilly western Oregon winters. The clothing that they were forced to wear as evidence of their progress was donated from the northeastern lay public, well worn and cast-off. The Willamette Valley’s rainy season can stretch from September through June many years, as many missionaries and emigrants ceaselessly complained. Regardless of other possible causes, Gary and others faulted the Indians’ biologically inherited depravity.

Gary used sexuality quite effectively in his justification for selling the mission school to the Oregon Institute, recently established for the rising Euro-American emigrant population. Without example or testimony, he charged that the children had been engaging in “criminal intercourse” with each other.<sup>102</sup> Whatever truth there was to his claim, he concluded that the ensuing generations continued to spread the venereal diseases inherited from their parents: sexually depraved, they had no future as a race. With Lee back East and Perkins the lone voice of “explosive” opposition, Gary encountered little resistance, mostly meeting with the missionaries of the 1840 reinforcement who generally wanted to go home.<sup>103</sup> However, the schoolmaster Hamilton Campbell broke ranks and apparently resisted Gary’s attempts to dispose of the mission school.<sup>104</sup> Perhaps in an effort to discredit Campbell, Gary reserved significant

blame for him, "[t]hese children receive no check...on their animal propensities from their parents and friends any more than pigs in the street...and the grave is open to receive them all." Without expanding on it, Gary accused Campbell of a sexual relationship with a child by relating a "rumor...[about] some events which are said to have taken place between Br. Campbell and S—a, a student in the school."<sup>105</sup> If true, no boys fit the abbreviated name, although "Sarah Stevens" and "Sarah Rich" were likely candidates among the girls and, of the two, only Rich stayed at the school with any regularity. Regardless of veracity, the charge, no matter how vague, was what mattered within the Methodist community. As Gary was perfectly aware by well established precedent, his report was bound for the Board, available to members of the Society to read, and selections would be published in the *Missionary Herald*; Campbell and other potential challengers would, of course, have been aware of this fact as well.

Not surprisingly, in closing the mission, Gary cited the actual numbers of Indians within the Oregon Mission's claimed boundaries, stretching from the Wascopam down the Columbia River, north to the Puget Sound, and south to the "Clamoth" River of the Oregon-Mexico borderland.<sup>106</sup> The Indian population in the lower country had been a point of concern since the Protestants' initial arrival; indeed the vanishing Indian was a mainstay of any discourse concerning Native peoples in the nineteenth century. As early as 1835, Parker, scouting for the ABCFM, pondered the certain eventuality of whites completely supplanting the withering Indian population.<sup>107</sup> John Richmond, a missionary of the 1840 reinforcement and avid critic of Lee, wrote to the Board in 1841 that "I have been most disappointed...in the number of Indians ...Instead of thousands I have found

but a few hundreds belong to this region [the short-lived Nisqually station on Puget Sound] and these are fast sinking to the grave."<sup>108</sup> William Kone, also a disillusioned 1840 recruit and vocal Lee critic, wrote from the Clatsop station a few weeks later, "there are too many [missionaries]...[while] the Indians are few in number, and *not prepared to receive the Gospel*."<sup>109</sup> Numbers continued to be an issue of complaint by missionaries critical of the Oregon Mission such as Hines and Frost, though demographics were not necessarily the most important "failing" to them, as evidenced by Kone's italicized editorial above. "Migratory habits," "degraded" behavior, savage customs, and language were commonly cited. Frost, for example, complained about the number of the Indians of the lower Columbia in relation to learning their dialects, there were too few people per dialect to make gaining sufficient proficiency for evangelizing worthwhile.<sup>110</sup> Hines authored a similar complaint to the Board, though Lee subsequently disputed such claims.<sup>111</sup> Many references to numbers related to getting enough Indians together at any one place because of their seasonally peripatetic way of life.<sup>112</sup> Venturing outdoors to the Indians' sedentary winter villages was apparently too burdensome, for Frost particularly. The winter was the season to sit in his cabin, stewing and pouring his numerous complaints into his journal. My discussion here is meant to address the missionaries' use of numbers within a political context, not to diminish the cataclysmic malaria or "fever and ague" epidemics of the 1830s, which decimated the majority of Native populations.

The brutal epidemics and massive depopulation had been a reality of the Oregon Mission from the beginning with malaria preceding the Methodists, and smallpox and influenza made their deadly presence felt during the mission's formative years. As one

Hudson's Bay officer recalled: "[e]very fall the Indians were excited as to what new ill was to come – Whooping cough, measles, Typhoid fever & c... All these things we think so lightly of now – scourged the poor Indians dreadfully."<sup>13</sup> Such was common knowledge. In short, the mission societies of the Methodists and the American Board of Commissioners were informed of the consequences of the epidemics. The pertinent question is why did the number of Indians suddenly matter in 1843. Although the Methodist Board felt that they had been misled regarding the Native population, they acknowledged that thousands of Indians survived in the Oregon Country. Perceptions were key. Without the charges of secular colonization against Lee and his slack accounting, the numbers of Indians – converted or otherwise – mattered much less. The Board only regretted the great reinforcement of 1840, which by all accounts except Lee's, brought more missionaries and laymen to the Oregon Country than were needed. The Euro-American mission family totaled nearly seventy people at the four stations of the Willamette settlement, the Willamette Falls, The Dalles, and Clatsop. Indeed, Lee successfully persuaded the Board to stay the course in 1844. However, unfortunately for Lee's vision of mission and colony, Gary was busy across the continent disposing of his Methodist properties.

The ambiguities of the Methodist mission project in Oregon – whether to civilize or Christianize, how much colonization was necessary versus distracting, and was the number of Indians worth the effort, indeed how to measure success – were resolved through the racialization of the Indians and the termination of the mission. Since the

1820s, there had been two prominent discourses evident among the Protestant missionaries' perceptions of the Native peoples, one racial and one ethnic: Indians, the dying race of savages, and Indians, the salvageable heathens. Racial definitions were biologically and divinely fixed leaving no room for human agency to alter them; Indians were irrevocably savages and they were destined to vanish. Ethnic definitions, the older and receding set of meanings used to explain human difference, were more fluid, assumed monogenesis and universality, and thus allowed for change.<sup>114</sup> Inherently, it would seem, evangelism and missionization occupied the intellectual realm of ethnicity: convert the heathen – also God's children – to the Truth. The *Missionary Herald* expressed the notion well in an 1821 appeal for a Northwest mission: "God has made of one blood all nations, and provided a Savior for all, and designed his Gospel for every heathen nation, however barbarous or inaccessible..."<sup>115</sup> However, such views had competition.

In the early nineteenth-century, scientific racism slithered into Euro-American folk beliefs and complicated the mission world. The *Great Chain of Being*, published in a widely disseminated text in 1800, popularized the racial categorizations and hierarchies developed by Enlightenment scientists in their obsession to rank and order humanity. Previously such pseudo-scientific meanderings had not found purchase in the soil of European and Euro-American folk beliefs, largely because such theories clashed with contemporary Christianity and monogenesis. Crucially, however, the *Great Chain of Being* merged race science with Christianity, arguing that God sanctioned the supposed superiority of northern Europeans and the inferiority of lesser races such as American

Indians.<sup>116</sup> By 1830, according Reginald Horsman, pessimistic racialist thinking began to dominate Euro-American views of Indians.<sup>117</sup> In the Oregon Country, racial thinking did not determine the fate of the mission, but it did inform the decisions of missionaries who negotiated the maze of their own perceptions regarding the Indians, competition from Catholics, and the growing emigrant population's challenges to their property.

Jason Lee had dabbled with the notion of race in his "vital experimental religion," promoting what he termed "amalgamation" of the races to create a solid Methodist base in the Oregon Country.<sup>118</sup> To Lee, intermarriages provided the same fundamental basis of civilization as racially endogamous marriages. Upon reaching the Snake River in 1834, Lee witnessed an unofficial or "custom of the country" marriage between trapper Thomas McKay and a "Snake...digger" woman (probably Shoshone or Paiute). McKay reportedly told her uncles, the arbiters in marriage, that whites "gained the consent of the lady then the relatives gave their consent and did not sell their females like their horses. The uncles did not object and they were man and wife." Lee took as a portent that her uncles conceded to their niece's decision and did not demand a bride price. "Surely these Indians must be very desirous to adapt the customs of the white people when they so readily yield [in] a matter of so much interest for a female sells for a pretty large sum."<sup>119</sup> Notably for a Christian missionary, Lee did not comment on the lack of officiation or ceremony, though he seems to have preferred a tighter marital institution. In 1839, he exhorted his successes of marrying the "Rocky Mountain men" and their Native wives and sanctioned intermarriage between his single Methodist laymen and Indian women of the mission.<sup>120</sup> Lee was convincing enough regarding "amalgamation" that the Mission



Board related intermarriage among Lee's successes to the Mission Society in their annual report in May 1841. "The wives of all these working men [mission laymen and unaffiliated emigrants], by their example and influence, with the Indian women, are training them in the habits of domestic comfort and economy and preparing them for civilized life, to which the Gospel is destined to introduce them."<sup>121</sup> The Board could have related the example of Celiast or "Helen Smith," the Clatsop woman, who married Euro-American farmer Solomon Smith and actively though unsuccessfully proselytized among her people.

Mixed-blood children also held particular interest for Lee, recognizing their potential as culture brokers, a role such individuals had filled for fur traders, colonists, and missionaries for centuries. Before his initial departure from Philadelphia for St. Louis in February 1834, Lee met Nathaniel Wyeth's thirteen-year-old Canadian-Chinook servant and announced: "I have seldom seen a more interesting lad. He can speak the Flat Head [Chinook] and French languages, and has made astonishing proficiency in the English, and can converse considerably with the other Indians [presumably Algonkians or Iroquoians] of whose tongue he knew nothing a few months ago."<sup>122</sup> In 1836, during the mission's nascent period, Lee felt that the mixed-blood children would be the future of Oregon Christianity, though he clearly held the racialist position that Euro-American children would eclipse them if both were present in Oregon. The mixed-blood children would be "the future of the country, they *will*, they *must* have the influence, unless a colony be introduced from the civilized world." Mixed-blood and converted Indian children would solve the language dilemma as well. Learning "english," these "Native

Elisha's shall go forth declaring to their Red Brethren in all things ye are too superstitious" and proclaiming the Gospel.<sup>123</sup> Lee could draw on a long line of converted Indians to support his hopes, most obviously his Methodist contemporary William Apess, the Pequot missionary and moral reformer.

"Native Elishas" could serve another important purpose as well – fundraising, the real lifeblood of the effort to convert the world. When Lee brought William Brooks and Thomas Adams, Chinook and Kalapuya respectively, back East in 1838, he was basically following a pattern established by Christopher Columbus of taking indigenous people back to the metropol to impress both the Native people and the colonizing population. Indeed the practice was established so well and so early that Harald Prins has estimated that two thousand Indians went to Europe before the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock in 1620.<sup>124</sup> Brooks, Adams, and three mixed blood sons of Thomas McKay proved their worth at Lee's first stop in Illinois when their hymnal produced a \$50 donation for the Oregon Mission from a delighted Baptist congregation.<sup>125</sup> With the help of the Indian boys, Lee would collect thousands of dollars on his eastern tour.

As has been noted by many historians from Bancroft onward, Lee's numerous stops in Illinois also contributed to Oregon Fever among likely emigrants. Thomas Adams apparently contributed as well, despite his inability to speak English. Falling ill, "Indian Tom" remained in Peoria from the fall of 1838 until the spring of 1839, became a local celebrity and apparently used signs and gestures to describe his homeland. Joseph Holman of "The Peoria Party," one of the trickling emigrants parties that would become a deluge within a few years, credited Adams' descriptions of massive Columbia salmon

runs with encouraging his 1839 emigration. Holman, a cooper, planned to pickle and pack the salmon and make a fortune.<sup>126</sup>

Brooks continued to the East Coast with Lee and delivered pleas for mission support, which Lee translated for the audience and later described as "always interesting, and sometimes delightful, pathetic, and thrilling..."<sup>127</sup> Lee claimed Brooks spoke "in his own language" on all occasions but one, in which he spoke English to, among others, a couple of congressmen in Washington, D.C. (Lee's concurrent efforts lobbying for territorial acquisition of Oregon have been long noted by contemporaries and historians.) However, Lee only spoke Jargon, not any of the actual Chinook dialects, which baffled Europeans and Euro-Americans with their complex range of vocal sounds and seemingly incomprehensible grammar.<sup>128</sup> Either Brooks sermonized in Jargon to his eastern Euro-American audiences, delivered pre-arranged homilies, or Lee only pretended to translate. The consistency with which Brooks called for laymen and missionaries suggests that he was either well schooled by Lee, who at the time was trying to get support for his great reinforcement, or that Lee simply translated liberally to fit his cause. In addition to calling for an expanded mission, Brooks understandably complained about the liquor traffic in Oregon, a result of Yankee trade ships in the late 1830s and HBC efforts to match their competitors. Importantly, Brooks also addressed race.

While fundraising in Baltimore, Brooks pondered the condition of a blind African-American man, and expressed an affinity with him that hints at Brooks' conception of race, Christian conversion, and death. Apparently, his fellow Baltimore Methodists referred to the man as "miserable." Brooks took exception: "he be very

happy. O, I love that old man, because he love Jesus Christ." In the next lines, Brooks turned the discourse to himself and presented a revealing reflection:

A great many men saucy to me, and I go on. My heart says, I not come here to see that kind [of] men. I come here to see all good friends. I saw great many men, bright like silver. These don't care what say God in Bible. If they die, that old man go in heaven; and these rich men – where they go to? You see children, how much more better if he die and go in heaven. I shall never forgit him again.<sup>129</sup>

The speech is obviously mediated through Lee's translation and the whimsy of the *Christian Advocate's* correspondent who is responsible for the "pidginy" nature of Brooks' voice. Still, if Lee approximated his meaning, Brooks clearly recognized racial and economic stratification among Americans and rebuked them, associating himself with the African-American man. His affinity with the man seems to have been based on infirmity and condemnation. Brooks connected with Christianity through physical suffering and death, not surprising given the nature of the religion and the realities of his world. Never knowing a time without pathogenic horror, the young man internalized the rhetoric of the "happy death" to which his mentors condemned his "doomed race."

The display of race, particularly Brooks' physical exoticism, was a purposeful component of his inclusion on Lee's trip. His flattened head constantly drew notice, as Lee undoubtedly intended. Similar to his Baltimore visit, in Massachusetts Brooks stated that "he had been insulted while passing through the streets, and his ears pained with oaths."<sup>130</sup> Indeed Lee described the "barbarous custom" as part of his standard stump sermon, pointing at Brooks and explaining that the Kalapuya Adams, still stranded and convalescing in Peoria, was even more deformed.<sup>131</sup> In Albany, New York, the *Christian Advocate and Journal* reported "if ever a congregation of professing Christians had their

duty to the heathen portrayed before them, ...it was acknowledged and felt on the present occasion."<sup>132</sup> Lee's venture had begun with drama, or at least the appearance of drama, with the Flathead's call from the heathen wilderness. Brooks and Adams were likely meant to renew the spark of Christian fervor; the young men blatantly bore their marks of savagery on their skulls yet evidenced the power of Christ in their conversion.

During the trip, Brooks' English reportedly improved and with time he likely could have produced some revealing unmediated insights into his sense of Christianity and colonialism in the manner of fellow Indian Methodists with "tutor'd minds" William Apess (Pequot) and George Copway (Mississagua Anishinaabe). In a recent study, Bernd Peyer analyzed such "transcultural" Indian writers of the antebellum era, or what he terms the "salvationist period," dominated by missionaries and largely independent of post-Civil War federal bureaucracy. Peyer describes "salvationist" Indian writers as "trained...to serve as ministers of the Gospel."

Their pietistic writings consequently reflect their own overall acceptance of Protestant ideals and their sincere belief in the need for all Indians to adapt to the dominant society in order to survive. In most cases, however, these authors also made rational and critical assessments of contemporary Indian-white relations and expressed their own notions for improving their people's situation. The intellectual confrontation with the colonial situation, which still characterizes much of contemporary Indian literature, has its roots in the lives and writings of the Indian missionary-writers.<sup>133</sup>

While Brooks is not directly comparable to Apess, Copway, or others because of the extended mediation between his voice and the written word, Peyer's analysis does contribute to an understanding of his messages. Brooks confronted the colony – mission relationship and eastern missionaries whom he deemed more interested in creature comforts and the economic resources of Oregon than in the welfare of the Indians.

"Great many ministers, when he ask me, 'You got everything good in your country?' I tell him, 'No, sir.' He ask me, 'You got plenty good houses in your country?' I say, 'No, sir.' Then he say, 'I not go in your country.' Now I don't call that Christian at all: I say, 'You stay *home*, sir.'"<sup>134</sup> Brooks' analysis of the Oregon Mission, complicated as it was by the overt relation to colonization, suggests that he could have emerged as a compelling critic even as he devoted himself to saving his people through Christian American civilization. However, like so many of his fellow Chinooks at this time, Brooks died while on the eastern fundraising tour in 1839. He was buried in Philadelphia and the local Christian media noted his "happy death."<sup>135</sup>

By 1844, the waves of disease among the Native population of the lower country tempered Lee's hopes for the Indians' future but he still saw "amalgamation" as an avenue of salvation. Testifying before the Board, he explained that "the Indians on the Walamette, will become, as a distinct race, extinct. But I think there will be more Indian blood, through amalgamation, running in the veins of white men a hundred years hence than would have been running in the veins of the Indians, if they had been left to themselves. The Missionaries have performed many such marriages among them."<sup>136</sup> Yet, amalgamation ran into problems among the Indians and other Euro-Americans. Mary Sargeant, a Molalla woman who resided for a time at the Willamette Mission, repeatedly left her husband, Euro-American emigrant Felix Hathaway, during their two-year marriage. Hathaway petitioned the Oregon Provisional Government for divorce in 1845 reportedly after learning that "Mary was constrained to give her consent...to marriage through fear of those persons having controll of her at that time."<sup>137</sup> An

independent missionary from Connecticut, the Congregationalist John Griffin, refused to recognize the sanctity of the intermarriages and accused the Methodists of "taking sides in favor of adultery." At Fort Vancouver, Reverend Beaver reacted similarly, condemning "the state of concubinage" and "fornication" because the Native wives were not properly instructed in and converted to the "truth" and thus cannot be considered to have been legally and religiously married.<sup>138</sup> As religious historian Robert Loewenberg put it, "Methodists, seeking in their dilemmas to erect bridges from what were essentially barriers, were open to such criticism."<sup>139</sup> Indeed, early emigrant John Minto recalled the change during the mid 1840s with the influx of Euro-American settlers that "some of them who had Indian families were rather exiled in civilized society afterwards. Some of them found it more agreeable to go...to their wives' people."<sup>140</sup> Lee's experiment of amalgamation fell to more widely accepted contemporary folk beliefs about race.

The racial discourse concerning the dying, degraded savage race emerged as dominant by 1843 with Gary's replacement of Lee and the emigrants' challenges regarding property. The racial assessment was as important a legacy of the Methodist Mission as the supposed "secularization." Until his death in 1844, Lee had maintained that the Indians, as heathens, were capable of Christian civilization and that the mission among them remained of crucial importance. Perhaps best evidenced by the termination of the manual labor school, Gary held little hope for Indians as anything other than a doomed race. He "made arrangements where nearly all the Indian scholars will be as well off in families as they would be in school until they die or run away." Euro-American homesteaders commonly held Indian children as laborers who worked for

board in Oregon. That Gary thought such was ultimately beneficial to the children seems best expressed in his pessimistic prophecy of their dying or running off. Nevertheless, he expressed "great relief."<sup>141</sup>

Rather than being strictly factual, the image of the vanishing Indian served a purpose, providing a rationale to abandon the Indian missions. Josiah Parrish, one of the only members of the Great Reinforcement to support the Mission and whose Clatsop Mission fell victim to Gary's purges, suggested other reasons for the change in focus. Regarding the Indian school, he explained that the newly arrived Euro-Americans decided "to have our children educated separate and apart rather from the Indians, and we resolved to establish a literary institution." Gary closed the Indian school in 1844 because "it was not productive [of] very much good," following the deaths of many Native children and the probably welcomed departure of most mixed-blood children to the new Catholic mission on the north side of the Columbia River after 1838.<sup>142</sup> The Oregon Institute, which replaced the Indian school, was only nominally racially inclusive. Article III of its constitution stated, "[t]he primary object of the Institution shall be to educate the children of white men; but no persons shall be excluded on account of color, provided their character and qualifications are such as are required by the by-laws of the Institution." Clearly, the committee excluded Indians in practice.<sup>143</sup> The Board in its 1847 Annual Report reported the constitution, wishing to change only the state of property ownership. Regretting Gary's sale of the school and surrounding land claim, the Society wished in vain for a reversal of the title transfer. Of the Oregon Institute, they concluded that "this institution is destined to wield a powerful influence in molding the



mind and heart of the medley mass with which the Valley of the Columbia is so rapidly filling up."<sup>144</sup> By 1847, the Indians of the lower Willamette Valley were increasingly out of sight and out of mind.

In assessing the cessation of mission activities among the Indians in western Oregon, Parrish blamed the poor condition of his fellow missionaries rather than that of the Indians. He claimed that the "hardships" of frontier missions among the Indians "were such that they could not endure them." Because of this, many returned home to New England and New York. The words of Frost, Hines, Kone, and others certainly support Parrish, though they condemned the Indians and the country instead of themselves. Noting the role of racism, Parrish explained to the Victorian historian Hubert Bancroft, "[y]ou know many of our people do not think there is a good Indian without he is dead. After the arrival of the [Reverend George Gary] in 1844 – he remained until 1847 – the mission work was principally to the whites." Although he did not overtly accuse the other missionaries or the colonists of any wrongdoing or misrepresentation of facts, he pointedly claimed that he had maintained an ever-increasing number of Indian converts at his mission on the Clatsop Plains on the lower Columbia. Indeed, the enumeration of the Native population continues to be a vexing problem. Boyd's demographic work, discussed in the previous chapter, takes at face value the reports of contemporaries such as Frost and Hines, men who had a stated interest in abandoning their endeavors and who hardly ventured forth for an accurate census. Declaring the scarcity of Indians emerged as a primary tool to achieve their goal. Granting that diseases annihilated tens of thousands of Indians, the question remains how

many Indians had to be alive to be worth saving. The reason for closing the missions and transferring the school to Euro-American children was not as simple as often presented. Despite destiny and propaganda, the Indians had not disappeared. In recognition of this fact and uncharacteristic of his peers, Parrish returned to Methodist tradition in 1845 and became an itinerant preacher "to the Indians and to the whites." Indeed, "The Indians were moving about hither and yon, as they always had done." Though he granted that "there were more than 500 Indians that died in this valley, with chills and fever and typhoid fever," he eked out a living preaching for his supper and sleeping in the villages of the survivors.<sup>145</sup>

The racialization of the Oregon population – the idea that the Indians were inherently and naturally incapable of survival whereas the suffering nascent Methodist colony (Anglo-Saxons) could and would survive – shaped the legacy of Willamette Indians as disappearing. The racial determination of the Indians came despite the reality of the increased Klickitat presence and the continued indigenous presence. Racialization coincided with questions of property ownership among "whites" with the mission staking secular claims to protect its interests from the challenges of McLoughlin and incoming settlers. The Oregon Mission had been founded on a construction of human difference that is best considered as ethnicity: a temporal, culturally derived, and changeable (convertible) difference. The emerging primacy of settler-colonialism established race in Oregon, a fixed pseudo-biological construction legitimizing the conquest of property through the dehumanization of the Indians. Racializing Indians denied their rights to the land; indeed, it denied their continued existence. The timing of the missionaries'

abandonment of conversion at the moment when their property was challenged reflects their confronting the reality of Oregon colonization; settlers were advancing westward and would take claims of occupancy, although no laws existed to protect titles. Time had run out on the Methodist mission-colony experiment. Evidencing the extent to which race was constructed from local experience (even as it grew from and, in turn, shaped a larger history), one mission society in the East disagreed with the Methodists and sought to save the Oregon Mission. In December 1845, the American Indian Mission Association explained to Congress the “lamentable decline” of Native peoples in explicitly non-racialized terms. Rather than “any constitutional defect peculiar to the race,” the various causes of depopulation “emanated from their conquerors.”<sup>146</sup> They advocated removal from the corrupting influences of the “settlements,” international disputes, and the fur trade: the Oregon Indians could still be saved. However, the memorial was issued from Louisville, Kentucky, far removed from the local realities of western Oregon. The early absence of substantial Euro-American emigration had allowed the Oregon Methodists to suspend the racial aspects of property ownership and citizenship in favor of religious salvation through the “civilizing” effects of agriculture and individualism. As will be developed in the following chapter, the Euro-American emigrants brought the folk belief of race – the determinant of who can possess the land and who ultimately has a right to exist – to the Oregon country, forcing the missionaries to play the land-title game and abandon their salvage efforts.

Missionaries claimed that evidence of the “degraded race” surrounded them and

forced their hands in abandoning conversion efforts; subsequently, some of the mission family turned to writing about their experiences and Oregon. They had practice, as evidenced by their letters to the Board and articles in Christian newspapers, which 1844 emigrant John Minto credited with first attracting him to Oregon. He claimed that such was true generally; though few read the accounts, they "were kept in circulation by verbal communication...and did not diminish in attractiveness amongst a restless enterprising people."<sup>147</sup> Philip Edwards, a mission layman from 1834 to 1838, contributed to the growing body of "knowledge," with his emigrant guidebook published in 1842. He made the connection between racialized Indians and the land very explicit. Edwards described the arid eastern Oregon country as "entirely unavailing to any of the purposes of civilization." Of the local Native population, the "gaunt and dirty Diggers, a sort of half human, half vegetable race, indolently plodding along the margin of the river, or gravely loitering around fisheries, as if they considered the country which the beasts have forsaken, as amply good enough for them."<sup>148</sup> He was typically enthusiastic about the Willamette Valley, though it was "by many greatly overrated...[and] not...on the whole superior to Missouri." Further, easterners tended to be more impressed than westerners who were actually "better adapted to the country." Regarding the Indians of the lower country, he stated, "The native are generally mild and indolent. ...Settlers in the Wallamette need entertain little apprehension of hostilities, and if death continues his annual harvests, there will in a few years be few in the valley. I should feel as safe there as I do here [in Richmond, Missouri]."<sup>149</sup> The knowledge produced by the published texts of the mission family are reflected in Minto's being "astonished...that such a

degraded race as the Indians were, could grow out of such rich ground as this was."<sup>150</sup>

The mission narratives deserve some commentary, as they were as important to the overall impact of Methodism in the Northwest as the mission itself.

The published texts of the mission family of the 1840s and early 1850s, stressing the ongoing disappearance of the Indians and promoting the settlement of their homelands, probably contributed to the subjugation of the Native people more than Christianization could have, had it been attempted in earnest and had the Indians cooperated. The 1844 narrative of Daniel Lee and John Frost explained the futility of efforts among the Chinooks, Kalapuyas and Clatsops. They compared these groups with the Umpquas to the south, the "miserable fish-eaters, who were as savage as the bears." The co-authors donated much space to explanations of why they, as missionaries, spent so little time evangelizing among the Indians other than scattered camp-revivals during the warm, dry summer months. Had the missionaries been more active in the winter when the Indians tended to keep to their home villages, they would have had more of an audience. Instead, they merely complained about the savagery of seasonal migration patterns that took Native people away from the mission stations. Lee and Frost further explained that the Indians of the "lower country" (northwestern Oregon) were "both *thieves* and *liars*," mocking Reverend Parker's assessment of them in the mid-1830s and adding, "in two instances attempts were made upon *white* ladies who resided among them." They remarked with obvious sarcasm "[s]urely these are virtuous Indians." Yet, the dangers the Indians posed were only temporary, for these "most degraded human beings...are rapidly wasting away, and the time is not far distant when the last deathwail

will proclaim their universal extermination." In the missionaries' opinions, the Indians were responsible for their own demise and were beyond salvation. Although Daniel Lee remarked that The Dalles mission had occasionally been successful in attracting Native congregations, he concluded by 1843 that they were not serious, easily backsliding into heathenism and treating the Christians as sport. At the last camp meeting that he attended before heading home to the northeast, he claimed that three-fourths of the Indians "arose to laugh, and ridicule, and mock." He concluded, "Such was the state of the people at the time the writer left the country, in regard to the direct tendencies of missionary labour among them." Lee, however, did note the success of the first camp meeting for whites in Oregon in the Willamette Valley in July 1843. Indeed, throughout, Daniel Lee and Frost made much of their conversion of whites as had Jason Lee some years earlier.<sup>151</sup> The Mission Board also noted the event with adulation to the Missionary Society.<sup>152</sup>

Like the overland guidebooks that became common in the 1840s, the missionary tales often included helpful information for colonization, such as descriptions of promising places for settlement and advice on dealing with the "wretched" Indians, particularly useful language for communication. The brief glossaries of words and phrases, usually Chinook Jargon and Nez Perce (for the lower and upper countries respectively) by the late 1840s and 1850s, provided emigrants with an ability to communicate specific needs. Traveling overland from the Snake River country to the Columbia River and then down to the Willamette Valley required aid from Indians on the Plateau and at Wascopam. Horses could be fed, purchased, bartered, or exchanged. Canoes could be obtained to cross and navigate the Columbia River and the mouths of its

tributaries. Labor was critical as well, usually emigrants required a crew of Native people experienced with the brutal rapids of the Columbia River to avoid an unfortunately common fate of drowning. Lee and Frost, one of the earliest examples, included a Tillamook and Chehalis glossary, reflecting their thinking that the mouth of the Columbia River would inevitably be an important colonial center. Their glossary included phrases, which they must have found useful, such as: "Whose canoe is that?" "Make a canoe, you." "Whose is that boy?" (Although most were abolitionists and repeatedly complained about Native slavery, the missionaries, like other non-Indians in the region, commonly retained Indians, particularly children, as personal valets.) "Make a fire." "Give me salmon." "I am hungry." Father Blanchet of the Catholic Mission, generally far less concerned with colonization than his Protestant counterparts, nevertheless provided useful examples of "Conversations" in the Chinook Jargon. The exchanges that he selected entailed contracting Indian labor for chopping wood, cooking, cleaning, portering, borrowing a canoe, and dickering for payment (trading shoes, coats, pantaloons, or money.) Although Washington Irving's semi-fictional account had long since established the Indians of lower Oregon Country as shrewd traders, Blanchet apparently felt the need to stress the point again; always haggle the price. Joel Palmer authored a popular guidebook that similarly included helpful Chinook Jargon words as well as examples of Nez Perce. The latter section particularly reflected the types of interaction emigrants would likely need: words about different types of horses, river activity, phrases for crossing, sleeping and eating in addition to some kin terms, food items, and animals. Far from creating a new body of literature, Palmer and other

guidebook writers capitalized on a genre initiated by the mission family, adding advice about supplies, fort locations, and water availability.<sup>153</sup>

The demographic realities of the Willamette Valley, in which the emigrants of the 1840s arrived in the wake of massive Native depopulation, contributed to colonization that did not require violent conquest, but such was not to be true of southwestern Oregon. The borderland between the Oregon settlements and those of northern California's Sacramento Valley was largely a mystery to Euro-Americans and contact with the Indians was slight. The northernmost people of the borderland, the "Umbaqua Indians" called on the missionaries in their first year of operation, leaving a boy for instruction. Like many of his schoolmates, he became gravely ill the following summer. His relatives visited when beckoned, but he died before they arrived. A fearful Lee was much relieved that they seemed to accept the death and "left after a friendly parting." That summer a party had arrived from California that had been assaulted by "the Indians who live south of the Umbaquahs."<sup>154</sup> The southern region and its inhabitants remained mostly mysterious and frightening to the missionaries and suggests the limits of the Oregon Mission. Before concluding this discussion, I will briefly analyze the only detailed narrative of southwestern Oregon, at least the northern perimeter, which was as far as any missionary would travel.

Gustavus Hines, the missionary assigned to the never-to-be Umpqua Mission, described his one-time encounter with the Kalawatsets in 1840 in terrifying terms: "[W]e were lying at the mercy of those who had proved themselves to be among the most treacherous of savages." Hines was much more content to remain at the central mission



station and preach the Gospel. On his canoe trip down the Umpqua River, while “contemplating the barbarous appearance of both animate and inanimate nature around us,” “We found little land along the river which holds out any inducements to emigrants... it is certain that along the stream it can never sustain much of a population.” Hines, of course, was referring to future Euro-American colonists and excluded the four Kalawatset villages below Fort Umpqua from his assessment. The first village, which he put at fifteen miles below the fort, was home to approximately one hundred Indians “crowded” into four houses and “exceedingly squalid in their appearance, and subsisting entirely on fish.” As Elizabeth Vibert has argued, many Europeans and Euro-Americans generally denigrated Indians who subsided on fish instead of “the hunt”: fish was a poor man’s food. Two hundred more Kalawatsets dwelled in three closely situated villages on opposite sides of the Umpqua near the mouth. Hines again derided the Kalawatsets for their dinner of fresh roasted salmon and locally procured hazelnuts, though he seemed impressed with the ingenious preparation without benefit of a stove or identifiable cookware. With typical missionary prose, Hines judged the Kalawatsets as being genuinely jovial “sons of nature” but claimed that “[t]he sombre shades of moral darkness, which had ever cast a melancholy gloom upon the people, had never been penetrated by the rays of gospel light.” He credited the Kalawatsets with intelligence and good spirits but was careful to point out that they lived in Satan’s empire, a land of savages and ill suited for agriculture.<sup>155</sup>

Their Kalawatset guide and interpreter, the Native wife of trader Jean Garnier of Fort Umpqua who had agreed to accompany Lee and Hines, advised the party to camp

outside the largest village to await the headmen. Upon their arrival, Lee attempted to explain the United States, the missions, and Christianity through the multi-lingual Kalawatset woman. In his narrative, Hines conflated their replies, "there being little difference in their speeches." His rendition was: "Great chief! We are very much pleased with our lands. We love this world. We wish to live a great while. We very much desire to become old men before we die." The intimation of possible land loss and premature death suggests a strong familiarity with events to the north along the Willamette and lower Columbia rivers, and one man did subsequently reveal that they had been warned about the Methodists. Such knowledge was not surprising as the missionary party had themselves encountered a dozen Kalapuyas from the upper Willamette Valley at Fort Umpqua two days earlier. Still, the vanishing Indian rhetoric may have been a flourish added by Hines for his mid-century readers. The compilation speech continued: "It is true, we have killed many people, but we have never killed any but bad people. Many lies have been told about us. We have been called a bad people. and we are glad that you have come to see us for yourselves. We have seen white people before, but they came to get our beaver." The latter reference was almost certainly to the ill-fated Smith party. "None ever came before to instruct us. We are glad to see you; we want to learn; we wish to throw away our bad things, and become good." The reputation referred to was indeed commonly held, even Garnier had warned the missionaries, according to Hines. The Jedediah Smith massacre of 1828 was apparently still fresh on the minds of Indians and whites.<sup>156</sup>

In his narrative, Hines was careful not to make the Kalawatsets seem too

sympathetic and so built up the savage image. Of the headmen's demeanor, "[t]hey spoke very loud, and their gestures were remarkably violent. Sometimes they would rise upon tiptoe, with both hands stretched high above their heads, and then throw themselves forward until their faces almost touched the ground." Thus, even when pleading for peaceful understanding and Christian instruction (what they understood of it anyway), Hines cast them as savage and dangerous. The headmen left but were excited to return after dinner to hear the missionaries "talk to God." Unable to sleep for fear the Kalawatsets would "molest us during the night," Hines looked forward to leaving as soon as the incoming tide covered the sandbar upriver from the villages. One headman explained that he felt that he had been misinformed about the missionaries just as they had been misinformed about the Kalawatsets, and the safely departing Methodists were given a beaver hide and a cedar-bark dress. Hines noted that all the women wore such garments except for two who were dressed like "Swiss peasants" referring to a woman, who had escaped enslavement from a French-Canadian "master," and Garnier's wife. Unfortunately, he did not offer any insight into why the Kalawatset headmen gave the missionaries a woman's garment. Hines' assessment of the Kalawatset country did not improve near the mouth of the Umpqua near modern-day Reedsport, Oregon. He condemned the place as destined to be unimportant "with reference to either agricultural or commercial pursuits," though the river mouth would be useful as an outlet for crops grown in the interior valleys of the upper Umpqua. After "[c]ontemplating the probable period when the barbarism of both animate and inanimate nature along this river shall give place to civilization and christianity, we turned our backs," and headed upriver to

Fort Umpqua. Despite the exchanges between the Kalawatset headmen and the missionaries, Hines claims that he received a shocking report from Garnier upon their return. Supposedly, one of the headmen had been at the fort when the missionaries had first arrived and, alarmed by Lee's shot pouch around his neck, had fled to warn his clan that Lee carried evil medicine. According to the tale, the Kalawatsets had intended to kill the Americans, but the careful watch of Garnier's wife and her brother had saved them. It would seem equally probable that Garnier, a Hudson's Bay trader, would not have wanted the competition and headaches of a local American mission and a settlement that tended to accompany them. Hines did not question Garnier's motives but instead explained that these "most treacherous of savages ... are capable of practising [sic] the most consummate duplicity." He backed his interpretation by recounting a version of the Smith party massacre as evidence.<sup>157</sup>

Guided by "We-We," an Umpqua Indian employed by Garnier, the two missionaries traveled some distance upriver from the fort to visit the "Umpqua Indians" and prospect their potential for conversion. The party soon reached their first of two brief stops on their journey into the upper reaches of southwestern Oregon's interior. Considering the relatively short, one-day travel distance, the Native village of forty-five people was likely Kalapyuan Yoncalla or Athapaskans; the Takelman Umpquas of the Cow Creek area would have taken longer to reach on foot. Hines, like his Euro-American contemporaries, lumped the peoples of the lower, upper, and southern forks of the complex Umpqua River system together as Umpquas or "Umbaquahs," though the four principal Native groups differed significantly linguistically and culturally. The

Kalawatset people downriver were related to other Penutian speakers from the Siuslaw River, northward on the central coast, down to the environs of the Coos River of the southern Oregon coast. The "Umpqua Indians" of the upper sections of the river were Kalapuyan and those among the many Athapaskan groups who had emigrated to the Oregon Country in recent centuries. Finally, to the south, the Cow Creek band had their closest kin among other Takelman speakers of the middle and upper Rogue River in interior southwestern Oregon. Lee and Hines did not spend enough time in southwestern Oregon to make such distinctions, however, and they never ventured below the upper Umpqua Valley. According to Hines's account, upon arrival at the Umpqua village the headman "harangued" the missionaries with a story about how he had recently killed one of his wives over alleged infidelity. During the headman's speech, a violent altercation erupted between two Native women, offending Hines's sensibilities about proper female behavior. Although the headman expressed his gratitude that the missionaries had come to his village, his "murderous" act and the "savagery" of the women frightened the ethnocentric missionaries into leaving or, at least, provided sufficient excuse. A short day's travel brought them to a small village of thirty people who welcomed the Methodists, listened to their preaching, expressed "great attachment," and asked the missionaries to stay and teach them more of the Gospel. The ever-wary Hines refused the offer: "[We] concluded that their love was not so ardent as to render it desirable...we decided to set our faces towards the Willamette Valley." Of his trip northward from the Umpqua to the Willamette Valleys, Hines recounted the beauty and potential of the arable, well-watered land. He mused, "[t]hough the country is now destitute of

inhabitants, except the wild beasts, and a few savages as wild as they, yet the day is not far distant, when it will be teeming with a civilized and christian people."<sup>158</sup>

Hines included a summary description of the Umpqua River region and its Indian inhabitants, maintaining that the Umpquas were too few – 375 by his count, which made no allowance for the brevity and limited scope of his visit – to bother missionizing. Worse, he doubted the Indians' sincerity to learn the Gospel. He maintained that their interest in Christianity was merely pecuniary; it would help them obtain greater prices for their furs, apparently considering the American missionaries potential trading partners and desiring to play them off Garnier at Fort Umpqua. His assessment may not have been far off in this regard, if the missionaries' reputation for commercial interests had preceded them, which it likely had given the active communication among the western Oregon peoples. Finally, Hines concluded that missions among the Umpqua peoples would be a wasted effort because "the doom of extinction is suspended over this wretched race, and...the hand of Providence is removing them to give place to a people more worthy of this beautiful and fertile country."<sup>159</sup>

The return trip to the mission brought the Methodists through a Kalapuya village in the upper Willamette Valley, consisting of approximately one hundred people, many were sick. "Our bowels of compassion yearned over them [during a four-hour visit and feast of roast duck], but it was not in our power to help them." Yearning bowels in tow, the missionaries "commended them to God," and left. Typically, although Hines mentioned no intention of establishing a mission among such ill-fated people, he marveled at the "good water" and "country of unsurpassing loveliness ... and amazing

fertility. Surely, thought I, ... [the] country...requires nothing more than a population under the influence of the religion of Christ, to render it a perfect paradise."<sup>160</sup>

Obviously, he did not consider these Kalapuyas, anymore than the Umpquas, the ideal population for the promised land.

Hines's narrative, based on his journals from a decade earlier, employed a literary device, well-worn by Anglo-American writers and hackneyed by 1851, in which he described the Indians as irredeemably "wretched" in direct contrast to the commercial usefulness of their surroundings, which they squandered and thus did not deserve. An erstwhile savior of Indian souls, he then provided an excuse or two to explain why a mission effort was implausible or unwarranted. In his discussion of the Kalawatsets, he had related the Smith Massacre tale and the thwarted assassination attempt on his own party. The Athapaskan Umpquas were embroiled in their savagery before his eyes at the first village, while the second village was guilty by association, their overtures duplicitous. Written for an eastern audience of potential emigrants, Hines's text now seems constructed as a justification for his decision to forsake their duties as missionaries and to promote the colonization of Oregon. But, for Hines, perhaps the narrative better reflected his inability to distinguish between mission and colony during an era of Native depopulation and aggressive colonial expansion.

The Methodist experiment and the paradox of mission and colony reflected the Euro-Americans' refusal to see the United States and themselves as imperialists; this myopia stands in stark contrast with their British competitors. In 1835, in response to

Lee's mission, Governor George Simpson of the HBC selected Herbert Beaver of the Church of England as chaplain for Fort Vancouver, seeking to model the lower Columbia establishment after the successful Red River colony. Beaver's brief tenure, September 1836 to November 1838, demonstrated few of the intellectual conflicts so evident among the Euro-Americans. He considered Fort Vancouver an "infant colony" of the "Mother Country" and called for better administration to improve the Crown's position vis-à-vis the Americans' "fast increasing and thriving colony," which will otherwise "become a thorn in our side." Beaver criticized McLoughlin for assisting the Americans and thus undermining "the interests of the company." Like the Methodists, Beaver called for settlers, "a few respectable English families of the labouring class," to build a Christian community. Unlike Lee, however, Beaver unapologetically confined his missionizing to the European men and the mixed-blood children of the fort, considering Indian conversion a wasted effort among adults because they were too "migratory and erratic" and arguing that children would have to be confined in a boarding school, to which he doubted Native parents would consent. He did hold out some hope for the Klickitats, whom he believed were religiously "an unprejudiced blank" and could perhaps be converted if given their own agricultural settlement away from the colonialists, where gradually "civilization would become the handmaid of Christianity, and both would mutually advance each other."<sup>161</sup>

One commonality between Beaver and the Americans was denominational jealousy. Whereas part of the criticism of the Oregon Mission derived from the idea that the Methodists were colonizing Oregon to the detriment of other Euro-American sects,



Beaver railed against his competition within the HBC: the Roman Catholics. Although the HBC was a royal company and the evangelical-Anglican Clapham Sect had a powerful member on the London board of directors in Benjamin Harrison, the workforce was largely Franco-Canadian and Catholic; thus both Catholic and Anglican priests were represented at company establishments.<sup>162</sup> Beaver's brief tenure was marked by a constant battle with the Catholic Chief Factor McLoughlin, culminating in a violent episode in which the larger McLoughlin physically assaulted Beaver. Beaver should be considered an agent of empire, an imperialist, expected to enact reforms decided upon by individuals outside of the Oregon Country. McLoughlin, by contrast, was a colonialist who made decisions on the ground level, balancing imperial policies with local and regional circumstances. As well, his personal preferences and sensibilities played a role, as a degree of autonomy certainly came with distance. The men's mutual enmity resulted in the chaplain's departure in late 1838 after which McLoughlin succeeded in replacing him with a Catholic contingent from Red River. Denominational jealousies aside, the Anglican and American Methodist missions differed significantly.

As an agent of empire, Beaver never attempted to hide the naked imperialism of Great Britain as the reason for his presence in Oregon. He had earlier been garrison chaplain at the African-slave colony of St. Lucia in the British West Indies and would later occupy the same office in South Africa until his death in 1858. He did not conceive of his position at Fort Vancouver any differently. The creation of a paradox between Christianity and colony was peculiarly American because, even as they openly competed with Great Britain for dominion in lower Oregon, Euro-Americans preferred protracted

delusions of divine intervention to viewing themselves as imperialists.

Although their influence declined rapidly in the late 1840s, the Methodists of the Willamette Valley created three crucial legacies for western Oregon. They legitimated Euro-American colonization through a divinely sanctioned, nationalist mission which readily usurped the land and resources of a Native population reeling from disease and dislocation. They fostered early Euro-American colonization through their mills, credit, and appeals for territorial acquisition. And, by officially ending their mission to convert and civilize the Indians of the lower country, they reproduced and legitimized the image that Indians were destined to vanish as a consequence of divinely appointed historical processes. Taking stock of their Oregon enterprise in mid-1848, the Board recounted their successes and mistakes, concluding with the rhetorical question, "who will dare to pronounce the Oregon Mission a failure?"<sup>163</sup> Indeed, considered as emblematic of the relationship between colony and mission, divinely sanctioned conquest and colonization, the Oregon Mission succeeded even as it collapsed under the weight of competing visions of empire. For the next several decades, Euro-Americans, asserting their rights to property, would seek the removal of the Indians from the colonial equation.

Euro-American contemporaries believed that the Native people degraded and withered on the evolutionary vine and had no right to the land they occupied. Whether by divine intervention, disease, or the "bad influence" of whites of poor character and their liquor, Indian extinction was generally considered inevitable. Although the missionaries' brief visits to the Native peoples of the Umpqua River in 1838 and 1840 seemed to confirm that the same future awaited the Natives of the constricted but fertile

river canyons of the southern valleys, the Indians of the Oregon-California borderland had different ideas about their fate. The failure of southwestern Oregon Natives to comply with divine, nationalist, and scientific logic contributed to their roguish image as irredeemable savages who must be forcibly extirpated. The imperial ideology and imagery of the land and Indians fostered by Methodists and early colonists rooted and grew strong during the subsequent international boundary disputes, legally unprotected land claims, and political factionalism. The central government of the United States would haltingly provide solutions and half-heartedly administer them, leaving much to local machinations and imaginations.

Notes

<sup>1</sup> William G. McLoughlin, "Cherokees and Methodists 1824-1834," *Church History*, 1981, 44-63; Hugh T. Hodges, "Charles Maclay: California Missionary and San Fernando Valley Pioneer -- Parts II, III," *Southern California Quarterly*, 1986, 207-256; Hugh T. Hodges, "Charles Maclay: California Missionary and San Fernando Valley Pioneer -- Part I," *Southern California Quarterly*, 1986, 119-166; Haunani-Kay Trask, *From a Native Daughter: Colonialism and Sovereignty in Hawai'i* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1999); Kenton J. Clymer, "Religion and American Imperialism: Methodist Missionaries in the Philippine Islands, 1899-1913," *Pacific Historical Review*, 1980, 29-50.

<sup>2</sup> Reginald Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981).

<sup>3</sup> Scholars often meld indigenization and syncretism problematically. Antonio R. Gualtieri provides some instructive delineations of the two processes in *Christianity and Native Traditions: Indigenization and Syncretism among the Inuit and Dene of the western Arctic* (Notre Dame, Ind: Cross Cultural Publications, Cross Roads Books, 1984), 3-9. Gualtieri, however, focuses exclusively on missionary perspectives, Catholic and Anglican. For a recent collection of essays that attempts to comprehend Native agency, see Nicholas Griffiths and Fernando Cervantes, eds., *Spiritual Encounters: Interactions between Christianity and Native Religions in Colonial America* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1999). See, particularly, Griffiths' historiographic discussion of Indian conversion, "Introduction," 3-7.

<sup>4</sup> Robert J. Loewenberg, "Saving Oregon Again: A Western Perennial?," *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, 1977, 332-350.

<sup>5</sup> Gualtieri, *Christianity and Native Traditions*, 3-4.

<sup>6</sup> Lee testimony to the Board, July 2, 1844 in Cornelius J. Brosnan, *Jason Lee, Prophet of the New Oregon* (New York: Macmillan, 1932), 257; Nellie B. Pipes, "Journal of John H. Frost, 1840-43," *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, 1934, 360.

<sup>7</sup> Beaver, *Letters and Reports of Herbert Beaver*, 4.

<sup>8</sup> Letter, Margaret Smith, dated "Fort Vancouver, April 10<sup>th</sup>, 1838" in *Oregonian and Indians' Advocate*, November, 1838, I, 58-61 reprinted in Brosnan, *Jason Lee, Prophet*, 82.

<sup>9</sup> Thomas Edward Harper, *Chinook: A History and Dictionary of the Northwest Coast Trade Jargon* (Portland: Metropolitan Press, Publishers, 1935), 75.

- <sup>10</sup> Gustavus Hines, *Life on the Plains of the Pacific* (Buffalo: George H. Derby and Co., 1851), 105.
- <sup>11</sup> Pipes, "Journal of John H. Frost," 360.
- <sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 72-73.
- <sup>13</sup> Kone in Robert Moulton Gatke, "A Document of Mission History, 1833-43," *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, 1935, 87; for Lee, Frances Fuller Victor, *The Early Indian Wars of Oregon, Compiled From the Oregon Archives and Other Original Sources with Muster Rolls*, (Salem, OR: Frank C. Baker, State Printer, 1894), 14.
- <sup>14</sup> Theodore Stern, *Chiefs and Change in the Oregon Country: Indian Relations at Fort Nez Percés, 1818-1855, vol. II* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 1996), 19.
- <sup>15</sup> For the Jesuits see, Gerald McKeivitt, "Jesuit Missionary Linguistics in the Pacific Northwest: A Comparative Study," *The Western Historical Quarterly*, 1990, 281-304; Peter A. Dorsey, "Going to School with Savages: Authorship and Authority among the Jesuits of New France," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 1998, 399-420; Bruce Trigger, "The Jesuits and the Fur Trade," *Ethnohistory*, 1965, 30-53; Peter A. Goddard, "Covering the *Sauvage*: Jesuit and Montagnais in Seventeenth-Century New France," *Catholic Historical Review*, 1998, 219-239; and Matthew Dennis, *Cultivating a Landscape of Peace: Iroquois-European Encounters in Seventeenth-Century America*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993).
- <sup>16</sup> Pipes, "Journal of John H. Frost," 360.
- <sup>17</sup> Robert F. Berkhofer Jr., *Salvation and the Savage: An Analysis of Protestant Missions and American Indian Response, 1787-1862* (New York: Atheneum, 1972), 69.
- <sup>18</sup> Robert J. Loewenberg, *Equality on the Oregon Frontier: Jason Lee and the Methodist Mission, 1834-43* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1976), 112. See also, Nathan Hatch, *Democratization of American Christianity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989); John Wigger, *Taking Heaven by Storm: Methodism and the Rise of Popular Christianity in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997); and Cynthia Lynn Lyerly, *Methodism and the Southern Mind, 1770-1810* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).
- <sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 4-6; McLoughlin, "Cherokees and Methodists 1824-1834"; Christine Leigh Heyrman, *Southern Cross: The Beginnings of the Bible Belt* (New York: A.A. Knopf: Distributed by Random House, 1997).
- <sup>20</sup> William B Cannon, "John Wesley's Years in Georgia," *Methodist History*, 1963, 1-7.

- <sup>21</sup> Clara Sue Kidwell, "Choctaws and Missionaries in Mississippi Before 1830," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*, 1987, 51-72. Regarding herding, see Richard White, *Roots of Dependency: Subsistence, Environment, and Social Change among the Choctaws, Pawnees, and Navajos* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983). For a discussion of the gendered social and political effects of acculturation, see Theda T. Perdue, "Cherokee Women and the Trail of Tears," *Journal of Women's History*, 1989, 14-30.
- <sup>22</sup> Sheppard in Archer Butler and Dorothy Printup Hulbert, eds., *The Oregon Crusade: Across Land and Sea to Oregon* (Denver: The Stewart Commission of Colorado College and the Denver Public Library, 1935), 197.
- <sup>23</sup> "Diary of Rev. Jason Lee," *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, 1916, 408, 254.
- <sup>24</sup> For Jason Lee quotation, see Robert J Loewenberg, "New Evidence, Old Categories: Jason Lee as Zealot," *Pacific Historical Review*, 1978, 356 and Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of Oregon, volume I*, (San Francisco: History Company, Publishers, 1886), 174. For a discussion of Lee's supporters and critics, see Gene Herbert Hovee, "Jason Lee: A Rhetorical Criticism of His Sermon on the Oregon Mission," (Ph.D. diss., University of Oregon, 1963), 43-55, Hovee quotation regarding Bancroft's characterization, 44.
- <sup>25</sup> Jonathan S. Green, *Journal of a Tour on the North West Coast of America in the Year 1829* (New York: Chas. Fred. Heartman, 1915), 10-11.
- <sup>26</sup> The ABCFM was a union of the Congregationalist, Presbyterian, and Dutch Reformed churches.
- <sup>27</sup> Green, *Journal of a Tour*, 17.
- <sup>28</sup> Address printed in the *Missionary Herald* (Boston), December 1827, 396-397 in Green, 17-19; Butler and Hulbert, *The Oregon Crusade*, 29. O. A. Bushnell, *The Gifts of Civilization: Germs and Genocide in Hawai'i* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1993), 221-22.
- <sup>29</sup> Green, *Journal of a Tour*, 37-38.
- <sup>30</sup> Green, *Journal of a Tour*, 103. Green's report was reprinted in the *Missionary Herald* April 1831 in Hulbert, *The Oregon Crusade*, 76-78, 83.
- <sup>31</sup> Mission Board in Gatke, "Mission Document," 73.
- <sup>32</sup> Bangs in *Ibid*, 74.

<sup>33</sup> Charles Henry Carey, "Methodist Annual Reports Relating to the Willamette Mission (1834-1848)," *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, 1922, 305.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 306.

<sup>35</sup> Because of my focus on western Oregon, I mostly discuss the Methodists. However, others, notably the Catholics and the American Board of Commissions for Foreign Missions also heeded the Macedonian Cry. Still, Jason Lee and his band were first.

<sup>36</sup> The Plateau peoples' belief in the missionaries powers to control disease – inflict it and heal it – would later figure in the Whitman Massacre after a number of Cayuse, Wallawalla, and Shoshones faulted the ABCFM missionaries for an outbreak of measles and dysentery in 1847, Stern, *Chiefs and Change*, 170-171.

<sup>37</sup> "Diary of Rev. Jason Lee," 241-42, 255. Stern, *Chiefs and Change*, 43-45.

<sup>38</sup> Historians have long noted that misunderstandings between Indians and whites shaped relations; recently Richard White's notion of "creative misunderstanding" has taken hold among scholars. See Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991). Jane Merritt's has developed a strong critique that such misunderstandings among Indians may have been purposeful, "Metaphor, Meaning, and Misunderstanding: Language and Power on the Pennsylvania Frontier," *Contact Points: American Frontiers from the Mohawk Valley to the Mississippi, 1750-1830*, edited by Andrew R. L. Cayton and Fredrika Teute, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998).

<sup>39</sup> Lee's sermon in Hovee, *Jason Lee, A Rhetorical Criticism*, 107-108.

<sup>40</sup> Daniel Lee and J. H. Frost, *Ten Years in Oregon* (New York: J. Collord, 1844), 127.

<sup>41</sup> "Diary of Rev. Jason Lee," 241, 264-65, 401-2.

<sup>42</sup> Carey, "Methodist Reports," 307-8.

<sup>43</sup> Gatke, "Document of Mission," 74-76.

<sup>44</sup> Carey, "Methodist Reports, 310.

<sup>45</sup> Stern *Chiefs and Change*, 45-47.

<sup>46</sup> Stern *Chiefs and Change*, 44-46, 172.

<sup>47</sup> For the Genesee conference, *Christian Advocate* April 4, 1834 in Hulbert, 122-4; for the subsequent attempt, Clifford M. Drury, "The Oregonian and Indian's Advocate," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, 1965, 159-167 and Clifford Merrill Drury, ed., *The Mountains We Have Crossed: Diaries and Letters of the Oregon Mission, 1838*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999), 314-316.

<sup>48</sup> Stern, *Chiefs and Change*, 50-1.

<sup>49</sup> J. Orin Oliphant, "Lee-Greene Correspondence, 1839," *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, 1934, 263-268.

<sup>50</sup> Carey, "Methodist Reports," 324.

<sup>51</sup> The best sources for the American Mission and its militant counterpart Manifest Destiny remain Frederick Merk, *Manifest Destiny and Mission in American History, A Reinterpretation* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963) and Reginald Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981). Nineteenth-century Americans did, however, have some sense that a portion of the "Indian wilderness" be preserved as artifact for scientific and artistic use, see Mark David Spence, *Dispossessing the Wilderness: Indian Removal and the Making of the National Parks* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999). For the waterfall account, Lee and Frost, *Ten Years in Oregon*, 227. For the hopeful use of the Willamette Falls, see P. L. Edwards, *Sketch of the Oregon Territory or Emigrants' Guide* (Liberty, MO: The Herald Office, 1842), 10. For Slocum's views see his letter to Jason Lee and others, January 18, 1837 in Hines, *Life on the Plains*, 22-23.

<sup>52</sup> For Choctaw mission-agricultural schools, see Kidwell, "Choctaws and Missionaries." Letter October 2, 1839 printed in *Missionary Herald* June 1840, reprinted in Stern, *Chiefs and Change*, 51.

<sup>53</sup> For the criticism of Indian students' education, see Lee and Frost, *Ten Years in Oregon*, 148.

<sup>54</sup> Fessett, *Reports and Letters of Herbert Beaver*, 78, 130.

<sup>55</sup> For Slacum, see Brosnan, *Jason Lee Prophet*, 84-85. For the role of Jason Lee and the figures, Lee and Frost, *Ten Years in Oregon*, 146. Lee and Frost put Slacum's donation at only \$50.

<sup>56</sup> Lee's sermon recounted in the *Zion's Herald* February 6, 1839 and his speech to the Mission Board *Jason Lee MS Collection*, Oregon Historical Society are quoted in Hovee, *Jason Lee, A Rhetorical Criticism*, 53-54, 106-112.



- <sup>57</sup> Lee in Hovee, *Jason Lee, A Rhetorical Criticism*, 54.
- <sup>58</sup> Gatke, "Document of Mission History," 91.
- <sup>59</sup> Carey, "Methodist Reports," 318.
- <sup>60</sup> Lee in Hovee, *Jason Lee, A Rhetorical Criticism*, 54.
- <sup>61</sup> Samuel Parker, *Journal of an Exploring Tour Beyond the Rocky Mountains, Under the Direction of the A.B.C.F.M.*, 4th ed., (Ithaca, NY: Andrus, Woodruff, and Gauntlett, 1844), 269. See the Oxford English Dictionary's etymology of the term extirpate.
- <sup>62</sup> Parker, 271. For Lee quotation, see Loewenberg, "New Evidence. Old Categories," 363.
- <sup>63</sup> Pipes, "Journal of John H. Frost," 56.
- <sup>64</sup> Pipes, "Journal of John H. Frost," 150.
- <sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 362.
- <sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>67</sup> Celiast is also known as Helen Smith for her marriage to Euro-American colonist Solomon Smith. She was the middle daughter of Coboway, the principal headman of the Clatsops during the early fur trade. Celiast had earlier married a French Canadian and resided at Fort Vancouver, thus her conversion may well have occurred before the Oregon Mission and/or been aided by earlier acculturation. See David Peterson-del Mar, "Intermarriage and Agency: A Chinookan Case Study," *Ethnohistory*, Winter 1995, 1-30, and Eugene O. Smith, "Solomon Smith, Pioneer: Indian-White Relations in Early Oregon," *Journal of the West*, 1974, 44-58.
- <sup>68</sup> Pipes, "Journal of John H. Frost," 73.
- <sup>69</sup> Verne Frederick Ray, "Lower Chinook Ethnographic Notes," *University of Washington Publications in Anthropology*, 1938, 75-76.
- <sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 359-60.
- <sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 364.
- <sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 160.
- <sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 161.

<sup>74</sup> For recent studies of this phenomenon, see Shari M. Huhndorf, *Going Native: Indians in the American Cultural Imagination*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001) and Philip Joseph Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 372.

<sup>76</sup> Hines, *Life on the Plains*, 104-5.

<sup>77</sup> Lee to Fisk, March 15, 1836, in Brosnan, *Jason Lee, Prophet*, 80. Jason Lee sermon, *Ibid.*, 111-112.

<sup>78</sup> Jason Lee sermon, *Ibid.*, 111-112.

<sup>79</sup> For the "happy deaths," see Lee and Frost, 263-4.

<sup>80</sup> *North American*, June 5, 1839 reprinted in Brosnan, *Jason Lee, Prophet*, note 70, 39-40.

<sup>81</sup> Carey, "Methodist Reports," 318-19, 322, 324.

<sup>82</sup> For complaints from Elijah White, J.P. Richmond, George Abernathy, and William Kone, see Gatke, "Document of Mission," 81-89 and Joseph Whitcomb's pro-Lee testimony, 164-68. Hines' damning letter of the mission, 171-81. Loans to emigrants, Carey, "Methodist Reports," 361.

<sup>83</sup> Carey, "Methodist Reports," 361.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, 360.

<sup>85</sup> Gatke, "Document of Mission," 173.

<sup>86</sup> Charles Henry Carey, "Diary of Rev. George Gary," *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, 1923, 81.

<sup>87</sup> Carey, "Methodist Reports," 348-9.

<sup>88</sup> Frederick V. Holman, "A Brief History of the Oregon Provisional Government and What Caused its Formation," *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, 1912, 123.

<sup>89</sup> Gatke, "Document of Mission," 164-65, 167.

<sup>90</sup> Gatke, "Document of Mission," 78-79.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid, 88-89.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid, 90-1.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid, 170.

<sup>94</sup> Carey, "Diary of Rev. George Gary," 84, 86.

<sup>95</sup> For a full exploration of the notion of Indians' school, reflecting the agency of the students, versus a school for Indians, see K. Tsianina Lomawaima, *They Called It Prairie Light: The Story of Chilocco Indian School* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994).

<sup>96</sup> Carey, "Diary of Rev. George Gary," 91.

<sup>97</sup> Pipes, "Journal of John H. Frost," 239. For a discussion of craniometry and its chief creator Dr. Samuel Morton, see Audrey Smedley, *Race in North America: Origin and Evolution of a Worldview*, 2nd ed., (San Francisco: Westview Press, 1999), 230-33. Beginning his skull studies in the 1820s and continuing through the 1840s, Morton concluded that Indians were racially predetermined to extinction.

<sup>98</sup> Carey, "Diary of Rev. George Gary," 84.

<sup>99</sup> Carey, "Diary of Rev. George Gary," 84.

<sup>100</sup> Lee testimony to the Board, July 2, 1844, in Brosnan, *Jason Lee, Prophet*, 257.

<sup>101</sup> Carey, "Diary of Rev. George Gary," 91.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid, 84.

<sup>103</sup> For "explosion" reference, see Ibid, 100.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid, 92.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid, 85.

<sup>106</sup> For border claims, see Carey, "Methodist Reports," 325.

<sup>107</sup> Parker, *Title*, 269.

<sup>108</sup> Gatke, "Mission Document," 82.

- <sup>109</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>110</sup> Pipes, "Journal of John H. Frost, 360.
- <sup>111</sup> Lee testimony, July 2, 1844, in Brosnan, *Jason Lee, Prophet*, 257.
- <sup>112</sup> For example, see Gatke, "Methodist Document," 88.
- <sup>113</sup> Roberts, "Recollections," 16.
- <sup>114</sup> For the assumptions of mutability within the monogenetic view, Robert E. Bieder, *Science Encounters the Indian, 1820-1880: The Early Years of American Ethnology*. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1986), 11-12, 91. Race scientists did, however, combine Darwinian evolution with monogenesis to rank civilizations, chart the presumed decline of "primitives," and predict the inevitable extinction of Indians and freed blacks, Smedley, *Race in North America*, 163, 166, 229-240. Such beliefs would not have been very prevalent among nineteenth-century missionaries dedicated to uplifting "lesser" peoples of the world, and who continued to advocate the civilizing effects of education. See House, "Memorial of The Board of Managers of the American Indian Mission Association," 29th Cong., 1st Sess., January 13, 1846, Doc. 73, Serial 483, 1.
- <sup>115</sup> Green, *Journal of a Tour*, 10.
- <sup>116</sup> Smedley, *Race in North America*, 174-76.
- <sup>117</sup> Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny*, 190; see also 189-207.
- <sup>118</sup> Lee's testimony July 2, 1844 in Brosnan, , *Jason Lee, Prophet*, 258.
- <sup>119</sup> "Diary of Rev. Jason Lee," 249-50.
- <sup>120</sup> Ibid, 412 and Hovee, *Jason Lee, A Rhetorical Criticism*, 54.
- <sup>121</sup> Carey, "Methodist Reports," 317.
- <sup>122</sup> Letter Jason Lee, February 5, 1834 reprinted *Christian Advocate and Journal*, February 21, 1834 and Hulbert, *The Oregon Crusade*, 136.
- <sup>123</sup> Loewenberg, *Equality on the Oregon Frontier*, 123, 124.
- <sup>124</sup> Harald E. L. Prins, "To the Land of the Mistigoches: American Indians Traveling to Europe in the Age of Exploration," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*, 1993, 175-95.

- <sup>125</sup> *Zion's Herald*, October 17, 1838, IX, 167; *Christian Advocate and Journal*, December 14, 1838, XIII, 66 in Brosnan, *Jason Lee, Prophet*, 98.
- <sup>126</sup> Joseph Holman, The Peoria Party for Oregon in 1839, MS. (Bancroft Library), 1, 2 in Brosnan, *Jason Lee, Prophet*, 101-2.
- <sup>127</sup> *Christian Advocate and Journal*, October 4, 1839, XIV, 102 in Brosnan, *Jason Lee, Prophet*, 111.
- <sup>128</sup> Boyd argues that Chinook Jargon arose because of the complexity of Kiksht, the upper Chinookan dialect at Wascopam, Boyd, *People of The Dalles*, 34.
- <sup>129</sup> "William Brooks' Boston Speech," *Zion's Herald*, February 13, 1839, 27 in Brosnan, *Jason Lee, Prophet*, 112.
- <sup>130</sup> *Ibid*, 121.
- <sup>131</sup> *Ibid*, 124.
- <sup>132</sup> *Ibid*, 137.
- <sup>133</sup> Bernd C. Peyer, *The Tutor'd Mind: Indian Missionary-Writers in Antebellum America* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1997), 20. See also Dale T. Knobel, "Know Nothings and Indians: Strange Bedfellows?," *Western Historical Quarterly* 1984, 175-198.
- <sup>134</sup> *Christian Advocate and Journal*, October 4, 1839, 25; *Columbian Weekly Register*, New Haven, Connecticut, January 12, 1839 in Brosnan, *Jason Lee, Prophet*, 113.
- <sup>135</sup> *Ibid*, note, 140.
- <sup>136</sup> *Ibid*, 258.
- <sup>137</sup> "Petition of Felix Hathaway to Legislative Committee [Oregon Provisional Government], June 28, 1845" in Loewenberg, *Equality on the Oregon*, 134.
- <sup>138</sup> Fessett, *Reports and Letters of Herbert Beaver*, 48-54, 57, 86, 116.
- <sup>139</sup> Loewenberg, *Equality on the Oregon*, 135.
- <sup>140</sup> John Minto, *Early Days of Oregon*, MS P-A 50. The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 9.

- <sup>141</sup> Carey, "Diary of Rev. George Gary," 93.
- <sup>142</sup> Josiah L. Parrish, *Anecdotes of Intercourse with the Indians*, MS P-A 59. The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 16.
- <sup>143</sup> Carey, "Methodist Reports," 357.
- <sup>144</sup> Carey, "Methodist Reports," 359.
- <sup>145</sup> Parrish, *Anecdotes of Intercourse*, 19, 34-47.
- <sup>146</sup> House, "Memorial of The Board of Managers of the American Indian Mission Association," 29th Cong., 1st Sess., January 13, 1846, Doc. 73, Serial 483, 1.
- <sup>147</sup> Minto, *Early Days*, 2, 20-21.
- <sup>148</sup> Edwards, *Sketch of the Oregon*, 6-7.
- <sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*, 19-20.
- <sup>150</sup> Minto, *Early Days*, 6.
- <sup>151</sup> Daniel Lee and J. H. Frost, *Ten Years in Oregon* (New York: J. Collord, 1844), 96, 100, 104-5, 261, 262.
- <sup>152</sup> Carey, "Methodist Reports," 326.
- <sup>153</sup> Lee and Frost, *Ten Years in Oregon*, 140-1. Washington Irving, *Astoria, or Anecdotes of an Enterprise Beyond the Rocky Mountains* (Philadelphia: Carey, Lea, & Blanchard, 1836). Blanchet in Thomas Vaughn, ed., *Paul Kane, The Columbia Wanderer: Sketches, Paintings, and Comment, 1846-1847*, (Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1971), 64-5. Joel Palmer, *Journal of Travels Over the Rocky Mountains*, reprint 1847 ed., (Fairfield, WA: Ye Galleon Press, 1983), 136-141.
- <sup>154</sup> Lee and Frost, *Ten Years in Oregon*, 130-1.
- <sup>155</sup> Hines, *Life on the Plains of the Pacific*, 101-2; Elizabeth Vibert, *Traders' Tales: Narratives of Cultural Encounters in the Columbia Plateau, 1807-1846* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997).
- <sup>156</sup> Hines, *Life on the Plains of the Pacific*, 104-5. See chapter one for a discussion of the massacre.
- <sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*, 105-112.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*, 112-118.

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.*, 117-118.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*, 101-103; speech, 104-105; warning about missionaries, 106.

<sup>161</sup> Fessett, *Reports and Letters of Herbert Beaver*, 78, 31, 22, 85, 131, 129.

<sup>162</sup> For editor's discussion of Harrison, Fessett, *Reports and Letters of Herbert Beaver*, 16.

<sup>163</sup> Carey, "Methodist Reports," 364.

CHAPTER V  
THE COLONIZATION OF *ILLAHEE*, 1843-1851

The Euro-American emigrants of the 1840s who bore the difficulties of the Oregon Trail were not plagued by the paradoxes of Christian mission and colony. Indeed, the missionaries' reports of "vanishing Indians" encouraged their colonial migration, as did faith that the United States would achieve sovereignty over Oregon and grant them the lands of the "doomed race." Over ten thousand migratory Euro-Americans left their homes in the Northeast, Midwest, and Southeast to speculate and cultivate the famed "open" land of the Willamette Valley between 1843 and 1851, quickly claiming full sections of 640 acres or one square-mile of Indian land in the lower Oregon Country.<sup>1</sup> Too large for individual farms, the mammoth land-claims, some as large as 1,920 acres (three square miles), were speculative ventures in which ordinary citizens stood to profit from future land sales to the expected hoards of future emigrants.<sup>2</sup> Earlier eastern colonization had featured the exploits of moneyed land-speculators and corporate enterprise, as these veteran settlers and survivors of the Panic of 1837 well knew and feared. They fled their mortgaged properties and the property taxes imposed by revenue-starved governments during the depression and headed west to the supposed Jeffersonian Promised Land. If the colonists achieved their goal, western Oregon would feature settler-speculators with claims based on physical occupation rather than capital.<sup>3</sup>

Before 1846, the Oregon Question was still unresolved – both the United States and Great Britain continued to share imperial sovereignty<sup>4</sup> – creating a vacuum in which



the growing body of Euro-American colonists shaped their desired system of land tenure. In 1845, the colonists established an idiosyncratic, provisional land office in Oregon City to record claims and sales as well as sundry property-related business deals, marriage contracts, and wills.<sup>5</sup> Officially, the colonists adopted the United States' formal position of "utmost good faith" toward the Native population and pledged not to seize Indian lands without their consent and compensation.<sup>6</sup> In practice, however, they ignored the legal notion of "Indian Country," which recognized Native sovereignty over aboriginal lands until "extinguished" by treaty with the United States Senate. To Euro-American colonists, the Oregon Country was "unsurveyed public domain" not "Indian Country."<sup>7</sup> In fact, colonists sometimes used Native villages and resource sites to mark their private claims in the absence of the formal surveys for which they lacked the equipment and expertise; or, at least, most refused to pay for such functions which were deemed the responsibility of the central government. Others simply included Native villages within their land claims, figuring that a combination of violence, threats, and official "Indian removal" would eventually clear away the Indians.<sup>8</sup> Rarely did Native peoples appear in the provisional claims records, other than having their villages and fishing sites serve as boundary markers. One Klickitat man did manage to have his claim to a lower Willamette prairie recognized in name at least – "Clickita Indian Jacque Prairie," though it is unclear from the land office records if the colonists who settled on his land paid him.<sup>9</sup>

Historical precedent in the East strongly suggested that the colonists would eventually gain title to their land claims, and there was little in western Oregon to suggest

otherwise except for the limited British presence, widely considered temporary.<sup>10</sup> Vicious disease epidemics, primarily malaria, smallpox, and measles, had decimated the several autonomous bands of Kalapuyas, Molallas, Clakamas, and Chinooks between 1830 and the mid-1840s, reducing their numbers from conservatively 15,000 to under 2,000 in the Willamette Valley.<sup>11</sup> Meanwhile, the Euro-American population grew from about 160 men in 1843 to 2,100 men and women in 1844, and continued to explode annually, reaching between 9,000 and 12,000 by 1848 and over 23,000 by 1850;<sup>12</sup> demographically, there was no question as to the balance of power by the late 1840s. Ecologically, pigs and tilling quickly destroyed camas fields, and wild game diminished from the pressures of over-hunting and lost habitat.<sup>13</sup> The environmental changes noted earlier by fur traders increased in pace with demographics. The Euro-Americans commonly referred to the lower Willamette domain as "the settlements," and indeed, they were transforming the environment into a colonial landscape.<sup>14</sup>

Although the fur traders had been employing Native people for decades, Indians of the lower Columbia and Willamette Valley soon came to depend on wage work to supplement their seasonal food procurement by the late 1840s.<sup>15</sup> Colonists readily employed local Indians as cheap laborers on their farms and businesses. Often calling them "pets," the colonists obviously did not much fear Native laborers, particularly the young boys and girls whose positions on colonial homesteads more closely resembled slaves than employees.<sup>16</sup> Still, adult Indians were not passive laborers, and some reportedly took advantage of the increased colonization to double their wages from the early 1840s.<sup>17</sup> Colonists were more ambivalent about the northern Molallas who lived

along the Willamette tributaries in the Cascades foothills and maintained ties with the more numerous and feared Klamaths and Wascos from the south and east who traveled to the Willamette Valley annually for trade, hunting, and gathering. Still, whatever the colonists' trepidations, no conflicts with the Mollalas or their friends occurred before 1848. The colonists also welcomed the labor of the five to six hundred Klickitats who remained in the valley after being attracted from the northeastern Cascades foothills by the fur trade centered at Fort Vancouver. Large numbers of Columbia Plateau Indians such as Yakamas and Spokans similarly came to work each winter on the farms of the Willamette and Cowlitz valleys and in the burgeoning towns of Vancouver and Portland. However, the understanding was that these Indians should leave in the spring and return to the distant lands where they "belonged."<sup>18</sup> The colonists would later force the Klickitats, the largest Native ethnic group in the area, from their occupation of parts of the Willamette, Umpqua, and Coquille valleys and target the Willamette tribes for removal east of the Cascades.

Creating official designations and an enumeration of Indians in the Willamette Valley was an essential part of colonization because it created an aura of legitimacy for the occupation of Indian Country. The Indians officially numbered approximately 2,000 – the tally of local Kalapuyan, Chinookan, and Sahaptian bands – though at any given time there were probably closer to 3,000 or more Native people actually in and around the "settlements." And some, particularly Klickitats, were not so willing to concede the bountiful western valleys to Euro-American colonization. The colonialists' trick, which would emerge most clearly with the 1851 treaty commissions, was to exclude the

Klickitats and others from treaties, effectively deeming them non-indigenous Indians, denying that recently emigrated Native peoples had the right to be there.<sup>19</sup> Colonization was not a "color blind" act; only "whites" could move into the valley and legitimately claim territory. Euro-Americans considered only the so-called "remnants" of local Native populations as aboriginal sovereigns, people whom they could conceivably bully into illicit land cessions with vague promises of future compensation.<sup>20</sup> Still, the Klickitats had their champion in Reverend Josiah Parrish, an evangelist who had not given up on the Methodist Mission in western Oregon even if his Society had. Parrish may have considered his work divine, but his methods were generally secular, using the courts and government administration. In two court cases in Washington County, Parrish persuaded a district court judge to rule in favor of one band of Klickitats, which had laid claim to small tracts in the agriculturally valuable lower Willamette Valley. In the first case, Donald McLeod brought action for trespass against the Klickitats who had destroyed timber, which he had cut for his house in 1851. Unfortunately for McLeod, the judge ruled that he was the trespasser, not the Klickitats, and that he had received prior warning from them not to occupy the claim. Indeed, he ruled that the Klickitats held "right of conquest" over the previous Native occupants, a questionable if effective reading of the impact of disease and migration among the Indians. In the second case, the Klickitats removed and destroyed fencing, and the judge again ruled that the American farmer, who had brought action of trespass, was at fault.<sup>21</sup> The unlikely decisions legitimized Klickitat emigration and granted them an aboriginal land title, at least temporarily. The court did not represent popular opinion, as evident in the settlers'

actions and subsequent clashes. Successive treaty commissioners better reflected settler-colonial *zeitgeist* by placing the Willamette Klickitats under the purview of an imposed identity, the Yakama Nation of the southwestern Columbia Plateau, and insisting on their removal to that region.<sup>22</sup> The missionaries too had played a numbers game when they had dismissed the few thousand Indians in western Oregon as "vanishing," but the colonists were not looking for reasons to abandon a frustrated project. Rather, they sought to legitimize and advance one. By limiting the reporting of Indians, colonists perpetuated the idea that extinguishing Indian title and granting donation lands should be cursory endeavors.

The speculative colonists began dividing and selling their land claims soon after recording them with the provisional land office, as new emigrants arrived seeking farmland in a region increasingly checkered with the sprawling claims. Colonists completed thousands of transactions between 1845 and 1848, before the United States had sole sovereignty or had granted land titles.<sup>23</sup> Many transactions were vague, using phrasing such as, "abandoned by request of [original claimant] in favor of..." without disclosing terms or noted only "valuable consideration," while others spelled out formal indentures and crop liens.<sup>24</sup> Often "fractions of land" were sold, sometimes with pre-built cabins likely constructed by inexpensive Indian and Kanaka laborers.<sup>25</sup> Profits could be considerable given that the colonists had not paid for the land yet sold it for prices ranging from as high as \$2.50 to \$35 per acre, and farms on the Clatsop Plains fetched two to six thousand dollars.<sup>26</sup> Not surprisingly, politics was not far removed from profits; the "founding fathers" of the United States had been among the great land

speculators of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries,<sup>27</sup> so too were the leading lights of Oregon. Future provisional and territorial Oregon governors George Abernethy and George Curry and Supreme Court Justice John Q. Thornton were well represented in several lucrative transactions. Judge Thornton held some expensive townsite lots in Oregon City, once pledging the same lots simultaneously as collateral to three different creditors.<sup>28</sup> He also certified some remarkable deals in which his wife was listed as the official owner, including a claim adjacent to Salem center obtained from Reverend Garry for only \$1 during the latter's dash to divest the Methodists of their holdings.<sup>29</sup> Thornton may have been ahead of his time in supporting the cause for married women's property laws, but more likely, he was hiding assets from creditors using a common method of his day.<sup>30</sup> By the late 1840s, Oregon City lots were arguably the hottest investment in the Willamette Valley, going for \$70 to \$2000 depending on their location and, presumably, the gullibility of the buyer.<sup>31</sup> Entrepreneurs staked-out other less successful townsites, as far away as William Tichenor's lonely Port Orford on the southern Oregon coast, which was supposed to compete with San Francisco as the major West Coast port; it was a time for dreams and schemes.

Euro-Americans saw potential profits in the land both for agriculture and sale but also in the massive timber stands, mineral deposits, abundant salmon runs, and coastal shellfish stocks. Two partners in a land claim who took 1,280 acres formally pledged to leave the timber for future value determination, rightly figuring that the towering conifers would become an important commodity milled and exported from the Willamette Valley via the Columbia River.<sup>32</sup> Others filed claims, clear cut the timber and moved onto the

next claim, a practice facilitated by an 1844 clause that allowed for non-adjointing acreage, specifically 600 acres of farmland and a separate 40 acres of timber.<sup>33</sup> Although felling a 330 foot-tall fir with a 7 foot-diameter base was no minor task, the colonists were successful in bringing the ancient giants down.<sup>34</sup> As early as 1852, James Swan described the forestry detritus evident well offshore in the Pacific "about thirty miles to the westward of the Columbia River...[which carried] in its course great quantities of drift-logs, boards, chips, and saw-dust, with which the whole water around us was covered."<sup>35</sup> Minerals were, of course, another important commodity; and after colonists "discovered" the coal deposits along the upper Siletz River, they were careful to note that claims included the ore.<sup>36</sup> After the land claims spread southward across the Umpqua-Calapooya divide into the Rogue River Valley in 1851, James Cluggage would profit hugely through his claim to the Jacksonville townsite. Although mineral claims were not yet protected by central government administration, the Jacksonville gold-fields, which brought the California Rush to Oregon, were located within Cluggage's land claim, bringing him a huge pay-off in an 1858 lawsuit against townspeople and local miners.<sup>37</sup> The colonists were well aware of the multiple ways in which they could profit from the lands of western Oregon without breaking a sweat behind a plow.

With the fur trade dwindling, the Hudson's Bay Company had experimented with commodifying non-fur-bearing animals, and Euro-American colonists aspired to do the same, relying on Native labor to harvest the salmon and shellfish. Employing Chinook, Chehalis, and Quinault laborers at Shoalwater Bay north of the Columbia's mouth, Charles J.W. Russell began an oyster trade to California in 1851 in which he exported as

much as 20 tons of oysters in a single shipment.<sup>38</sup> Ethnically diverse Native people traveled to the bay for oysters, clams, and crabs for subsistence and for trade with colonists, working their labors for Russell into their regular gathering rounds.<sup>39</sup> Aided by his English-speaking Native wife Suis, Russell also employed Indians, mostly Chinooks, to procure salmon and clean, salt, and package them in crates. James Swan, who wrote of Russell's business and recorded numerous daily interactions with "our copper colored attendants,"<sup>40</sup> did not note any resistance to treating the salmon thusly, although the Indians balked at taking too many salmon in any one location. After taking hundreds at a single camp in one day, hired Chinooks explained that a dead person had spoken during the night, telling them to leave and to take no more. When Russell complained that the sound had been a plover's whistle and not a talking spirit, one man reportedly retorted: "You are a white man, and don't understand what [the dead] say; but Indians know, and they told us not to catch any more salmon."<sup>41</sup> A frustrated Russell had no choice but to oblige and move on. Catching extra salmon for trade was a long established practice among the Native peoples of the Oregon Country and one that necessarily depended on maintaining a sustainable harvest. Russell could find a new commodity to exploit; the Chinooks could not so easily replace the heart of their economic and spiritual world.<sup>42</sup> Suis, "a most remarkable woman, possessing a fund of information in all matters relative to incidents and traditions relating to the Bay,"<sup>43</sup> may have also tried to influence Russell, but he seemed little impressed: the colonial mission was to profit while the getting was good. Indeed, when the going got tough during a smallpox outbreak originating at Clatsop, Russell left for San Francisco, though he (unlike his Native workforce and



presumably his wife) was vaccinated against "that most disgusting and contagious disease."<sup>44</sup> By the mid-1850s, Euro-American colonization was increasing on Shoalwater Bay and elsewhere in the environs of the lower Columbia River. Consequently, although Native labor would still play an important role in the economy for decades as a cheap and easily exploited workforce, it would be less crucial with the influx of thousands of young Euro-American men.<sup>45</sup>

Settlement, that deceptively vague term that often hides the brutal realities of conquest and colonization, was supposedly a Euro-American birthright, one that the people of "manifest destiny" reserved for themselves as "whites."<sup>46</sup> As labor historian Mike Davis has explained, western Europeans of diverse ethnic and religious groups became one race – white – "through the unifying settler-colonial credo that made them all 'CITIZENS.'"<sup>47</sup> United States citizenship bound colonists together and legitimized the seizure of Native lands. Western Oregon in the mid-nineteenth century provides an excellent example of settler-colonialism with its twin goals possession of the land and dispossession of the indigenes. Their land claims that they both worked and divided for sale, their timber, shellfish, and fish harvesting, and their developing strategies of dealing with the local and regional Native population comprised the western Oregon form of settler-colonialism. Their provisional land office, petitions to the federal government, and evolving governmental structure can be considered as folk-imperialism, an attempt at ordering their endeavors based on the institutional and personal memories of colonizing the Old Northwest and Southeast. This folk-imperialism provided the legitimacy and structure for enacting the local manifestation of settler-colonialism.<sup>48</sup>

Not surprisingly, given the historical era of the 1840s and 1850s, republican discourse was readily apparent in the writings and debates of early colonists in the Willamette Valley. Drawing on the rhetoric of classical republicanism, they touted yeoman citizenry and the common good and bemoaned wildcat banking and economic speculations that had caused the financial panics of the day. Indeed, David Johnson influential study of early Oregonians' political rhetoric argues that Oregon settlers put their discourse into practice. According to Johnson, the emigrants to Oregon differed both from the market-oriented easterners whom they left behind and from their fellow overland emigrants who had flocked to Gold Rush California. They were a self-selected, homogenous group of Midwestern farmers that sought to create a society separate from the major changes brought on by nascent capitalism during the era which Charles Sellers has pegged as the "market revolution."<sup>49</sup>

Yet, widely-held beliefs in classical republicanism did not displace or necessarily contradict the liberal economics of speculation by individual citizens. The Oregon citizenry definitely wanted to mitigate the painful disruptions of the market revolution, as noted by Johnson: they were against the market evils they believed inherent to banks and corporations. Such is not surprising; criticisms of the effects of the early market economy seem to have been common. Sean Wilentz, Paul Johnson, and Mary Ryan have shown that attempts to resist and mitigate the social, political, and economic upheavals of the era occurred among groups as diverse as New York City laborers, Rochester merchants, and families of the emerging middle class. However, while I agree with Johnson that the Oregon colonists meant what they said through their republican

language, I disagree that they then differed fundamentally from California colonists or easterners. Their condemnation of large-scale speculations of corporations and banks did not inhibit individual speculations or suggest that the populous was economically anti-liberal and thus unique among their generation of Euro-Americans. As will be further evidenced subsequently regarding federal appropriations, they picked and chose which speculations they deemed appropriate. Put simply, speculation did not necessarily contradict republicanism. As Daniel Feller has observed, citizens of the early republic distrusted excesses but, nevertheless, sought improvement of themselves and society through progress and economic achievement. Importantly, as noted above, this notion of citizenship was racially exclusive, reserved for "whites," and functioned as a unifying factor among the settler-colonists.<sup>50</sup>

The race-colonial equation was complicated by the history of the fur trade, however, which had created a relatively cosmopolitan population in the lower Willamette Valley. The Hudsons Bay Company had brought to the Oregon Country Algonkian and Iroquoian Indians from the East, French Canadians who intermarried with Native Oregon women, and Pacific Islanders (mostly Kanakas but also Tahitians, Maoris, and Aleuts). Additionally, the Euro-American "Rocky Mountain men" who had crossed into the Oregon Country in the late 1820s and 1830s had intermarried with Native communities and, like the French Canadians, had produced a number of mixed-blood children. In the colonization of the Oregon Territory, mixed bloods had obtained a conditional inclusion as citizens and were allowed to pass as members of the "white race." The 1846 Oregon Treaty between the United States and Great Britain established the 49<sup>th</sup> parallel as the

boundary, granting modern Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and western Montana to the Americans. Importantly, the treaty protected the property rights of the Hudson's Bay Company employees: many were mixed-bloods who had established land claims and together with the French Canadians equaled the Euro-American population until the massive emigration of 1844.<sup>51</sup> Throughout the West, the increasing number of free African Americans and the slavery question that ran hand-in-hand with westward expansion complicated the color coding of citizenship, as did the formal inclusion of Tejanos, Californios, and other former Mexicans following the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo. Still, the ephemeral phenomena of "passing" offered few Latinos in the Southwest and mixed bloods in the Northwest long-lasting protections on the ground level.<sup>52</sup>

Official acceptance of mixed bloods did not transcend folk beliefs or translate into reality. Oregon Territory's definition of whiteness, reflected in the early Organic Laws of Oregon regarding citizenship, was that "Every free male descendent of a white man ... shall be entitled to vote ... [and extended] the rights of citizens," thus including mixed bloods.<sup>53</sup> However, as noted in contemporary Oregon Trail guidebooks and governmental reports, the conditional extension of whiteness and citizenship to mixed bloods was not reflected in popular racial thought. Consistently, writers separated mixed bloods from the designation of white when discussing the territory's population.<sup>54</sup> An enduring sentiment, one official baldly explained in 1858 was that, "[w]hen I speak of whites I mean Americans." This distinguished what another had called the "mongrel race" of the Hudson's Bay Company.<sup>55</sup> An emigrant of 1844 stated that as Euro-

American families quickly became the norm, "some of them who had Indian families were rather exiled in civilized society afterwards. Some of them found it more agreeable to go...to their wives' people."<sup>56</sup>

The Euro-American emigrants from the Methodists' "Great Reinforcement" in 1840 through the massive emigrations between 1843 and 1848 increasingly came as families; thus, the early high ratio of Indian-white intermarriage among colonists – 25 of 36 in 1840 – dropped precipitously.<sup>57</sup> Even after the advent of the 1849 California Gold Rush, which attracted thousands of single men to the southwestern Oregon – northern California borderlands in 1851, the intermarriage rates were not very high. At the end of that decade, there were only thirty-two such interracial unions in the six counties of southwestern Oregon, though the sex ratio among Euro-Americans aged fifteen to fifty averaged 3.7 men to 1 woman or 5,268 to 1,428. In the remaining fourteen counties, there were an additional thirty-four intermarriages (including two African-American – Native couples) and the sex ratio among similarly aged Euro-Americans averaged 1.7 men to 1 woman or 12,634 to 7,590.<sup>58</sup> The intermarriage figures account for only official unions, however, and the number of Indian-white cohabitations was likely higher.

Still, there was a compelling reason for Euro-American men to make their marriages to Native women official: the provisional land laws and the subsequent federal version allowed married men to take 640 acre land-claims (320 in the name of the wife) while single men could take only 320 acres.<sup>59</sup> The Oregon Supreme Court upheld the legality of the doubled acreage in the case of Native wives, finding that for the purpose of land law, the race of the Native women was subsumed by the racial identity of their

“white” husbands. In this instance, white patriarchy altered the legal status of the women from “Indians” to the “wives” of citizens and entitled them to 320 acres by virtue of their “wifeship.” To rule otherwise, Justice C. J. Williams reasoned, would effectively make all intermarriages illegal and all the children of such marriages bastards. He opted not to comment on the Native wife’s racial status and property rights in the case of widowhood. He regretted that intermarriages had occurred before Congressional authority had been extended to Oregon Territory because “it is not to be supposed that Congress would, by law, sanction marriages between” the races.<sup>60</sup>

For Native communities, intermarriage would prove to be a mixed blessing. On the one hand, marriage gifts or “bride prices” brought much-needed food and wealth items into the village, and Native wives of Euro-Americans were immune to “Indian removal.” Eventually, interracially married women became the only connection between some tribes and their former homelands. On the other hand, intermarriages, particularly informal unions and temporary arrangements, wreaked havoc with Native formulations of status and identity, as colonists manipulated so-called bride purchases into a form of commodity exchange.<sup>61</sup>

Intermarriage played an important role in shaping interactions between colonials and indigenous peoples, but it is a poorly understood topic that reflects a faulty understanding of Native “bride purchase” practices. Among southwestern Oregon Indians in the nineteenth century, parents and/or local headmen typically arranged marriages, which involved a reciprocal bride price that, in turn, determined the initial status of the children, and the marriages tended to be village exogamous.<sup>62</sup> Marriages,

though monogamous relationships between two individuals, were also, to some extent, communal ventures in that wealthy individuals (or several village members with pooled wealth) often contributed to bride prices for poor local men.<sup>63</sup> The alternative was to lose such men to the wives' villages, which would gain their labors and future children.<sup>64</sup> Importantly, despite the English term, "bride price," Native women were not commodities. Several informants of early "salvage" ethnographers and linguists (ca. 1880-1940) pointed to the agency of women who could refuse their "purchase," manipulate the terms, and leave relationships if they were unsatisfied or abused.<sup>65</sup> Indeed, bride price had much to do with children. It was the children's social status, much more than their mothers, which was closely tied into the supposed marriage by "purchase."

As the bride price was a reciprocal (though not necessarily equal) exchange, the child had an ascribed status from both sides of his or her parentage. Indeed, in some cases, a further payment was owed to the woman's family upon her first birth.<sup>66</sup> Children of single mothers ("unpurchased" women) suffered the pains of low status. Nettie West stated that a Coos child born to a single mother was *itiasre* or "nobody's child," a very deprecating stigma for children. The stigma, according to West, was erased only by the "purchase" of the mother; notably, the pre-marital status of the mother at conception was irrelevant.<sup>67</sup> Agnes Johnson put it succinctly, "If [mothers] not bought, children are bastards."<sup>68</sup> Suggesting the importance of avoiding bastard status, Coquel Thompson told John Harrington, "If a man knocks up my daughter and [is] going to marry her, it is all right with me, I let him go, but if he does not, then...I can kill him."<sup>69</sup> Thompson later

added that the stigma carried a dangerous correlate when the child became an adult. Just as the Coquille word became the same for bastard as "half-breed," the punishment for killing either people (bastard or mixed blood) was equally low – a relatively small fine or a hair cut. Obviously, the cutting of hair was significant to the people at the time but Thompson intimated that it was a relatively small punishment compared with killing someone of "importance."<sup>70</sup> Further demonstrating the connection between bride price and child status, H. G. Barnett's informant Tom McDonald warned that a divorced man did not necessarily want to recover the bride price immediately because his ex-wife may have been pregnant. Regardless of marital status at the time of conception, "if no money left, [the] child would be a bastard...You gave money so people could respect your child."<sup>71</sup> Thus, the husband would doom his child to bastard status by retrieving the bride price. According to Agnes Johnson (Coos), Frank Drew (Coos and Siuslaw) and an anonymous Tolowa informant, the bride price was partially refunded if the first child died or was stillborn.<sup>72</sup> Indeed, further evidencing the direct connection between bride price and children, a Tolowa man was expected to "buy" his wife "over again" with the money returned to him by her family. Clearly other factors such as women's labor and what might be termed alliances (for trade, warfare or resource use) also played a role in marriage arrangements, but the main reason for the institution of bride purchases seems to have been children. Perhaps because women were the indirect focus of the bridal purchase system (despite outward appearances), they could find a small degree of maneuverability evident in refusals to marry or special arrangements. Evidently, wealthy men could alter this system to fit their needs.<sup>73</sup> Death customs suggest that bride price



represented an emotional link between families, not simply a monetary exchange for the woman. If a woman died, her family sent another woman to the man to prevent him from requesting the return of the bridal price – a deep insult. Lotson stated that the deceased woman's family could become so incensed by the man's request for his "money back" that the "wife's side gets mad – might get after him, might kill him."<sup>74</sup> Finally, throughout the Oregon Country, marriages presupposed continued visiting among newly established kin and the bride price was predicated on ongoing reciprocal exchanges.

During Euro-American colonization, the complex traditions of bride gifts, reciprocity, and establishing and maintaining important, kin connections mutated into the outright purchase of Indian women.<sup>75</sup> The choice of these women and their families consisted of denying a marriage that would bring much needed supplies (the bride price typically consisting of blankets or food) or accepting white men of questionable intent. One settler, Richard Cannon recalled that, "[m]ost of these squaw wives were bought from the Indian father for a consideration such as: one or more ponies, a blanket, food, or supplies, depending upon how desirable the girl was."<sup>76</sup> Judge Mann stated that the Indian women "could be purchased ... for a few pairs of blankets." Then, the new couple lived, "clandestinely without any marriage ceremony."<sup>77</sup> Such inter-racial marriages were arguably the first bride purchases of Indian women in southwestern Oregon, using the strictest definition of the phrase in the language in which it was constructed.

Native women became another exploitable resource for procuring berries, eggs, fresh fish, and game for colonists, but also for sexual labor. As one colonist put it: "[w]e were all bachelors...[and] there were but few white females in that part of Oregon in

1852. But there used to be a great many Indians...and a good many loose squaws would come around the ferry to beg and trade, and they liked whiskey whenever they get it."<sup>78</sup> Early colonists stated that the trade visits of these Indian women were common because some popular items among Euro-Americans were too difficult to get themselves such as, "Blackberries and Raspberries [that] were scarce in the valley although plentiful in the hills."<sup>79</sup> Further, the Indians commonly stopped for social visits following long established custom in southwestern Oregon. Among the miners, these trade and social visits took on another meaning. Reinhart stated that some of these women accepted whiskey in payment. This trade apparently led to "licentiousness and debauchery," with the tragic results of rapes, alcoholism and widespread venereal disease.<sup>80</sup> Annie Miner Peterson, related one such story of a fellow Indian woman, Kitty Hayes. (Anthropologist Melville Jacobs added the parenthetical clarifications to his transcriptions.) After her husband and children died, Kitty became a "bad (loose, drunken) woman. She lay drunken all the time. Then she became ill. She did everything (prostituted) for nothing (i.e., for drink). She was just completely drunken all the time. Then she died poor. (She was about forty at her death.)"<sup>81</sup> Although Hayes lived out her tragic life some years after Reinhart's reputed trade arrangements, one can reasonably assume that similar dynamics were involved. The environmental effects of Euro-American agricultural and mining activities exacerbated the inequality between Indian women and Euro-American men. A broad range of colonial activities decimated traditional economic activities such as mining sluices, which clogged and polluted streams inhibiting fish runs and spawning activity and cattle, which trampled and devoured camas fields. Some Native bands

literally faced starvation as a result.<sup>82</sup> In this desperate state, some Indian women prostituted themselves for food and, increasingly, whiskey. Their actions, while understandable, reinforced the stereotype of the “loose squaw.” Reinhart provided an excellent example of such a desperate situation in the upper Umpqua region.

I had got through dinner, and the man, Ashcraft by name, was alone with me, when two squaws and a little girl came to camp. One was an old woman; one about twenty, blind of one eye, and the little girl about seven or eight years old. They were begging for bread, flour, or sugar. Ashcraft for fun asked them some questions, and the old woman said the young woman *would* for some bread and a handkerchief or some sugar. They sat by the fire and eat some bread and meat we give them, and Ashcraft went off with the one-eyed one.<sup>83</sup>

Reinhart commented that a “chief” came to their camp requesting that the miners not molest “their squaws.”<sup>84</sup> The detrimental environmental impact of white mining and settlement activities, which caused desperate conditions for the Indians, combined with general stereotypes about Indian women and poorly understood Native Oregon gender roles to create the “squaw” – ready for exploitation by colonists.<sup>85</sup>

Children of white fathers and Indian mothers created another dilemma for Native communities when they were not born within a marriage, as often occurred. As mentioned, the Coquille used the same word for “half-breed” as “bastard” confirming the low status of the children of these inter-racial sexual relations.<sup>86</sup> Lottie Evanoff related the parentage of fellow Harrington informant Frank Drew whose Umpqua mother had gone “home from Yachats to visit at Umpqua, and some white man knocked [her] up there, and kept on going. And she returned to Yachats to have her baby.”<sup>87</sup> Evanoff explained that Drew’s mother and twin brother died during childbirth and that “[t]hey were going to throw [him] in the hole with his mother cause he was a bastard kid.”<sup>88</sup> Relatives adopted and raised Drew, however. Interestingly, Evanoff drew a correlation between these white men and the cultural trickster Coyote, “The early whites here were

just like coyote – they would make a baby and then just keep on going. Coyote did this too.”<sup>89</sup> This comparison possibly resulted from the devastation and lack of control over events that linked the mythical “creation” era of Coyote to Euro-American colonization. Such sentiments led to vast over generalizations such as Evanoff’s statement that “All people in my country have no father” and her statement that “You know those old half-breeds, none of them know who was their father.”<sup>90</sup> Such was likely the derivation of the curious appellation by the Coos for Euro-Americans, “moving people,” which some scholars have viewed as a reference to their bustling pioneer endeavors but may be instead a derisive comment on their paternity.<sup>91</sup> The place of mixed heritage individuals was undetermined for Native and colonial societies in the first two decades of colonization; they were in some sense non-entities. They often lacked status within Indian communities, and government officials ignored them in enumerating Indians. Among the Chinooks, for example, mixed bloods would have doubled their numbers in the treaty census of 1851; but as discussed earlier, such would hardly benefit the colonial cause.<sup>92</sup>

Successive colonial governments from the provisional “wolf” assembly (1843–48) to the federally recognized territorial government (1848–58) to the state constitution of 1859 explicitly used “white” as a criterion for citizenship and thus for holding and protecting property.<sup>93</sup> The Euro-American colonists barred the hundreds of Kanakas from taking claims.<sup>94</sup> The Kanakas were residing in the country as current and former contract-laborers for the Hudson’s Bay Company. Euro-American colonists subsequently employed them as cheap laborers, boarding them or renting them living space instead of allowing them property ownership. Illicit minority-squatter communities such as “Kanaka Flats” outside of Jacksonville comprised of Native Hawai’ians, dispossessed Indians, Chinese, and unrespectable white “squawmen” provided additional though

precarious and temporary homes.<sup>95</sup> The colonists banned African Americans from settlement, as they would the Chinese in the state constitution of 1859. The ban on African Americans was not a means of avoiding the Slavery Question, as one colonist put it: "poor whites...hated slavery, but ...hated *free negroes* worse."<sup>96</sup> Indeed in 1857, Oregon voters cast two separate ballots on slavery (per the "popular sovereignty law" of the 1850 Compromise) and on allowing free African Americans in the territory. Slavery was defeated in all counties 7,727 to 2,645 (74%), and "free negroes" were banned by a greater majority, 8,594 to 1,081 (89%).<sup>97</sup> When Oregon territorial representative Samuel Thurston debated the Donation Land Act of 1850 on the House floor, he carefully explained his Oregon constituents' views on race and settlement. He argued for the phrase "American citizen" in establishing land claims. Otherwise, the land law "would give land to every servant of the Hudson's Bay Company, including some hundreds of Canakers [Kanakas], or Sandwich Islanders, who are a race of men as black as your negroes of the South, and a race, too, that we do not desire to settle in Oregon." Making clear the connection to the 1790 Naturalization Act, which allowed only "whites" to become citizens, he stated "If we are to give lands, let it be to American citizens by birth and those who will become so by naturalization." Further, "I am not for giving land to Sandwich Islanders or negroes...Our Legislature passed a law at its first session, excluding free negroes; that law I approve, the people there approve it." Thurston then explained a home-grown Oregon racial alchemy in which "the Canakers and negroes, if allowed to come there, will commingle with our Indians, a mixed race will ensue, and the result will be wars and bloodshed in Oregon. The members of our Legislature foresaw this, and, like wise men as they were, they guarded against it."<sup>98</sup> In other words, the supposedly inferior, savage races would naturally combine and form a sort of Super-Rogue, and deny American citizens ("whites") the security of their birthright. He also

explained that at the very least banning "any free negro...[was] a matter of protection to themselves against the injurious influences which are exercised over the Indian race, inclining them against the whites."<sup>99</sup> This latter comment probably referenced the colonization of the Deep South, particularly Florida, where escaped slaves joined with Seminoles to resist Euro-American colonization.

Indeed, the Oregon situation came to resemble Florida, if not by design of the central government than by the practice of the Euro-American colonists. In the case of the so-called "Armed Occupation Act of Florida," Congress went so far as to use Euro-American settlement as a means of exterminating Seminole Indians who refused to "remove" to Indian Territory. During the so-called "Second Seminole War" of 1835 – 1842, Colonel William J. Worth waged a brutal campaign in the summer of 1841, initiating a scorched-earth policy torching villages and crops and preventing the harvest of wild foods by constantly assailing the Seminoles. By the following spring, only about 250 Seminoles were estimated to have survived the late campaign and a resulting hungry winter. President John Tyler advised Congress that "further pursuit of these miserable beings by a large military force seems to be as injudicious as it is unavailing." Worth proclaimed the war over in August 1842; it had cost the lives of thousands and \$20 million.<sup>100</sup> After the official end of the war, Congress found it cheaper to allow settlers to "solve" the remaining "Indian problem" through private wars paid with land bounties: the armed occupation act. The well-established tradition of using land bounties to pay individuals for military service mutated into an outright call for armed occupation by "any [white] man capable of bearing arms." The act of 1842 made available 200,000 acres as bounty "to provide for the armed occupation and settlement of the unsettled parts" south of Gainesville. Public land historian Paul W. Gates argued that the Oregon Donation Acts (as well as the related measures regarding Washington and New Mexico

Territories) were related to the earlier Florida act. All were intended to "help to reduce the Indian menace" while encouraging Euro-American settlement in dangerous areas.<sup>101</sup> The link between Florida and Oregon was not lost on contemporary citizens. Charles Drew, who would emerge as one of the most vehement advocates of Indian extermination among the citizens of southwestern Oregon, twice compared the situation in the Rogue River Valley with the "Seminole Wars" of Florida in one of his infamous diatribes against the Indians "infesting" the region.<sup>102</sup> Drew's Oregon-Florida comparison was matched by articles locally in the *Oregon Statesman* and nationally in the *Army and Navy Journal*.<sup>103</sup>

Land bounties, properties donated to citizens for military service against foreign nations and federally sanctioned wars against Indian nations, were obviously not new in the 1840s. Since the American Revolution, land was the primary means for the central government to pay its soldiers, and by October 1851, land bounties exceeded a staggering 16 million acres, compared with 3.4 million then reserved for Indians.<sup>104</sup> By the 1840s, land bounties served the purpose of conquest and "occupation" at little cost to the central government, as seen in Florida. Similarly, in May 1848, after an appeal from the territorial government of Oregon for military aid, President Polk recommended that Congress allow the issuance of land bounties to men willing to stake claims in Cayuse country, a Native people with whom Euro-American-Oregon considered itself at war.<sup>105</sup> That particular move was a flop as most Euro-American men who served in the so-called Cayuse War of 1848 had already staked claims in the arable Willamette Valley through the provisional government's land office.<sup>106</sup> Indeed the object of the Oregon settlers' campaign against the Cayuse, according to Governor Abernethy, was "to keep the Indians busy in protecting their families and stock in their own country, and by this means keep them out of the [Willamette] valley."<sup>107</sup> As well, the torched and plundered properties of

the Protestant missions and neighboring ranches as well as the limited success of the Oregon militia in the war did not bode well for the successful colonization of the Columbia Plateau at that point. Nevertheless, Polk's equation of Oregon colonization and "occupation" land bounties demonstrates the extent to which the central government sanctioned and encouraged private militancy or settler-colonialism in Indian Country regardless of its pledge of "utmost good faith."

When news of the Whitman Massacre arrived in Oregon City in November 1847, Oregon's provisional government created its first in a long line of volunteer militias to campaign illicitly in Indian Country without permission or direction from the United States Army. Polk's support was *ex post facto*. At the time, the regular army buttressed by several state militias was busy seizing the northern third of Mexico, leaving Oregon's provisional government on its own militarily and unwittingly contributing to a tradition of independent militarism that federal officials would later have difficulty stopping. The Willamette Valley militia called their retributive expedition to the Columbia Plateau: the Cayuse War.

Euro-American colonists sought vengeance following the Whitman Massacre and subsequent raids including one on The Dalles, a mission station and a recent extension of colonial settlements of the Willamette Valley. A group of Native men from Cayuse, Wallawalla, and Shoshone bands had killed and captured several Euro-Americans and destroyed mission and colonial property on the Columbia Plateau. By their own admission, the Indians were retaliating for a raging disease epidemic for which many blamed the colonials. The colonists' ensuing six-month campaign failed to achieve the desired vengeance against the perpetrators of the massacre. However, all of the Euro-American captives of Teloukaikt and his colleagues were retrieved, though Hudson's Bay Company trader Peter Skene Ogden had effected this success diplomatically on his own



before the militia began its campaign of retributive violence. Indeed, the freed captives' salacious accounts of murder, rape, and forced marriage contributed to a public clamor for the extermination of the offending Cayuse instead of an alternative scenario in which the captives' safe return circumvented further bloodshed, which had been the hope of Ogden, Teloukliakt, Five Ravens, and others. The provisional government raised a militia and attempted to get help from Euro-Americans in Alta California and the United States. After two brief fights, successful peace negotiations between several Plateau Sahaptian bands and the provisional government's "Peace Commission" occurred at the Hudson's Bay Company's Fort Nez Perce (alternatively Fort Walla Walla) in early March 1848. Satisfied that he would not face a substantial pan-Indian force, Colonel Cornelius Gilliam continued his militia campaign to track down the perpetrators of the massacre, fought 400 Palus Indians on the Snake River (a case of mistaken identity), then retreated southward across the Columbia River. The militia maintained a presence in the Grande Ronde Valley to protect seasonal emigrant parties that typically arrived in late summer.<sup>108</sup> As discussed in the next chapter, this practice would continue through the mid-1850s on the northern emigrant route across the Columbia Plateau and the southern route across the Klamath Basin into the Rogue River Valley, engendering more conflicts than it prevented. After the colonists' "war" had sputtered to a halt, the provisional government declared peace established on July 5, 1848, and offered bounty lands in Cayuse country to volunteer militiamen if they would remain as guards. Few were interested, as mentioned; the Willamette Valley was still "open," most of the militiamen had claims there, and the Plateau seemed a dangerous place for Euro-American colonization. Thanks to the restraint of numerous Plateau headmen and their bands, the efforts of the Peace Commissioners of the provisional government, and Ogden, the so-called war did not flare up into a wider conflict more deserving of the name.

The colonial wars of the Willamette Valley or as one pioneer called them the "contest of races in Western Oregon"<sup>109</sup> were relatively minor affairs. In midsummer of 1846, a band of Chinookan Wascos from the Wascopam or The Dalles had moved into the headwaters of the Santiam River in the foothills east of the Salem settlements. Likely, the Wascos were only in the area on a seasonal hunting and berry-picking excursion, as Plateau peoples had used the comparatively lush western valleys and foothills at least since the earliest records of Fort Astoria in 1811; indeed, their seasonal use almost certainly dates back thousands of years. Euro-Americans nevertheless resisted the incursion into their claimed territory, and a company of "Oregon Rangers" engaged them at what is still known as Battle Creek, though the confrontation barely deserved the moniker. The militia wounded one Wasco man and temporarily lost one of their own when he fainted from the heat and excitement. The "battle" ended with the Euro-Americans paying a horse to the family of the wounded Wasco man in recompense for having shot him; such was the only acceptable alternative to a blood feud in much of Native Oregon or *Illahaee*. The Wascos had not shot any volunteers. The militia may have gained some sense of accomplishment from the Wasco band's eventual withdrawal back to the Wascopam, though such was probably planned anyway.<sup>110</sup>

During the Cayuse War in early March 1848, another citizen militia attacked a group of Indians in the environs of the lower Willamette, supposedly defending their land claims from invaders. The militia surprised and murdered a number of "Koosta's" band of Molallas camped on Abiqua Creek in the foothills east of the Euro-American settlements of Oregon City and Molalla. Individual homesteads had recently extended eastward from the Willamette River as Euro-Americans claimed a number of sprawling 640-acre properties along Abiqua Creek by 1848.<sup>111</sup> Sahaptians, the Molallas had emigrated westward from the Columbia Plateau into the Cascade foothills in the

eighteenth-century, probably as a result of Shoshone ("Snake") raids. (The Shoshones acquired horses from the Spanish borderlands and brought them to the Oregon Country. The *Illahaee* first confronted by Euro-Americans was much affected by their earlier raids.) The Molallas had by the 1840s become middlemen of sorts between Native traders from the Wascopam and Klamath Basin, and not surprisingly, Koosta had married a Klamath Lake woman. Thus, his band of Molallas commonly hosted Klamaths as well as fellow Sahaptian-speakers from the Columbia Plateau. During the war hysteria of 1848, Euro-Americans became convinced that a pan-tribal plot would result in an attack on the Willamette Valley while the main militia was campaigning on the Plateau. Problems with Klamaths, relatives of Koosta's wife, who were visiting the Molalla camp on Abiqua Creek thus took on greater significance than normally would have been the case. Apparently, some of the young Klamath visitors had scared settlers on Abiqua Creek by supposedly taking pot shots at cabins, wearing paint and yelling while riding their horses, and killing a cow. As well, "Cayuse emissaries" were rumored to be at Koosta's camp to entice him to attack the settlements. Margaret Hutchins, the daughter of Koosta and his (unfortunately anonymous) Klamath wife, later stated that the Cayuses were actually visiting Wascos. At the time, however, no colonists bothered to ask.<sup>112</sup>

In a practice that was becoming increasingly common by 1848, local colonists formed a militia and began shooting indiscriminately at any Indians seen along Abiqua Creek and the surrounding area. Over two days, the militia shot at least ten people, though as one contemporary stated, "It is impossible to say with certainty how many Indians were killed as the whites were much divided" of opinion. At least three of the dead were women and "None of [the militiamen] were quite certain whether the Indians killed were of those that should have been killed." Presumably, the ones who "deserved" death were the Klamath visitors and supposed Cayuse emissaries. One colonist explained

that "[i]ndeed killing the Indians was not the object, so much, as driving them off to their own country, which was done most effectually."<sup>113</sup> The Willamette Valley was for Euro-Americans and the few local bands that behaved in an acceptable manner (i.e., furnishing cheap labor and wild foods for trade.) Still, as will be seen, the Willamette Valley tribes were not to be permitted to retain even the smallest portion their homelands.

Ultimately, the larger significance of the Cayuse War for Euro-Americans lay with the nationalist political campaign the colonists waged during and after the hostilities. Waving the Whitman Massacre and their military exploits around like bloody flags proving both their need for protection and their dedication to United States sovereignty, the colonists urgently pushed a reluctant and divided Congress for territorial recognition. In their petitions for territorial status, they consistently used the rhetoric of citizenship to legitimize their claims, to request army forts to protect emigration routes, and treaty commissioners to clear away the Indians and their land titles. In a memorial of December 29, 1847, the provisional assembly deemed the Cayuse War a dilemma requiring an immediate solution. The citizens of Oregon demanded absolute possession of western Oregon: such was their Euro-American birthright. Not surprisingly in the December memorial, they stressed the pressing need for their pet legislation, the Donation Land bill, which would formally grant them the massive land holdings that they had already claimed through their provisional land office. In recommending quick action on behalf of Oregon, President James Polk on May 29, 1848, pressed Congress to establish a territorial government, extend land bounties to volunteer militiamen who remained on the Plateau in Cayuse country, and appoint treaty commissioners to extinguish Indian title to western Oregon.<sup>114</sup> After years of ignoring the matter, exaggerated accounts of the "Cayuse War" finally convinced Congress of the urgency to end Oregon's indeterminate governmental status and it formally created the Oregon Territory on August 14, 1848.

The new territory of Oregon lost no time in pressing Congress and the national treasury for full reimbursement of their war effort. On October 31, 1848, the territorial assembly passed an act creating a claims commission to begin gathering evidence of expenses. In a memorial the following summer in 1849, the legislature advised Congress that the bill could be as high as \$200,000 but they assured that "the most rigid and scrupulous economy" had been followed in the prosecution of a war fought by "citizens...in the public cause."<sup>115</sup> The assembly eventually whittled their request down to \$87,230.53. Congress generously appropriated an even \$100,000 on February 14, 1851, although two more Congressional acts in 1852 and 1853 were necessary before Oregon officials could meet the increasingly loosened burden of proof required by the Comptrollers Office of the Treasury Department. The remuneration was finally allocated in March 1853. Soon after receiving these monies, the territorial government discovered more expenses and pressed for another \$30,000, which they received in March 1854.<sup>116</sup> With their massive land claims nearing legitimacy, their militia effort well covered financially, and the Native peoples of Oregon vilified nationally, the Willamette Valley settlers had done well by their Cayuse War.

The territory also dispatched Representative Samuel Thurston to Washington, D.C. to secure congressional approval of the colonists' economic speculations. From December 1849 through June 1850, Thurston "electioneered" daily sometimes until midnight to gain senatorial approval for an Indian treaty commission and the appointment of Anson Dart as Superintendent to conduct the negotiations. Dart was told to effect the extinguishment of Indian land title and the removal of the western Oregon Indians to the more arid Columbia Plateau east of the Cascades Mountains.<sup>117</sup> Dying enroute back to Oregon, Thurston did not witness his hard work on Oregon Indian affairs undone by Native negotiators, people whom one senator had dismissed as "inconsequential."<sup>118</sup>

To provide order to colonization and speculative land deals, the United States government had adapted the British imperial policy of “extinguishing Indian title” to aboriginal holdings, a formal-legal termination of indigenous peoples’ claims to their homelands. From a treaty system based on mutual recognition of national sovereignty – indigenous and colonial – to public land transfers, “real property” legally passed from the possession of Indians to the central government to the Euro-American citizenry. United States law dictated that only the Senate could authorize treaty commissions with indigenous nations and that prior to senatorial treaty ratification, western lands were legally “Indian Country.” Experience taught the necessity of keeping power away from self-interested, private citizens, though in reality the differences between private and public interests were shady at best. However, as presented above, Euro-American settlers had already completed hundreds of illicit land transactions among themselves, though the Oregon Country was legally Indian Country.

Although the competing imperial powers of the United States and Great Britain had divided the region between themselves in the treaty of 1846, Congress had not yet performed the legalistic colonial alchemy that transformed indigenous homelands into United States “public domain.” Perfected in 1841, the formula required a three-step process performed in order: a senate-approved treaty commission to “extinguish” Indian title, an official “survey” of the land to translate it into a series of grid lines, and a disposal of the resulting “public domain” through sales, bounties, and donations.<sup>119</sup> Euro-American colonists disrupted the concoction by skipping the first two steps of the formula and seizing sprawling land-claims as the supposed birthright of their citizenship and race.

Oregon’s Donation Land Act of 1850, then, had to be an exception to the rule. Unlike similar contemporary legislation regarding the disposition of the public lands in

the territories of Kansas and Nebraska in 1854, Congress omitted the ordering stipulations of section 10 of the 1841 preemption law from the Oregon legislation. Aware that the cat was already out of the bag, Congress passed the 1850 donation land law without the requisite stipulations governing the order of treaties with Indians, extinguishment of Indian land-title, and government surveys before settlement. Indeed, thanks to the tenacious daily lobbying or "electioneering" of Thurston, Congress acted as if the Indians and their claims were a mere formality to be accounted for on paper. In early May 1850, with Thurston's assiduous urging, Congress passed Senate bill 197 "to amend the act of 4th September, 1841, granting preemption rights to settlers on the public lands." Largely a procedural move, Congress could then move onto the donation land law and the requisite law providing for a treaty commission. According to the House Journal for May 29, 1850, the house heard both bills the same day. House bill 250 "to create the office of surveyor general of the public lands in Oregon, and to provide for the survey, and to make donations to settlers, of the said public lands" was the precursor to the donation land law. Senate bill 90 entitled "An act authorizing the negotiation of treaties with the Indian tribes in the Territory of Oregon for the extinguishment of their claims to lands lying west of the Cascade mountains, and for other purposes" met the Senate's official obligations regarding Indians and their lands. That both bills were presented together and the manner with which Congress dispensed with section 10 of the 1841 law speaks volumes about how seriously the legislators took issues concerning Native sovereignty by mid-century.<sup>120</sup> The only reason that the Senate's treaty commission law passed in early June while the donation land law not until late September was probably procedural. Laws affecting territories and public lands had to pass through layers of House committees, whereas congressional approval of Indian treaty commissions was a simpler process, though still requiring constant pressure on

ambivalent eastern senators. Thurston had to lobby hard for the support of a few key Senators get his Indian bill reported. Once accomplished, however, approval of the treaty commission was easy.

Ratification was another matter: When the nineteen treaties arrived back from Oregon in the summer of 1852, the Senate sat on them for two years, failing to ratify them before events in Oregon made them nearly irrelevant.<sup>121</sup> There were a few reasons for the Senate's inaction. First, the Senate faced a daunting number of treaties in the early 1850s as the war with Mexico and increased settlement of the eastern and southern Plains meant a huge expense, though Native people received a pittance of their land's actual value. As of January 1850, the government had paid \$61,121,717.12 for land purchased from Indians and foreign nations (the majority of the expense probably paid to Mexico, Spain, and France) and expended \$6,369,838.07 for surveying and \$7,466,324.19 for its land sale system for a total cost of \$74,957,879.38. Still, the net profit from disposing of the public domain equaled \$60,381,213.79.<sup>122</sup> In an 1850 debate over treaties extinguishing Native claims to Minnesota, one senator worried about busting the treasury through massive outlays to Indian tribes while another countered that "if this Government could buy these lands for ten cents an acre, it would be the most splendid speculation they ever entered into."<sup>123</sup> In the case of Oregon, however, the Donation Land Act meant that the federal government would not profit from its outlay. Thus, the Oregon treaties were not profitable ventures for the Treasury, and there was some question whether the Indians of western Oregon were worth the bother and expense.

While the Native population figures were indeed vastly smaller than many tribes between the Cascades Mountains and the Mississippi River, the Chinookan and Kalapuyan peoples of western Oregon Territory proved themselves anything but inconsequential. They outmaneuvered the colonists' political machinations and undid six



difficult months of Thurston's lobbying by forcing Dart into treaty concessions that were unacceptable to the Oregon citizenry. Demonstrating their grasp of Oregon settler-colonialism by 1851, the Clatsops explained that the speculative land sales by which Euro-Americans were making "much money" – two to six thousand dollars in some transactions, according to the Clatsops – were not benefiting them, though they had allowed this business in their country. They referred specifically to the Clatsop Plains, coastal valley lands enriched with deep topsoil and laden with massive timber stands and streams that ran throughout the summer, land long praised in the writings of Lewis and Clark, Washington Irving, and the Methodist missionaries. Indeed, one of the treaty commissioners Reverend Josiah Parrish had a 640-acre claim there (which he subsequently traded for two promising Oregon City lots) as did other former Methodist Mission associates and more recent emigrants who benefited from the missionaries' initial colonization.<sup>124</sup> Before the Clatsops would treat, they demanded that commercial traffic on the Columbia cease and two sawmills removed because they had "frightened the fish away!" The mills and the salmon depended on the same waters, and the latter were already losing the conflict by 1851. Dart claims he had difficulty convincing them of the "impossibility of...their demands," though it seems more likely that Clatsops were simply bargaining. The Clatsop Plains were already lost to them: colonists had claimed "nearly or quite every acre," and the Clatsops' subsequent counter-offer included only their burial grounds and lodges at Point Adams, which would ensure access to the Columbia fish runs. Although three Euro-American colonists had laid claim to the area, Dart recognized that they were inconsequential compared to the half million acres of farmland and timber stands that the Clatsops were prepared to cede. In effect, the Clatsops only ceded what had already been taken from them, and by issuing "impossible" demands they had secured a small core of their homeland and the removal of three

troublesome land claims.<sup>125</sup>

The Chinooks agreed to cede their homelands to the United States in exchange for annuities but similarly negotiated what they wanted. They retained their principal surviving village, usufruct rights to fishing sites, timber stands, grazing lands, cranberry marshes, and even arable lands for future cultivation. The Chinooks noted their value to the colonists as laborers and Dart agreed that since the "Indians make all the [fencing] rails...and do the greater part of the labour in farming" that the colonial economy would suffer from their removal. Instead, the Chinooks insisted upon the removal of a Euro-American colonist named Washington Hall who had filed a land claim encompassing their village, damned up their fresh water, and generally acted obnoxiously among them. Hall's haughtiness was despite his marriage to a slave, a bond that completely undermined his pretensions to high status among the Chinooks. Notably, the Chinooks also flipped the "vanishing Indian" thesis on its head. They acknowledged that their population of 320 (the official figure excluded mixed-bloods and slaves) was vastly smaller than it had been twenty years earlier and that the federal government had the power to exterminate them if it chose. Indeed, they used this position of claimed inferiority to push Dart into promising a speedy delivery of the treaty stipulations before they disappeared from the earth. Incredibly, Dart attributed their death rates, which had indeed soared catastrophically between 1834 and 1851, not to disease but to salmon, which "tends much to shortening their lives." The only part of the negotiations to which Dart seemed successful was preventing the Chinook women, all of whom participated in the negotiations, from signing the treaty.<sup>126</sup>

In his treaties with the Clatsops and Chinooks, Dart agreed to create a permanent Indian Country on both banks of the lower Columbia and was forced to promise the removal of Euro-American colonists – the complete opposite of what his instructions had

been! Dart did not fare any better among the Clackamas or any of the other Willamette Valley peoples, all of whom insisted on retaining small reservations within the hearts of their former homelands, which were now largely claimed by colonists.

By forcing Dart to concede to "colonist removal" and securing parcels of Native homelands as permanent reservations, the Indians, knowingly or not, negotiated treaties that were not passable. The Senate simply would not ratify Indian treaties without extensive "electioneering," the constant lobbying pressure needed to get support from key senators, most of whom were easterners far more concerned with the Slavery Question than far-western Indians who were generally reported to be going extinct. In the immediate aftermath of the Compromise of 1850 with the entrance of California into statehood, Oregon land legislation (of which Indian treaties were an essential part) threatened to reopen unhealed sectionalist political wounds. Thurston had had to walk a fine line in the winter of 1849-1850 to achieve his Indian commission, assuaging senators from Ohio, Alabama, and Tennessee. Oregon's territorial government did not support the treaties – western Oregon was meant to be the Jeffersonian Promised Land not Indian Country. Thus, Thurston's tireless lobbying efforts were not replicated in support of the nineteen treaties. They were ignored in Washington, D.C. and Superintendent Dart resigned from office in disgrace.

The nineteen bands of Chinookan, Kalapuyan, Salishan, Sahaptian, and Athapaskan peoples of the lower Columbia and Willamette environs had demonstrated that they were a people of history. They were prepared to change with the times and sought to recreate Indian places within colonial Oregon, *nesika illahee* "our land," as the confederated tribes of Siletz would come to call their piece of Indian Country. However, the Oregon of the 1850s was not that of the fur trade before the epidemics of the 1830s had so decimated the Native population. The Indians caught their first glimpse of how

far their power to negotiate had slipped when their efforts were simply ignored: the colonists continued to stream into their lands, pushing them further away from resource sites and no funds arrived in compensation. The pain was not only economic.

Economically important places did not just offer the best local eel, salmon, camas, or huckleberry harvesting: each place housed a specific spiritual being with whom the local population had long maintained a reciprocal relationship that was crucial to constructions of identity. These foundational relationships between people and place could take different forms such as the so-called world-renewal cult of the southern Oregon – northern California borderlands. “Formulists” were people, notably not full-time medicine makers or shamans, but rather individuals who, in a non-western sense, owned a resource site (often in conjunction with an extended family and/or village). Their usufruct ownership included controlling and distributing the fruits of the site. In ceremonies that released and renewed the giving power of the place, the formulists temporarily stepped outside of their erstwhile social roles, purified themselves, and became brokers between the spiritual and earthly realms by reciting “formulas” retained over generations. They spoke the ancient words of the immortals who had (ideally) performed the rituals originally in the exact locations that the ceremonies continued to be held, recounting specific mythic deeds.<sup>127</sup> In addition to speaking the words, formulists and their households distributed sacred wealth items among high-status individuals “to dance” or animate objects such as large obsidian blades, hyqua-shell necklaces, ornately weaved basket-hats, Woodpecker headdresses (Pileated, Red-headed, and Yellow-bellied Sapsucker), bluejay visors, or white-deerskin robes, depending on the locale and nature of the ceremony. Importantly, though the efficacy of rituals for earth renewal, first-fruits, or prevention of disease depended on specific places, making this form of spirituality entirely dependent on local environment, interethnic participation over scores of miles

was common, at least by the mid-nineteenth century. Visitor participation ensured inter-village harmony, and extended kin, often crossing ethnic lines, made available sufficient wealth items for successful ceremonies. All of these ritual performances demonstrated respect to the ancestors, ensured the survival of the people, and reflected a regional belief network. Among the Tolowa, Athapaskans from the colonial border of Oregon and California, ceremonies could include visitors from as far north as the Athapaskan Tututni of the Rogue River and south to Yuroks, Karoks, and Wiyot – four wholly distinct language groups or “tribes.”<sup>128</sup> Similar networks existed among the Native peoples of the region surrounding the lower Columbia River from the Quinault River south to the Alsea River, east to The Dalles, up the Cowlitz and Willamette rivers (to the falls in the case of the latter).<sup>129</sup> Perhaps most famous in the southern Pacific Northwest because of their extensive trade center or “Indian mart” were the Wascopam, the people of The Dalles who included Upper Chinooks, Columbia River Sahaptians, and Cayuse.<sup>130</sup> They were (and are) the people of an integral part of Indian Country where the Columbia Plateau meets western Oregon at the Cascade Mountains divide. Native Oregon or *Illahee* was, at once, regional and local, and shared ceremonies reflected the place-specific identity of individual Native bands and their space within regional networks. Indian resistance to removal from their individual *nesika illahee* grew from the core of who individual bands were as a people – to themselves, among other Indians, and to the spirit people, their ancestors.

Euro-American colonists who noted Native “superstition” about leaving the “homes and graves of their fathers”<sup>131</sup> glimpsed only the surface of the difference between *Illahee* and Oregon. Native people overtly stated that they had come to rely on wage-work and were becoming part of the colonial economy, but they refused to lose a large part of what made them Clatsop, Nasomah, or Santiam: their places. When Dart

and his replacement Joel Palmer suggested “removing” the western Oregon peoples to the Columbia Plateau and the Klamath Basin, Indians on both sides of the mountains vociferously condemned the proposal. Indians of the “Eastside” rightly cited disease as one damning factor, western Oregon Indians had indeed suffered more because of their close proximity to the “settlements,” but they also noted reasons Palmer described as cultural.<sup>132</sup> To remove the Clatsops would be to steal from them what it meant then to be Clatsop. Practically, to place the Clatsops or any western peoples among the Wascopam would obliterate their social status. Western Oregon Indians could rightly fear that with the advent of the multi-ethnic reservation system in the 1850s, removed peoples could become slaves: effectively kinless, they were low-status people without access to the power of their ancestors who had remained behind in lost places.

Although it is unclear when it began to circulate, by 1854 a prophecy that spoke to the profound fear of forcible removal and relocation spread through Indian Country from Puget Sound to the Oregon-California borderlands – *polaklie illahee*, literally land of darkness. *Polaklie illahee* was the spiritual antipode of *nesika illahee*: a place of complete alienation where all Indians would be forced to reside yet no Indian could live.<sup>133</sup> This dystopian vision will be explored further in the next chapter as it was purported to have reflected a turn toward militant resistance to colonialism, a way of blaming the indigenous peoples for the so-called “Indian Wars” of 1855-1856, which erupted in southwestern Oregon, the Columbia Plateau, and Puget Sound. For the moment, it is enough to point out the fundamentally devastating meaning of removal to the Indians of western Oregon and the complexities of land and identity, ignored and dismissed by colonists.

Indeed, we need to take the complexity one step further to address Native emigration, which predated and coexisted with Euro-American emigration and

colonization: if removal was so devastating, why did Indians seem to exhibit peripatetic tendencies similar to the Euro-Americans? Could Indian identities be mobile *and* dependent on place? As noted earlier, some bands of Klickitats and Klamaths spent considerable time away from their respective homelands and were infamous in the Willamette Valley as a result. But did these bands become somehow less Klickitat or less Klamath? Also, intermarriages occurred among Native groups over huge distances by 1850, such as an Ikiraku'tsu (Bear Creek Shasta) headman of the Rogue Valley who married his daughter to a man of the Wascopam hundreds of miles to the north.<sup>134</sup> Was she no longer Ikiraku'tsu? From yet another perspective, what about the seemingly permanent migration of entire bands? The names that colonialists attributed to "tribes" often derived from the location of peoples when they were first encountered by westerners. The so-called upper Coquille Tribe, Athapaskans of the Coquille River, had only occupied that river drainage since about 1800. According to Coquel Thompson, his father was a boy when his people moved from the Umpqua River to the upper forks of the Coquille.<sup>135</sup> Was he then a Coquille or an Umpqua Indian? Both were official tribal designations. Coquel Thompson's family history was hardly unique, as a common method of defusing intra-village conflict was to found another town.<sup>136</sup>

One answer to these diverse questions is that Native emigrants, individuals and groups, never ceased to be where they were from: a connection remained to their communities. Famed Klamath headman Lileks spent much of the early to mid-1840s at the Wascopam among the Chinookan and Sahaptian peoples and at Daniel Lee's Methodist Mission there. However, as a Klamath Indian, he could and did return to Klamath Lake. Indeed, with Chiloquin, he used his experiences to consolidate several bands from Klamath Lake and Klamath Marsh into a "tribe" and led them through the tumultuous 1850s and 1860s without significant conflict with colonists, a relatively

peaceful experience not shared by neighboring Modocs and Shastas.<sup>137</sup> The Klickitats of the Willamette Valley similarly never broke ties with their homeland, and their relatives on the Columbia Plateau negotiated their safe return when the colonialists finally concentrated the Willamette Klickitats on the Grande Ronde Reservation in 1855.<sup>138</sup> As well, social and ceremonial "visiting" was evident throughout the Oregon Country and was essential to maintaining contact with out-married family and an integral part of intermarriage among Native ethnic groups. As suggested by Alexandra Harmon's exhaustively researched book on Indian identity around Puget Sound, Native peoples of the Pacific Northwest were intertwined with one another, and identity was a fluid phenomenon.<sup>139</sup> Such is not to argue that "an Indian is an Indian is an Indian," but rather that the overly simple tribal designations of the treaty era, which have since been reified by anthropological scholarship and government bureaucracy, poorly reflect Native constructions of the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>140</sup> The problem with questions such as those posed above is that they originate from a static, timeless sense of Native culture and identity that never existed.<sup>141</sup>

Because of the Indians' temporary success and Dart's abject failure, the Donation Land law went into effect despite the continuance of indigenous title and Native occupation of western Oregon. Ironically, the initial law of 1850 undermined the colonists' speculative efforts in that it required four years of occupation before title would be granted; thus, land sales had to be suspended. Further, the term of occupation did not begin until a new federal claim was filed, which could not be done until after an official survey was completed. The surveys were delayed by logistical and administrative problems, preventing the initial claims from being certified until mid-1853 and gross inefficiency prevented most claims from being patented by the general land office in Washington, D.C. until 1862.<sup>142</sup>



Indeed, the land system was much more complicated and exclusive than the colonists had hoped. J.R. Preston, the surveyor-general, arrived in the spring of 1851 to implement "the national survey system," in which the base line and meridian were established "as far as practicable," and surveys were free – provided the land was located within recognized subdivisions (areas with established township and section lines.) Translated, most colonists who claimed land outside the principal lower-Willamette townships surrounding Portland and Salem had to pay for their own surveys – \$8 per mile – because Preston intended to work backwards, using the individual claim surveys to create townships and sections.<sup>143</sup> The effects were obvious: Although 1,079 colonists quickly filed "notifications" (statements of occupation and requests for survey) in 1852, only 420 claims were surveyed and certified four years later at the end of 1856.<sup>144</sup> (See Table 1.) This despite Preston's claim that "every settler is anxious to receive his patent in order to divide and sell."<sup>145</sup> Preston, as surveyor-general, collected the survey fees from the deputies in his employ and this made him the enemy of the Oregon settler-speculators. By the time the Oregon colonists successfully had Preston removed from office in November 1853, he had collected approximately \$25,000 from them. The citizen land-speculators demanded that Preston's replacement Charles Gardiner refrain from similar survey-speculating, which eventually, they accomplished.<sup>146</sup> The colonists' land-speculations were, as mentioned, stymied by the four-year clause, which prohibited dividing claims prior to patent, and they sent Joseph Lane to Washington, D.C. to rectify the situation. Lane fended off accusations of rampant speculation by the Oregon citizenry, arguing that since the Donation Land Act, land sales had ceased (except for townsite lots, the sale of which were still permitted under the federal law.) Regardless, the sale of one's land (settler-speculation), according to Lane, was a "right."<sup>147</sup> The solution that Lane affected in 1853 allowed for "cash donations," through which colonists

could gain title if they occupied the land for only two years (soon modified to one year in 1854) and paid \$1.25 per acre. The number of cash donations grew steadily, and they seem to have had the effect of diminishing the size of claims. (See Tables 1 and 2.)

Socially, the continued gender-ratio imbalance among the colonists was reflected in the types of certified claims between 1853 and 1856 with the number of single claims continuing to increase annually. Yet, while the gender-ratio does help to explain the number of male single-claimants, the presence of single-female claimants is surprising. Between 1853 and 1856, five women filed as single claimants – not as heirs or widows, but as independent settlers. (See Table 1.) Their claims caused some apprehension at the federal land office in Washington, D.C. The scrawls of confused clerks are still apparent in the ledger books: “female settler? – is she entitled?” The answer was yes; each of their claims was patented in 1862. The women (Janet Pugh, Sally Goodman, Mary Center, Mary Canada, and Delilah White) seem to have exploited some confusion created by the 1850 law’s allowance for limited married women’s property rights.<sup>148</sup> The provision clearly granted up to 320 acres to be held by married women in conjunction with their husband’s claim, and widows could take single claims as heirs.<sup>149</sup> The Oregon law does not suggest nascent proto-feminist egalitarianism, however. Rather, the common view of women as keepers of hearth and home was responsible. In an 1854 congressional debate, Lane explained that men could not be trusted to refrain from speculating but wives could, thus preserving homesteads and fledgling communities.<sup>150</sup> Congress rejected similar women’s property-provisions in the 1854 land law of New Mexico Territory, and the five Oregon women who successfully gained land patents are probably best viewed as notable exceptions to the continued exclusivity of settler-colonialism as the domain of white males.

Table 1. Certified Donation Claims, 1853-1856.

Year	# Claims filed	Married filings (% total)	Single men (% total)	Single women (% total)	Heirs (% total)	% took max acreage*
1853	70	53 (76)	13 (19)	2 (3)	2 (3)	90
1854	159	132 (83)	15 (11)	1 (1)	11 (8)	81
1855	135	82 (61)	49 (36)	0 (0)	4 (3)	65
1856	56	17 (30)	37 (66)	2 (4)	0 (0)	11

Data, *Abstracts of Oregon Donation Land Claims, 1852-1903*, (Washington: National Archives, National Archives and Records Service, General Services Administration), rolls 1-3.

\* includes claims of 600 acres or more for marrieds; 300 acres or more for singles

Notes: between 1853 and 1856, % married filings dropped, % single men rose, single women small but constant; % of those taking maximum allowable acreage decreased; claims recorded dropped precipitously in 1856. See next table for further explanation of decreased size of claims.

The colonization of Oregon was proving to be a difficult and complex project. The frustrations among the colonials and the Native peoples began to be reflected in increasing conflict between 1851 and 1855, particularly in southwestern Oregon and along the migration routes across eastern Oregon. Land claims spread illicitly into southwestern Oregon and the slender valleys of the Coast Range canyons, particularly after the California Gold Rush advanced into the area. The handful of regular army troops did not intervene. Similarly, the federal government steered clear of mining claims, opting for a policy of "non-interference."<sup>151</sup> Euro-American land and mineral claimants took matters into their own hands, pushing "non-whites" out of the way, even killing them.<sup>152</sup> Congress neither cleared indigenous title nor demanded that colonists stay out of the Indian Country of southwestern Oregon. Intentionally or not, the Senate

sanctioned the folk vision of Oregon, which had taken shape in the colonization of the Willamette Valley: land and resources were there for the taking.

Table 2. Land Claim Size Exceptions, 1853-1856.

Year	Total Exceptions * (% of total claims)	Exceptions: Non-Cash Donation (% of total claims)	Exceptions: Cash Donation (% of total claims)
1853	7 (10%)	7 (10%)	N/A**
1854	30 (19%)	17 (11%)	13 (8%) **
1855	49 (35%)	4 (1%)	45 (34%)
1856	49 (89%)	3 (5%)	46 (84%)

Data, *Abstracts of Oregon Donation Land Claims, 1852-1903*, (Washington: National Archives, National Archives and Records Service, General Services Administration), rolls 1-3.

\* Exceptions refers to claims less than 600 acres for marrieds and less than 300 acres for singles.

\*\* The cash donation law passed February 15, 1854 and went into effect July 17, 1854 after the March and June recordings were completed; thus, no cash donations were recorded before October 1854, the year's last book.

Note: Claims filed as cash donations accounted for an increasing majority of land claims that were "exceptional" for being smaller than the allowable size. Another mitigating factor was arguably geographical: the latter claims were filed in southwestern Oregon with its smaller valleys.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> For land claims, Lottie LeGett Gurley, ed., *Genealogical Material in Oregon: Provisional Land Claims, abstracted, volumes I-VIII, 1845-1849* (Portland, OR: Genealogical Forum of Portland, 1982). For demography and birthplaces of the initial colonists, William Bowen, "The Oregon Frontiersman: A Demographic View," in *The Western Shore: Oregon Country Essays honoring the American Revolution*, edited by Thomas Vaughn, (Portland: Oregon Historical Society and the American Revolution Bicentennial Commission of Oregon, 1976), 181-198 and Frederick V Holman, "A Brief History of the Oregon Provisional Government and What Caused Its Formation," *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, 1912, 89-139.

<sup>2</sup> Under the provisional government, claims larger than 640 acres were usually business partnerships; see Gurley, *Genealogical Material* Book 1 for examples. Seeking an amendment to sales of land claims in 1854, Oregon representative Joseph Lane admitted that the original claims taken under the provisional government and sanctioned by the 1850 federal law were overly large in size. He also had to defend his speculative constituents from some amusingly sarcastic criticisms from fellow representatives regarding the Oregonians' propensity for economic speculation. *The Congressional Globe*. 33rd Cong., 1st Sess., May 4, 1854, 1076.

<sup>3</sup> For related discussions, see Paul W. Gates, "The Role of the Land Speculator in Western Development," in *The Jeffersonian Dream: Studies in the History of American Land Policy and Development*, edited by Allan G. and Margaret Beattie Bogue, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996), 6-22; Jerry A O'Callaghan, *The Disposition of the Public Domain in Oregon: Memorandum of the Chairman to the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, United States Senate* (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1960); Paul W. Gates and Robert W. Swenson, *History of Public Land Law Development* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1968); Roy M Robbins, *Our Landed Heritage: The Public Domain, 1776-1936*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1942); Malcolm J. Rohrbough, *The Land Office Business: The Settlement and Administration of American Public Lands, 1789-1837* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968).

<sup>4</sup> Frederick Merk, *The Oregon Question: Essays in Anglo-American Diplomacy and Politics* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1967).

<sup>5</sup> The land office reflected the growing unease among the Euro-American colonists that new emigrants would jump their claims, Holman, "A Brief History," 135-136.

<sup>6</sup> Ronald Spores, "Too Small a Place: The Removal of the Willamette Valley Indians, 1850-1856," *American Indian Quarterly*, 1993, 173.

<sup>7</sup> Benjamin Dowell argued, for example, that since 1841, "[I]n Oregon and California

every settler upon the public lands, whether 'surveyed or unsurveyed' had, and still has the guarantee of an act of Congress for a perfect title before the Indians title is extinguished." MS P-A 133. The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, folder 4, 7.

<sup>8</sup> Gurley, *Genealogical Material*, 215.

<sup>9</sup> Gurley, *Genealogical Material*, 68.

<sup>10</sup> As early as 1825, the British had indicated that they were willing to abandon all the lands south of the Columbia River, modern-day Oregon, and the location of most Euro-American colonial settlements. HBC chief factor John McLaughlin continued to act under that belief until the 1846 treaty, Holman, "A Brief History," 121 and Merk, *The Oregon Question*, 72.

<sup>11</sup> Spores, "Too Small a Place," 172 and Robert 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), 323-329.

<sup>12</sup> The California Gold Rush caused the actual numbers of Euro-Americans to fluctuate, making their numbers hard to determine. For the approximate figure of 9,000, Holman, "A Brief History," 132, 136. President Polk's address to Congress in 1848 put the figure at 12,000, Senate, *Message of the President of the United States, In Relation To the Indian Difficulties in Oregon*, 30th Cong., 1st Sess., 1848, Doc. 47, Serial 508. The 1850 figure is from the Corrected United States Census, Oregon, 1850, Bowen, "The Oregon Frontiersman," 184.

<sup>13</sup> William G Robbins, "Extinguishing Indian Land Title in Western Oregon," *The Indian Historian*, 1974, 11 and Spores, "Too Small a Place," 173.

<sup>14</sup> For detailed studies of environmental change in the Pacific Northwest, see Willam G. Robbins, *Landscapes of Promise: The Oregon Story, 1800-1940* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997); Robert Bunting, *The Pacific Raincoast: Environment and Culture in an American Eden, 1778-1900* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1997); Richard White, *Land Use, Environment, and Social Change: The Shaping of Island County, Washington* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1980); and Peter Boag, *Environment and Experience: Settlement Culture in Nineteenth Century Oregon* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992).

<sup>15</sup> Spores, "Too Small a Place," 173, 176.

<sup>16</sup> Joseph Lane, Autobiography, MS P-A 43. The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 99; Thomas Smith, Account of the Rogue River Indian Wars of

1853 and 1855, MS P-A 94. The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 44; Josiah L. Parrish, *Anecdotes of Intercourse with the Indians*, MS P-A 59. The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 71; *Reminiscences of Southern Oregon Pioneers*, MS CB H629. Knight Library, University of Oregon, 1938, Finnis Dillard, 3, Jennie Bealman Dewald, 5, Clara Stevens White, 5; Robert H. Brown John A. Ruby, *Indian Slavery in the Pacific Northwest* (Spokane, Washington: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1993), 66, 98, 114.

<sup>17</sup> Perkins in Boyd, *People of the The Dalles*, 69.

<sup>18</sup> Senate, *Report of the Secretary of the Interior*, 33rd Cong., 2nd Sess., 1854, S.ex.Docs., Serial 746, 456.

<sup>19</sup> House, *Report of J. Ross Browne on Indian Affairs in the Territories of Oregon and Washington, 1857*, Special Agent of the Treasury Department J. Ross Browne, 35th Cong., 1st Sess., 1858, Ex. Doc. 38, Serial 955, 7.

<sup>20</sup> Spores, "Too Small a Place," 172-174; Robbins, "Extinguishing Indian Title," 11; C. F. Coan, "The First Stage of the Federal Indian Policy in the Pacific Northwest, 1849-1852," *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, 1921, 52-53.

<sup>21</sup> *Report of J. Ross Browne*, 8.

<sup>22</sup> Washington territorial governor Isaac Stevens would eventually effect their removal in his 1855 negotiations with the support of the Yakama Nation, Isaac J. Stevens, Indian Treaty File: Klickitat Indians: Council Notes, Hazard Stevens, AX 42/8/22. The Knight Library, University of Oregon, 1956.

<sup>23</sup> There were approximately 3,950 filings noted in Gurley, *Genealogical Materials*, a figure that includes repeated filings by individuals for the same claim, as the provisional claims only lasted six months.

<sup>24</sup> Gurley, *Genealogical Materials*, 89, 107, 109, 110, 111; value consideration, 110; indentures and crop liens, 89, 90, 163, 196.

<sup>25</sup> Gurley, *Genealogical Materials*, 117, 128.

<sup>26</sup> Gurley, *Genealogical Materials*, low 209, high 264; Clatsop Plains, Superintendent Anson Dart to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, November 7, 1851.

<sup>27</sup> For a strong, recent treatment of the topic, see Woody Holton, *The Forced Founders: Indians, Debtors, Slaves, & the Making of the American Revolution in Virginia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999).

- <sup>28</sup> Gurley, *Genealogical Materials*, 159, 160, 163.
- <sup>29</sup> Gurley, *Genealogical Materials*, 164.
- <sup>30</sup> Richard H. Chused, "The Oregon Donation Act of 1850 and Nineteenth Century Federal Married Women's Property Law," *Law and History Review*, 1984, 77.
- <sup>31</sup> Gurley, *Genealogical Material*, high price 209, low 214.
- <sup>32</sup> Gurley, *Genealogical Material*, 91.
- <sup>33</sup> James M. Bergquist, "The Oregon Donation Act and the National Land Policy," *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, 1957, 32; Charles H Carey, *A General History of Oregon, Prior to 1861* (Portland, OR: Metropolitan Press, 1935), 344.
- <sup>34</sup> Richard White, *Land Use, Environment, and Social Change: The Shaping of Island County, Washington* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1980), 78.
- <sup>35</sup> James G. Swan, *The Northwest Coast; or, Three Years' Residence in Washington Territory* (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, Franklin Square, 1857), 19.
- <sup>36</sup> Gurley *Genealogical Material*, 246; Carey, *A General History*, 390.
- <sup>37</sup> For general description, Oregon Sentinel, February 5, 1879; For 1861 legal suit, B. F. Dowell, MS P-A 139. The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 206.
- <sup>38</sup> In 1830, Chief factor John McLaughlin of the Hudson's Bay Company's Fort Vancouver sent salted salmon with a Captain Simpson to Monterrey and south to Valapraiso, Lima, and Buenos Aires to see if there was a market for them, Burt Brown Barker, ed., *Letters of Dr. John McLoughlin Written at Fort Vancouver, 1829-1832* (Portland: Binfords and Mort for the Oregon Historical Society, 1948), 163, 170 and 181. Joseph Holman cited the potential profits of salmon packing for his 1839 emigration, *The Peoria Party for Oregon in 1839*, MS. (Bancroft Library), 1, 2 in Cornelius J Brosnan, *Jason Lee, Prophet of the New Oregon*, (New York: Macmillan, 1932). Regarding shellfish, James G. Swan, *The Northwest Coast; or, Three Years' Residence in Washington Territory* (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, Franklin Square, 1857), 33, 63.
- <sup>39</sup> Swan, *The Northwest Coast*, 33, 59.
- <sup>40</sup> Swan, *The Northwest Coast*, 36.
- <sup>41</sup> Swan, *The Northwest Coast*, 42.



<sup>42</sup> Verne F. Ray, "Lower Chinook Ethnographic Notes," *University of Washington Publications in Anthropology*, 1938.

<sup>43</sup> Swan, *The Northwest Coast*, 33.

<sup>44</sup> Swan, *The Northwest Coast*, 58-59.

<sup>45</sup> Superintendent Dart's assessment of the colonists' reliance on Indian labor was that it was temporary, "at this time," Dart to CIA, November 7, 1851.

<sup>46</sup> For the best overview of the relationship between "Anglo-Saxon" Americans and their perceived destiny to possess most of North America, Reginald Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981). In the mid-nineteenth century, the identity of white slowly encompassed non-Anglo immigrants such as Germans and Irish and later eastern and southern Europeans, Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998), David R. Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class* (New York: Verso, 1991), and James R. Barrett and David Roediger, "Inbetween Peoples: Race, Nationality and the 'New Immigrant' Working Class," *Journal of American Ethnic History*, 1997, 3-44.

<sup>47</sup> Mike Davis, *Prisoners of the American Dream: Politics and Economy in the History of the US Working Class* (London: Verso, 1986), 28-29.

<sup>48</sup> Refer to the introduction for an elaboration of this post-colonial terminology and my use of it.

<sup>49</sup> David Alan Johnson, *Founding the Far West: California, Oregon, and Nevada, 1840-1890* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992); Charles Sellers, *The Market Revolution: Jacksonian America, 1815-1846* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991).

<sup>50</sup> Johnson, *Founding the Far West*, 181-187, 270, 180; Sean Wilentz, *Chants Democratic: New York City and the rise of the American Working Class, 1788-1850* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984); Paul E Johnson, *A Shopkeeper's Millennium: Society and Revivals in Rochester, New York, 1815-1837* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1978); Mary P Ryan, *Cradle of the Middle Class: The Family in Oneida County, New York, 1790-1865* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981); Daniel Feller, *The Jacksonian Promise: America, 1815-1840* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995).

<sup>51</sup> Holman, "A Brief History," 110-111.

<sup>52</sup> For example, see David D Smits, "'Squaw Men,' 'Half-Breeds,' and Amalgamators:

Late Nineteenth-Century Anglo-American Attitudes Toward Indian-White Race-Mixing," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*. 1991, 15, no. 3, 29-61, George Martinez, "Mexican Americans and Whiteness," in *Critical White Studies: Looking Behind the Mirror*, edited by Richard Delgado and Jean Sefancic, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1997), 210-213, David G Gutierrez, *Walls and Mirrors: Mexican Americans, Mexican Immigrants, and the Politics of Ethnicity* (New York: Oxford, 1995) and Tomas Almaguer, *Racial Fault Lines: The Historical Origins of White Supremacy in California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

<sup>53</sup> Organic Laws of Oregon (Article 2, part 10) quoted in Rueben Gold Thwaites, *Early Western Travels, 1748-1846*, (Cleveland: The Arthur H. Clark Co, 1906), volume 30, page 306.

<sup>54</sup> Lansford W Hastings, *The Emigrant's Guide to Oregon and California*, reprint of 1st 1846 ed., (New York: Da Capo Press, 1969), 105, 113; Joel Palmer, *Journal of Travels Over the Rocky Mountains*, reprint 1847 ed., (Fairfield, WA: Ye Galleon Press, 1983), 100. See also Overton Johnson and Wm. H Winter, eds., *Route Across the Rocky Mountains*, reprint of 1846 ed., (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1932), 107. For an official report containing similar racial language, see "Account of Oregon, by Lieut. Wilkes, Commander of the late Exploring Expedition" in Rueben Gold Thwaites, ed., *Early Western Travels, 1748-1846*, (Cleveland: The Arthur H. Clark Co, 1906) volume 29, page 99.

<sup>55</sup> Puget Sound Agent M.T. Simmons to Superintendent Nesmith, June, 30, 1858 in Senate, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1858*, 35th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1858, S.Ex.Doc. 1, Serial 974, 224. For the Fort Vancouver population as "mongrel," Palmer, *Journal of Travels*, 100.

<sup>56</sup> Minto, "Early Days," 9.

<sup>57</sup> Holman, "A Brief History," 104-105.

<sup>58</sup> *The 8th United States Census, 1860*: Matthew Aeldun Charles Smith, "Wedding Bands and Marriage Bans: A History of Oregon's Racial Inter-marriage Statutes and the Impact on Indian Interracial Nuptials," (master's thesis, Portland State University, 1997), 49-51, 66-73. Smith makes much of the small increases in the numbers of intermarriages from 1850 through 1870 but does not account for the drastically increased population size or the ratio of intra and inter-racial unions.

<sup>59</sup> Initially, under article four of the 1843 Provisional land laws, each man was entitled to 640 acres, but by the passage of the 1850 Donation Land Law, the full section was for married couples only, *United States Statutes at Large*, 31st Cong., 1st Sess., Chap. 76, 1850, section four.

<sup>60</sup> "Vandolf v. Otis," *Cases in the Supreme Court, Territory of Oregon, December 1854*.

<sup>61</sup> Much of the following discussion of bride purchase derives from my unpublished paper, "The 'Value' of Women: Exploring the Institution of Bride Price among Native Societies in Northern California and Southern Oregon," Coquille Indian Tribe's 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Cultural Preservation Conference, May 18-20, 1998, Coos Bay, Oregon.

<sup>62</sup> Jay Miller and William R Seaburg, "Athapaskans of Southwestern Oregon," in *Handbook of North American Indians* vol. VII, Wayne Suttles ed., (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian, 1990), 585; Daythal L. Kendall, "Takelma," in *Handbook of North American Indians* vol. VII, Wayne Suttles ed., (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian, 1990), 591; Henry B. Zenk, "Siuslawans and Coosans," in *Handbook of North American Indians* vol. VII, Wayne Suttles, ed., (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian, 1990), 575-576; Roberta L. Hall, *The Coquille Indians: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow* (Lake Oswego, OR: Smith, Smith and Smith Publishing Company, 1984), 53; Stephen Dow Beckham, *The Indians of Western Oregon: This Land Was Theirs* (Coos Bay, OR: Arago Books, 1977), 95-96. For some Native informant statements about exogamy, see Philip Drucker, *Field Notes* vol. 1, 1934a, 23, Melville Jacobs, "Coos Narrative and Ethnologic Texts," *University of Washington Publications*, (Seattle: The University of Washington, 1939), 84-88, John P. Harrington, *The Papers of John Peabody Harrington in the Smithsonian Collection, 1907-1957* (Millwood, NY: Kraus International Publications, 1981), roll 25, frame 1023.

<sup>63</sup> H. G. Barnett, *Indians Tribes of the Oregon Coast: Field Notes* vol. 1, 1934, 71; Philip Drucker, *Field Notes* vol. 3, 1934, 41.

<sup>64</sup> Barnett, volume 1, 64; Philip Drucker, *Field Notes* volume 2, 1934, 88.

<sup>65</sup> *Ethnographies*: Lottie Evanoff in *Harrington Papers*, roll 24, frame 889, Nellie Lane in Drucker volume 3, 39, Jim Buchanon, Harry Hull St. Clair, *Coos Linguistic Material*, vol. 1, *Field Notes*, 1903), 1; linguistic evidence from the Hanis Coos language, Drucker noted the word *getummol* which he defined two ways: first; his interpretation, "old maid," and second; the literal translation from informant Frank Drew, "wouldn't marry." Drucker volume 1, 79. Annie Peterson used a very similar Hanis Coos word, *ketammul*, to describe a woman who "refused an offer of marriage," Barnett volume 1, 19.

<sup>66</sup> Kendall, "Takelma," 591.

<sup>67</sup> Barnett volume 1, 75.

<sup>68</sup> Drucker volume 1, 23.

<sup>69</sup> *Harrington Papers*, 25: 905.

- <sup>70</sup> *Harrington Papers*, 25: 943.
- <sup>71</sup> H. G. Barnett, *Indians Tribes of the Oregon Coast: Field Notes* vol. 2, 1934, 21-22.
- <sup>72</sup> Drucker volume 1, 23, 77; Philip Drucker, *Field Notes* vol. 1, 1934, 25.
- <sup>73</sup> Peterson in Jacobs, "Coos Narratives," 81-88.
- <sup>74</sup> Drucker volume 4, 36.
- <sup>75</sup> For Euro-American recognition of this problem, ARCIA 1871, 316, 319.
- <sup>76</sup> *Reminiscences of Southern Oregon Pioneers*, MS CB H629. Knight Library. University of Oregon, 1938, Richard Cannon, 4.
- <sup>77</sup> Emil R. Peterson and Alfred Powers, *A Century of Coos and Curry: History of Southwest Oregon* (Portland, OR: Binfords and Mort, Publishers, 1952), 261.
- <sup>78</sup> Doyce B. Nunis Jr, ed, *The Golden Frontier: The Recollections of Herman Francis Reinhart, 1851-1869* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1962), 56.
- <sup>79</sup> *Reminiscences*, Lucretia Ollivant, 3.
- <sup>80</sup> ARCIA 1871, 319.
- <sup>81</sup> Jacobs, "Coos Narratives," 118.
- <sup>82</sup> Superintendent Anson Dart to Commissioner of Indian Affairs L. Lea, November 7, 1851.
- <sup>83</sup> Nunis, *The Golden Frontier*, 45.
- <sup>84</sup> Nunis, *The Golden Frontier*, 46.
- <sup>85</sup> David D. Smits, "The 'Squaw Drudge': A Prime Index of Savagism," *Ethnohistory*, 1982, 281-306. Some Native scholars assert that "squaw" derives from an Iroquoian word for vagina and is, therefore, racist, see Joy Harjo and Gloria Bird, *Reinventing the Enemy's Language: Contemporary Native Women's Writings of North America* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1997), 44. Marge Bruchac (University of Massachusetts, Amherst) counters that "It does not come from the Kanienkehake (Mohawk) word "otsikwa," or "otsioskwa" (which actually translates to "cornmeal mush"). It DOES come from a phoneme - variously spelled "squa," "skwa," "esqua," "kwe," "queh," etc. - a sound common to all Algonkian languages, that indicated "female," not "female reproductive

parts," H-AMINDIAN@H-NET.MSU.EDU, February 2, 2001. For a recent etymology and an overview of the current debate as it has applied to place names, William Bright, "The Sociolinguistics of the 'S-Word': Squaw in American Place Names," *Names*, 2000. 48, 3-4, 207-216.

<sup>86</sup> *Harrington Papers*, 25: 943.

<sup>87</sup> *Harrington Papers*, 24: 921.

<sup>88</sup> *Harrington Papers*, 24: 698.

<sup>89</sup> *Harrington Papers*, 24: 694.

<sup>90</sup> *Harrington Papers*, 24: 921, 24: 1004.

<sup>91</sup> Stern, *Chiefs and Change*, 229.

<sup>92</sup> Boyd, *The Coming of the Spirit*, 328.

<sup>93</sup> *The Congressional Globe*, 31st Cong., 1st Sess., May 28, 1879. For a contemporary criticism of Oregon's "Whites Only" policy, see "Who May Be Citizens of the United States." *Harper's Weekly*, 1858, 306.

<sup>94</sup> Janice K. Duncan, "Minority without a Champion: Kanakas on the Pacific Coast, 1788-1850," 15-16.

<sup>95</sup> *Kanaka Flats Inventory, April 12, 1865*, Takelma Indians File, Southern Oregon Historical Society, Medford, Oregon.

<sup>96</sup> Jesse Applegate in Bowen, "The Oregon Frontiersman," 183.

<sup>97</sup> *Oregon Sentinel*, December 21, 1857.

<sup>98</sup> *The Congressional Globe*, May 28, 1850, 1079.

<sup>99</sup> *The Congressional Globe*, May 28, 1850, 1080.

<sup>100</sup> Allan R. Millett and Peter Maslowski, *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States of America* (New York: The Free Press, 1984), 136.

<sup>101</sup> Paul W. Gates and Robert W. Swenson, *History of Public Land Law Development*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1968), 390.

<sup>102</sup> Drew to Oregon Territorial Governor George Curry, December 30, 1854 in Dowell 133, folder 4.

<sup>103</sup> Dorothy Sutton and Jack Sutton, eds., *Indian Wars of the Rogue River*, (Grants Pass, OR: Josephine County Historical Society, 1969), 166 and Old John of Rogue Or Red River, Oregon (From Army and Navy Journal - 1855), Mss 286. Oregon Historical Society.

<sup>104</sup> *The Congressional Globe*, April 23, 1850.

<sup>105</sup> President James K. Polk to Congress, May 29, 1848. Senate, *Message of the President of the United States, In Relation To the Indian Difficulties in Oregon*, 30th Cong., 1st Sess., 1848, Doc. 47, Serial 508, 2.

<sup>106</sup> Based on a comparison between land office records and remuneration claims, at least 76% of the militia had land claims in the Willamette Valley. Adjusting for matching surnames (in the case of young men who volunteered for Indian fighting but who were not old enough to take land claims) and garbled French surnames, the figure may have been closer to 90%. Such would explain the failure to accept bounty claims in Cayuse country. Data are from Gurley, *Geneological Material* and Senate, *Memorial of the Legislature of Oregon, Praying An appropriation for the payment of expenses incurred by the provisional government of Oregon in the Cayuse War* 31st Cong., 2nd Sess., 1851, Misc. Doc. 29, Serial 592.

<sup>107</sup> Territorial Governor George Abernethy to President Polk, in Frances Fuller Victor, *The Early Indian Wars of Oregon, Compiled From the Oregon Archives and Other Original Sources with Muster Rolls*, (Salem, OR: Frank C. Baker, State Printer, 1894), 236-7.

<sup>108</sup> For an excellent recent narrative of the Cayuse War, particularly regarding Indian actions, see Stern, *Chiefs and Change*, section 5.

<sup>109</sup> John Minto, *Early Days of Oregon*, MS P-A 50. The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 37.

<sup>110</sup> Minto, *Early Days*, 39.

<sup>111</sup> Gurley, *Geneological Materials*, 52, 53, 71, 102, 116, 118, 126, 139, 191, 194, 204, 224, 232, 241, 259.

<sup>112</sup> Minto, *Early Days*, 41-45.

<sup>113</sup> Minto, *Early Days*, 41-45.

- <sup>114</sup> Senate, *Message of the President of the United States, In Relation To the Indian Difficulties in Oregon*, 30th Cong., 1st Sess., 1848, Doc. 47, Serial 508, 2-7.
- <sup>115</sup> Senate Miscellaneous Document 5, 2.
- <sup>116</sup> Statement of Comptroller Elisha Whittlesey to Secretary of Treasury James Guthrie, House, *Expenses of the Cayuse War*, 33rd Cong., 1st Sess., 1854, Doc. 45, Serial 721, 6-8.
- <sup>117</sup> George H. Hines, ed., "Diary of Samuel Royal Thurston," *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, 1914, 171-173, 175-176, 179-188, 191-198, 200.
- <sup>118</sup> Robbins, "Extinguishing Indian Title," 12.
- <sup>119</sup> *United States Statutes at Large*, 27th Cong., 1st Sess., Chap. 16, 1841.
- <sup>120</sup> *Journal of the House of Representatives of the United States, 1789-1873*, May 29, 1850, 978-9; *Senate Executive Journal*, May 6, 1850, 324; August 6, 1852, 434; March 9, 1854, 262.
- <sup>121</sup> *Journal of the House of Representatives of the United States*, May 29, 1850, 978-9; *Senate Executive Journal*, May 6, 1850, 324; August 6, 1852, 434; March 9, 1854, 262.
- <sup>122</sup> *The Congressional Globe*, 31st Cong., 2nd Sess., January 13, 1851, 103.
- <sup>123</sup> *The Congressional Globe*, 31st Cong., 1st Sess., September 25, 1850, 1703-4.
- <sup>124</sup> Dart to CIA, November 7, 1851; Elmer G. Million, "Frontier Legal Process: Parrish vs. Gray, 1846," *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, 1972, 245-256.
- <sup>125</sup> Dart to CIA, November 7, 1851.
- <sup>126</sup> Dart to CIA, November 7, 1851; "Treaty with Lower Band of Chinook," August 9, 1851.
- <sup>127</sup> A. L. Kroeber and E. W. Gifford, "World Renewal, A Cult System of Native Northwest California," *University of California Publications in Anthropological Records*, 1952, 1-155, 1, 3, 105-6.
- <sup>128</sup> Kroeber and Gifford, "World Renewal," 1, 107.
- <sup>129</sup> Yvonne P. Hajda, "Regional Social Organization in the Greater Lower Columbia, 1792-1830," (Ph.D. diss., University of Washington, 1984), 2.

- <sup>130</sup> For an excellent, recent study of the Wascopam, Robert Boyd, *People of The Dalles. The Indians of Wascopam Mission: A Historical Ethnography Based on the Papers of the Methodist Missionaries*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996).
- <sup>131</sup> Dart to CIA, November 7, 1851.
- <sup>132</sup> Palmer to CIA, June 23, 1853, in Robbins, "Extinguishing Indian Title," 14.
- <sup>133</sup> *Report of J. Ross Browne*, 11-12; ARCIA 1858, 226-227; Dr. William F. Tolmie to Governor Fayette McMullen in Ezra Meeker, *Pioneer Reminiscences of Puget Sound: The Tragedy of Leschi* (Seattle: Lowman & Hanford Stationary and Printing Co, 1905), 448; Ruby and Brown, *Indian Slavery*, 191.
- <sup>134</sup> *Report of J. Ross Browne*, 44-47.
- <sup>135</sup> Beckham, *The Indians of Western Oregon*, 95-96.
- <sup>136</sup> Abe Logan regarding Megwin and Joshua Tututni peoples in Drucker, volume 3, 30, 31.
- <sup>137</sup> Albert Samuel Gatschet, *The Klamath Indians of Southwestern Oregon*, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1890), Leslie Spier, "Klamath Ethnography," *University of California Publications in American Archaeology and Ethnology*, 1930; Theodore Stern, "The Klamath Indians and the Treaty of 1864," *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, 1959, 229-273.
- <sup>138</sup> "Indian Treaty File," 4.
- <sup>139</sup> Alexandra Harmon, *Indians in the Making: Ethnic Relations and Indian Identities around Puget Sound* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.)
- <sup>140</sup> James Clifford and George E. Marcus, *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986.)
- <sup>141</sup> Peter Hulme, *Colonial Encounters: Europe and the Native Caribbean, 1492-1797* (New York: Routledge, 1986.)
- <sup>142</sup> Bergquist, "The Oregon Donation Act," 30.
- <sup>143</sup> Harlow Zinser Head, *The Oregon Donation Acts: Background, Development and Application*, (master's thesis, University of Oregon, 1969), 65-70.



<sup>144</sup> Bergquist, "The Oregon Donation Act," 29, and *Abstracts of Oregon Donation Land Claims, 1852-1903* (Washington: National Archives, National Archives and Records Service, General Services Administration), rolls 1-3.

<sup>145</sup> Preston in Head, *The Oregon Donation Acts*, 70.

<sup>146</sup> Head, *The Oregon Donation Acts*, 69.

<sup>147</sup> Congressional Globe, 33rd Cong., 1st Sess., May 4, 1854, 1075.

<sup>148</sup> *Abstracts of Oregon Donation Land Claims*, rolls 1-3, certificates 44, 57, 79, 376, 380. The bureaucrats' questions are evident on the adjoining pages.

<sup>149</sup> Sections five and eight, *United States Statutes at Large*, 31st Cong., 1st Sess., Chap. 76, 1850.

<sup>150</sup> Congressional Globe, May 4, 1854, 1076.

<sup>151</sup> For mining policy discussion, see Richard White, *It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own: A New History of the American West*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), 147.

<sup>152</sup> For south-coast land-claim example, see Miller's massacre of Chetcos, *Report of the Secretary of the Interior*, 1854, 465-467. In an infamous case regarding some of the south coast's richest gold diggings, two mixed-blood men from the lower Willamette Valley lost their claim to a couple of whites despite local acknowledgment of their prior claim. Doyce B. Nunis Jr., ed, *The Golden Frontier: The Recollections of Herman Francis Reinhart, 1851-1869* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1962), 81.

## CHAPTER VI

## COLONIAL 'EARTH HUNGER' AND THE 'RACE WARS' OF 1855-1856

*"to expel from our midst these hostile indians and give us that security of our lives and property which is the birthright of all American citizens."*<sup>1</sup>

– Petition of Josephine Country Citizenry, 1855

Although the Donation Land Law was not all that the colonists had hoped, the lands of the Willamette and lower Columbia River valleys were quickly claimed and the southern valleys of the Umpqua, Rogue, and Coast Range Mountains soon followed suit.<sup>2</sup> Colonists found the valleys of southwestern Oregon attractive both because of the climate (drier than the Willamette Valley, wetter than California's Sacramento Valley) and their proximity to the gold fields in the Oregon – northern California borderlands, which provided a market for cattle and produce.<sup>3</sup> Numerous Willamette Valley colonists such as famed "Indian fighter" John Ross and his "Oregon boys" (as he called his fellow settler-miners<sup>4</sup>) headed for the California gold fields in 1848 and supposedly had to fight their way from the north end of Umpqua canyon in southwestern Oregon to Scott's Valley on the California side of the Siskiyou.<sup>5</sup> This was the so-called Rogue country, a meaningful name.

To the waves of Euro-Americans in the 1840s and 1850s, the Native peoples of southwestern Oregon and neighboring northern-most California were simply "Rogues" and the river and surrounding valleys bore the name as well. Through 1851, repeated references mention the "Rogue's river" or the "Rogue's valley."<sup>6</sup> As their spellings

indicate, Euro-Americans understood the largely unknown region to be in the possession of rogues. Only with the increased presence of Euro-Americans and their land and mineral claims from 1852 onward did the Indians become literally divested of possession. Thereafter, they were more often defined in terms of the landscape, "Rogue Rivers" or "Rogue River Indians." However, as Euro-Americans intellectually assumed possession of the region, they did not alter their perception of the so-called Rogue Indians as naturally predisposed to thievery and violence. As early as October 1849 with travel increasing between the Willamette settlements and the California gold fields, territorial governor Joseph Lane reported the "Rogue river Indians...are a warlike and roguish people...it is to be feared that we will have trouble with these Indians."<sup>7</sup> Umpqua Valley settler Jesse Applegate referred to the Oregon-California borderland as the "gauntlet of the Indians."<sup>8</sup> Indeed, a number of Euro-American travelers had experienced difficulties along the Oregon-California Trail since the late 1830s, with the "Rogues'" reputation for hostility to colonists certainly growing with each telling of the tales.<sup>9</sup>

Their nefarious reputation produced an expectation among colonists for violent encounters, and at least one Shasta boy was killed by a nervous, trigger-happy Euro-American traveler in 1837.<sup>10</sup> In 1847 Oregon's provisional Indian agent offered the following advice to a group of California-bound travelers: "After you get to the Siskiyou [M]ountains, use your pleasure in spilling blood...my only communication with these treacherous, cowardly, untamable rascals would be through my rifle." The Indian agent explained that extermination was the only possible policy: "[t]he character of their country precludes the ideas of making peace with them, or ever maintaining treaties if

made; so that philanthropy must be set aside in cases of necessity while self-preservation here dictates these savages being killed off as soon as possible."<sup>11</sup> The "Rogue" identity pressed upon the Takelma, Shasta, and Athapaskan bands was fast becoming infused with the idea of irredeemable savagery and extermination. The agent's sentiment regarding the Native peoples of the southwestern Oregon-northern California borderland would only grow with time, as Euro-Americans became more familiar with and desirous of the region, and the indigenous people came to be seen as an obstacle to the colonists' profitable pursuits or the "public welfare" in pioneer parlance.

Early in the California Gold Rush, colonialists put their extermination rhetoric into action. In 1849, while prospecting the area around Coloma, California, two "Oregonian" miners died and their fellow settler-miners blamed the local Indians. John Ross and about twenty "Oregon boys" captured 130 Indians who were peaceably encamped near Coloma. An argument between "California miners and the Oregonians" over the fate of the Indians soon erupted. A man named Marshall tried to advocate for the Indians but was driven off at gunpoint, and the "Oregon boys" burst into a home to retrieve an Indian man "secreted" by a white woman in her home. They pronounced the secreted man and four others guilty and hung all but one who escaped. Perhaps in retaliation, another Oregon settler-miner was killed soon after. This time Ross and company did not bother pretending to determine the guilty parties and instead went Indian hunting, randomly slaughtering sixty people whom they came across.<sup>12</sup> The action of Ross and his "Oregon boys" was the first large-scale massacre of California Indians by Euro-Americans, a despicable trend that would continue for years throughout the Gold

Rush and early colonization period and result in the extermination of entire bands.<sup>13</sup>

After a brief stint back in the Willamette Valley in which Ross discovered that another hardy pioneer had stolen his thresher, he rejoined some "Oregon boys," then prospecting along the Klamath River near the Oregon-California border. Over the next two years, Ross perpetrated or was involved in several more deadly expeditions against Wirūhikwai'irukla (Shastas of the Klamath River), Wīwehā'wakūtsu (Shastas of Scott's Valley), and Modocs of the southern Klamath Basin. At Yreka, California, Ross led a popular revolt against so-called "Indian resolutions" that would have limited the rights of citizens to take violent retribution against Indians for thefts and other minor property offenses. Together with his colleague Benjamin Wright, a man who decorated his Yreka home's entrance with an Indian's scalp on a pole and who masterminded the massacre of 41 Modocs invited for peace talks in 1854, Ross carved out a niche for himself as the scourge of the Indians of the southwestern Oregon-northern California border region.<sup>14</sup>

Following a massacre of Euro-American emigrants on the Klamath Basin in 1852, another near Fort Boise in 1854, and brief clashes between Euro-Americans and bands of Shastas and Takelmas in the Rogue River Valley in 1851 and 1853, the colonists of southwestern Oregon clamored for more protection. The United States Army built four forts – Fort Lane in the Rogue Valley, Fort Orford on Oregon's south coast and Forts Reading and Jones in neighboring northern California – and maintained garrisons to monitor Indian-white relations and generally keep the peace. Despite pressures from local citizens, the aptly named Captain Andrew Jackson Smith of Fort Lane in the heart of the Rogue River Valley saw little need for a fort on the Klamath Basin or for policing

the Indians too closely in the Siskiyou and adjacent valleys. Smith saw his fort near the new Table Rock Reservation, established in the upper Rogue Valley after the brief hostilities of 1853, as sufficient for the protection of Indians and Euro-Americans. Indeed, with independent, volunteer militias calling themselves "Squaw Hunters" and the "Exterminators" roaming the Oregon-California borderlands at the first hint of violence, Smith and other federal officials tended to view the Indians as needing the most protection.<sup>15</sup>

However, in 1854, the effectiveness of the U.S. Army's Department of the Pacific was limited: Less than a thousand men were spread out over a vast area including California, Utah territory, and the Pacific Northwest. Many were arranged to defend against an assault from a fellow imperial power such as Great Britain or Russia. (The Crimean War was then raging and Russian frigates in the Pacific made American officials and merchants nervous.) Detachments sent to keep the peace between Indians and colonialists were necessarily small and dispersed. As was the trend since the War of 1812, Congress only allowed a large army during war, slashing its size afterwards; with the notable exception of the conquest of Florida, so-called "Indian wars" usually did not compel Congress to increase the size of the regular armed forces.<sup>16</sup> In the midst of the rabid sectional politics caused partly by the recent, great land grab – the war with Mexico, the commander of the Pacific General John Wool could not get Secretary of War Jefferson Davis even to approach Congress for more men and resources in 1854.<sup>17</sup> Wool had too few resources to guard the major harbors of California, Oregon, and Washington, the outlying settlements from the Pacific coast to Utah Territory, and the overland

emigration routes from the new border with Mexico north to British Canada.<sup>18</sup> As well, he had to prevent private conquests or “filibusters” against the Mexican state of Sonora and the sovereignty of Hawai’i launched from California and involving a complicated diplomatic morass of French, Mexican, and American citizens.<sup>19</sup> Wool distrusted civilians, their colonial pursuits, and saw independent militias such as those of Oregon as an affront to his authority.<sup>20</sup>

Oregon’s speculative settlers and miners probably did not know and certainly did not care about Wool’s dilemmas nor did they think much of his local representative, Captain Smith. They wanted protection of their investments from Native “enemies” as well as the ability to take-up claims securely and profitably in Indian Country (or the “unsurveyed public domain” in colonialists’ conception of the land), duties for which the regular army was ill-equipped and unwilling to perform. In 1854, Oregon Territory revised its militia law to allow for a western, antebellum version of traditional, American volunteer militias, which could meet these goals.<sup>21</sup>

In early July of 1854 with the imminent approach of the “emigration season,” Charles S. Drew petitioned Oregon Territorial Governor John Davis for permission to organize a volunteer militia to patrol the western stretch of the southern emigrant road. The southern or Applegate route ran between Fort Hall (in present-day southwest Idaho) and the settlements of the Rogue River Valley in southwestern Oregon. According to one disgruntled contemporary, a party of speculative “road hunters” led by Jesse Applegate established the route in 1846 because they wanted to divert emigrants to the upper Willamette and Umpqua valleys where they had land claims to sell.<sup>22</sup> A route through

the Rogue Valley would bypass the older lower Willamette Valley settlements and the massive claims being divided and sold there. The colonists' southern route wound through the mostly arid homelands and frontiers of several bands of Shoshones, Northern Paiutes (known to Euro-Americans as "Snakes" and "Diggers"), Achomawi ("Pitt Rivers"), Modocs, Klamaths, and Shastas. The specter of an emigrant party massacred on the northeastern shore of Tule Lake in September 1852 continued to haunt the imaginations of colonists. To local Modocs the thin stretch of shoreline between the lake and a sheer wall of volcanic rock was *wagakanna* ("little canyon"). Henceforth it became known to Euro-Americans as "Bloody Point."<sup>23</sup>

Drew stated that the evil deed was not repeated the following year only because "Captain" John Miller had led sixty independent volunteers to "Bloody Point" and prevented a similar massacre in 1853. Captain Smith of Fort Lane disagreed. Oregon Superintendent of Indian Affairs Joel Palmer had visited the Klamath Basin and accepted pledges from the Indians that they would not attack emigrants.<sup>24</sup> They probably met with Tule Lake and Lost River Modocs under the headman Schonchin as well as several Klamath Lake bands then coalescing under the headmen Lileks and Chiloquin. Two Native historical accounts support Smith's and Palmer's claims that emigrants no longer had anything to fear on the Klamath Basin. Jeff Riddle, the son of Winema (the famous heroine of the 1873 Modoc War) and a local Euro-American settler, published a defense of his people in 1914. According to Riddle, the members of the Rock band of southern Modocs or Combutwaush and certain individuals from the Lost River and Tule Lake bands who committed the 1852 massacre had previously fled to the mountains and



remained there. Schonchin, having arisen as a principal headman around 1846, came to see his peoples' future as depending on peace with the increasing numbers of Euro-Americans.<sup>25</sup> Indeed, Schonchin explained in an 1875 interview that he initially believed the whites to be far fewer in number. He lamented, "[w]e killed all we could; but they [Euro-Americans] came more and more like new grass in the spring. I looked around and saw that many of our young men were dead and could not come back to fight." Schonchin ended his attacks on Euro-American emigrants stating, "[m]y heart was sick. My people were few. I threw down my gun. I said, 'I will not fight again.' I made friends with the white man."<sup>26</sup> It was Schonchin's people remaining in the valleys around Tule Lake, however, who would bear the wrath of the Euro-American citizen-militias from Oregon and California in 1854.

In the summer of 1854 militias from the Willamette Valley and the Rogue Valley were dispatched to the Columbia Plateau and the Klamath Basin; the first to avenge a massacre and the latter supposedly to prevent one. Governor Davis, a temporary Democratic appointee, gave tenuous approval to Klamath-Basin militia campaign "if it should be considered necessary." But he advised Drew and Ross that the territorial government could not provide any monetary assistance or guarantee federal reimbursement, though "every proper effort will be made by this department to obtain compensation from the general Government for such outlay." He subsequently reminded Ross that "you will be compelled to rely upon the liberality and patriotism of our fellow citizens, who in turn will be compelled to rely upon the justness of the General Government for their compensation."<sup>27</sup> In a symbolic and strategic move, Ross ordered

“Captain” Jesse Walker to establish his field headquarters at *wagakanna* “Bloody Point” and to send detachments out to meet emigrants and arrange them into defensible groups. Of the Indians, “cultivate their friendship; but if necessary for the safety of the lives and property of the immigration, whip and drive them from the road.”<sup>28</sup>

In both the Klamath Basin and Snake River campaigns of 1854, the regular army at forts Vancouver and Lane offered too little assistance to satisfy the colonists, acting under a different set of prerogatives than the territorial militias and constrained by limited manpower and resources. The U.S. Army was not officially caught up in the profitability of Oregon, though the many desertions by soldiers to the gold fields might suggest otherwise. On the other side, volunteers from the Willamette Valley and the Rogue Valley acted similarly in their respective actions in the Snake River and Klamath Basin areas. Each campaign was partly protective, punitive, and vengeful. Despite the pleadings of Superintendent Palmer, the Snake River campaign was as brutally violent as the Walker expedition in which Modocs and Northern Paiutes were hunted and starved into submission.<sup>29</sup> Palmer instructed his subagent to determine the guilty and protect the innocent from revenge: “*It should not be forgotten that we are a civilized and christian people, and they savage and ignorant. Women and children should, if possible, be saved, that they may, at the same time, be impressed with a sense of our power, and our humanity.*”<sup>30</sup> Palmer tried unsuccessfully to appeal to the rhetoric of benevolent, Christian civilization, about which most colonists did not care. Even Palmer seemed ambivalent; in his call for a demonstration of American power, he echoed the same punitive ideas advocated by extremists. His advice to spare women and children “if

possible," and a de facto instruction to kill the men, was not far removed from those like Charles Drew who called for outright extermination.

These official, territorial campaigns were in addition to private militant actions by Euro-American citizens pursuing property, profit, and the extermination of Indians who, in their opinion, inhibited their sacred birthrights to land and minerals. After the death of a miner, in August 1853, Benjamin Dowell, a Jacksonville lawyer and merchant, wrote that the "citizens mostly composed of miners ... passed resolutions demanding the Extermination of the Indian race. The next day was death and destruction not only to the Shasta Indians but to any and all who were found by the Oregonians. Several Rogue River Indians were shot by whites without giving the Indians notice that the war had been commenced." Dowell also recounted the fate of an 8 to 10 year old Indian boy, a laborer for Euro-Americans on Battle Creek, who came into town the evening two supposedly guilty Indians were hung for killing the miner. A mob seized the boy and went to hang him. Dowell claims to have intervened and proposed to hold him prisoner. "Just then," some volunteers rode into town who "had been out killing Indians" and "chanted, 'hang him! hang him!'" According to Dowell, the militia argued, "'Our resolutions demand the Extermination of the whole indian race! Knits breeds lice!'" They hung the boy "not for any alledged crime, but for the purpose of exterminating the indian race..."<sup>31</sup>

Dowell's claim of nobility in attempting to protect the boy may be seen as self-serving and was perhaps fabricated to provide some distance between his murderous community members and himself; the account comes from an 1878 interview with historian Hubert Bancroft. However, as a lawyer, Dowell made a career of pursuing remuneration claims

for territorial militias and their suppliers, an effort that depended on support from eastern Congressmen. His work would not be well served by embellishing "extermination rhetoric"; thus, his account would seem to have merit regarding the event and the public mood at the time.

Extermination of Indians for the sake of economic speculation was not limited to the immediate Jacksonville area. In the fall of 1853, an association of speculative settlers took up land claims on the lower Chetco River with designs on establishing a townsite at the mouth that would serve the burgeoning mining population on the south coast. Athapaskan villagers on either side of the river mouth grudgingly acquiesced to the homesteads but refused to surrender their successful ferry business, by which they too profited from the Gold Rush. The Chetcos also refused to allow the speculators' leader, a man named Miller, to live in their village on the south bank. Indeed, Miller's proposed townsite claim encompassed that entire village. On February 15, 1854, Miller and some hirelings from nearby Crescent City, California (veterans of an 1853 massacre of Athapaskan Tolowas) slaughtered fifteen Chetcos and burned their two villages on either side of the river mouth. At a perfunctory hearing at Port Orford, Miller offered no defense for his actions, and the surviving Chetco villagers could not legally testify because of their "race." Miller thus took possession of his lower Chetco claim.<sup>32</sup> Desperate, some Chetcos raided settlements during the winter to survive. Though they did not kill any Euro-Americans, eleven more Chetco men "and several squaws were killed" by early May 1854. Euro-Americans derided the Chetcos and other south coast victims as savage renegades ignoring the manner in which the Athapaskan villagers had

become homeless and desperate. Forty more "renegades" of the south coast bands were killed in a militia raid during the Rogue River War in the spring of 1856.<sup>33</sup> Expeditions in 1856, 1857, and 1858 killed many more Native people of the Chetco and Pistol River bands near Port Orford during efforts to "bring in" the Indians.<sup>34</sup> For the 1857 "round-up," Indian Superintendent James W. Nesmith contracted William Tichenor (the first land speculator on the south coast, founder of Port Orford) "for the purpose of securing and removing them to the reservation." However, the superintendent advised the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, "I have little hopes of his success, and see no way that the settlers in those infested neighborhoods can rid themselves of the nuisance, unless they can hit upon some mode for their extermination, a result which would occasion no regrets at this office."<sup>35</sup> An 1857 militia, the "Gold Beach Guard," failed to hit upon such a mode, though with the help of Tichenor, they did shoot seventeen more Chectos who reportedly tried to escape that year's round-up. That Tichenor previously placed hidden militiamen along the road at precisely the point where the Chetcos supposedly attempted their escape strongly suggests some forethought about the massacre. U.S. Army regular Lieutenant Shire from nearby Crescent City initially offered to help Tichenor, but since he refused to consider extermination as an option, Tichenor sent him back to California. Tichenor later stated of his 1858 round-up, "[I] captured seventy-one...nine bucks with their families...if I had had my own way...I would have had to kill them." Indeed, he had told agent Nesmith that "[I] meant to quiet them, if I had to kill the last one of them."<sup>36</sup>

Most Native bands were small and the massacre of one or two dozen people effectively exterminated some "tribes." On January 28, 1854, a few weeks before

Miller's initial massacre of Chetcos and a short distance to the north, Euro-Americans staged a pre-dawn surprise attack simultaneously on the three Nasomah (Miluk-Kusan speaking) villages on the lower Coquille River, shooting eighteen people indiscriminately as they fled their burning homes. The colonists claimed legitimate retribution for a damaged rope, a ricocheted shot meant for a duck but which passed near a ferry house, and a Nasomah man who reportedly uttered, "God-damned Americans." When an Indian agent reached the area some months later, he indicated that two of the Nasomah villages were emptied and only John's band (though probably a composite of survivors) of thirty-eight adults and twenty-one children occupied the third.<sup>37</sup> As a distinct people, the Nasomah never recovered from the massacre and dispossession soon to follow as they *had* recovered from successive disease epidemics since 1800.<sup>38</sup> Although some descendants now comprise part of the composite Coquille Indian Tribe, none can speak their Miluk language and their traditions are fractured and lost in what one elder calls a "cultural blackhole."<sup>39</sup>

Although colonials on the lower Coquille prepared a formal list of grievances before the massacre,<sup>40</sup> many attacks on Indians occurred more randomly. On the California side of the Siskiyou on May 24, 1854, colonists ambushed a band of Ahōtirē'itsu (people of the Shasta Valley) who had just come from a meeting with regular army captains from forts Lane and Jones in which they had been assured of their continued friendship and safety.<sup>41</sup> The excuse for the militia's attack on them was that a Shasta man, "Indian Joe," was alleged to have tried to rape a white woman. That the accused man was not present and was from a different band did not matter nor did a

history of attempts by the assailed band to maintain amicable relations with colonists around Yreka, California, and Oregon's Rogue Valley. The Ahōtirē'itsu headman "Bill" had earlier killed fellow Shasta headman Tipsu Tye of the Ikiraku'tsu (Shastas of the Rogue Valley) whose band was blamed for the alleged assault. Bill knew that colonial militias were not terribly discriminating in seeking revenge against "Indians" and thus he killed Tipsu and his son while they visited his people in order to keep the peace with Euro-Americans. Still, Bill was among the victims on May 24<sup>th</sup>. A confused and despondent Ahōtirē'itsu elder who witnessed the massacre inquired why, if rape was such a horrific crime to Euro-Americans, did the colonists "constantly run down, sometimes by men on horse," and rape Native women. There is no record of how or if Captain J.C. Bonnycastle or any members of the Yreka militia – the "Squaw Hunters" – replied.<sup>42</sup>

In a discussion such as this, it is important to point out that militias did not always find support for extermination among their fellow colonists. Captain Smith reported that, on February 3, 1854, nineteen miners attacked a village on southwestern Oregon's Illinois River "in which there were but seven squaws, one boy, and two children, with the avowed intention of killing them all." After firing nine shots into a pregnant woman, killing her, the miners found themselves routed by three other women and the boy. When the miners attempted to recruit "an increased force...to wipe out the Indians...the better portion of the community interfered and delayed" them until the Indian agent arrived.<sup>43</sup> Still, by 1855, the ranks of the extermination-minded colonists swelled, counter-discourse waned, and no colonist did much to prevent the massacres of Indians.

In the summer of 1855, on the eve of the final Rogue River War, a group of

Josephine County petitioners argued that they will lose "all invested here and if forced to leave by the hostility of the indians will be pecuniarily ruined and a mining locality capable of furnishing remunerative labor for thousands of men for years be again abandoned to be in unproductive idleness." They requested Governor George Curry "to *expel from our midst these hostile indians and give us that security of our lives and property which is the birthright of all American citizens* [italics in original]."<sup>44</sup> Calls for the formation of militia companies came from all corners of southwestern Oregon beginning in the early summer and continuing through autumn of 1855.<sup>45</sup> As John Ross put it to Curry, the citizens of southern Oregon require "your aid in defending the inalienable rights of the people."<sup>46</sup> The militia proponents used the republican language of citizenship almost exclusively in their appeals for support and in defense of their actions. In their public appeals for funding, they consistently refer to themselves as "citizens" and the protection of their profitable pursuits as the "public welfare."<sup>47</sup> There were several reasons for such discourse among them were attempts to legitimize their actions through an appeal to patriotism, to protect illicit land claims in Indian Country, and to receive federal remuneration for their militia activities. In the process, they voiced the underlying racialized notion of American citizenship as white and closed.

In Jacksonville, colonists held meetings about their "Indian problem" with voices for extermination being the strongest. As had happened a few years earlier in Coloma, extremists silenced one man who advocated for the Native people. Fearing for his life, John Beeson fled to San Francisco then New York, from where he published a highly critical tract against his fellow colonists and their advocacy of extermination.<sup>48</sup> The



exiled Beeson claimed that “numbers of men made it a point” during the summer of 1855 “to shoot Indians wherever they could do it with safety to themselves.” In the autumn, in a Jacksonville tavern, a local farmer and politician James Lupton hatched a scheme to instigate a final showdown, a final solution, and formed a militia of local colonists. In the predawn light of October 8, 1855, they assailed “Old Jake’s” Quachis band of Ikiraku’tsu Shastas on Little Butte Creek in the shadows of Fort Lane and Table Rock. According to Beeson, the militia had “the avowed purpose of killing every Indian in the [Rogue River] valley, regardless of age or sex.”<sup>49</sup> Ostensibly, trackers had previously determined the bands’ guilt in waylaying and killing two packers on the Siskiyou Pass.<sup>50</sup> A justifiably doubtful Captain Smith had earlier refused to allow a vengeful Jacksonville militia access to the Table Rock Reservation to search for the suspects and ordered his regulars to shoot the colonial militia if they attempted to enter. Lupton’s militia subsequently ended debate with their predawn massacre, which actually did not go as planned. In addition to approximately twenty-five Ikiraku’tsu men, women, and children slaughtered, Lupton died – despite the overwhelming odds of attacking sleeping families. More of this Ikiraku’tsu band would soon die at the hands of a reconstituted Jacksonville militia as they tried to reach the protection of Fort Lane. Two “old squaws” were bashed to death with clubs and “a child...was taken by the heels and its brains dashed out against a tree.” Such brutality cannot be explained by a need for security. According to General Wool, militias killed eighty “friendly Indians” to ignite the warfare of 1855 – 1856 in southwestern Oregon; others put the figure at 106. One volunteer reportedly stated that, although extermination made him feel bad, “the understanding was that [the Indians]

were all to be killed. So we did the work."<sup>51</sup>

The last of the so-called Rogue River Wars had begun. Colonel William J. Martin of the territorial militia soon issued the following extermination order to the Oregon volunteer companies: "In chastising the enemy, you use your own discretion, provided you take no prisoners."<sup>52</sup> Another militia commander advised that "[t]reaties effected with powder and ball, and no other, is the motto."<sup>53</sup> In early November, General John Wool reported to his superiors that "[i]n Rogue River valley the threats of the whites to commence a war of extermination against the friendly Indians on the reserve, and in the vicinity of Fort Lane, have been put into execution, despite the efforts of the officers of that post to prevent it."<sup>54</sup> On October 9, 1855, the day after the massacre on Little Butte Creek, many of the Indians remaining on the reservation fled to the protection of the rugged canyon country of the Coast Range Mountains. Agent Samuel Culver had earlier permitted some bands to leave the disease-ridden and poorly supplied reservation because the death rate had soared to twenty percent in the first year.<sup>55</sup> Native attempts to survive and remain sovereigns in their homelands and the militias' attempts to either kill or capture them continued for ten months into the early summer of 1856.

A self-fulfilling prophecy, the colonists had finally pushed the Native peoples into the extremely violent, widespread "race war" that they had forecasted for years.<sup>56</sup> Subsequent massacres drove neutral bands into the conflict. At an Umpqua camp on the Arrington Ranch, ten Euro-Americans annihilated a camp of "old men, women, and children" while the men were hunting in the nearby Olalla hills. The band had previously maintained amicable relations with the colonists, some Umpquas labored on local farms,

regularly hung about the hotel, and some intermarriages occurred. The hunters, apprised of the Olalla Massacre by a boy who miraculously escaped, subsequently joined the warring bands along the Rogue River.<sup>57</sup> Such examples of Native peoples' traveling to assist in the fight against the colonialists added fuel to the speculations regarding a pan-Indian threat.

Indeed, a principal justification for the war by the colonists' (particularly Lupton and his supporters) was defense against a perceived pan-Indian confederacy, which threatened extermination of the "whites." Thus, the colonialists' genocidal efforts supposedly mirrored Native intent and were morally defensible for that reason.<sup>58</sup> Not all "whites" were of common mind regarding the pan-Indian threat. George Roberts, an Englishman and administrator of the Hudson's Bay Company and the Puget Sound Agricultural Association, gruffly dismissed the popular beliefs of a pan-Indian threat as so much "public clamour." Roberts insisted that the notion of an inevitable race war was part of what he called an "earth hunger" that was born of an ignorant, nationalist belief in "Manifest Destiny" that was being carried out by "ruffians," "squatters," and the "vilest of the vile...hardy pioneers indeed." He was equally critical of the leadership among the Americans. He expressed his astonishment upon hearing Joseph Lane, Oregon's preeminent early politician, "remark 'damn them [Indians], it would do my soul good to be after them.'"<sup>59</sup> The contrast between Anglo and American interpretations of Indian behavior and intent had been obvious since the early 1840s. Henry Perkins of The Dalles Mission had been convinced as early as 1843 that the Wascopam "Indians are endeavoring to form a general coalition for the purpose of destroying all the Boston

people: that it is not good to kill a part of them, and leave the rest, but that every one of them must be destroyed."<sup>60</sup> Roberts, McLaughlin, and other English officials regularly discounted such beliefs, leading some Euro-American officials by the 1850s to portray the English as being part of the Indian conspiracy.<sup>61</sup> "Earth hunger" certainly contributed to the Euro-American vision, but what were they witnessing among the Indians that was construed as an extermination-minded pan-Indian effort?

Since the 1870s, historians of southwestern Oregon have focused mainly on Euro-American military maneuvers and political disputes regarding economic speculation, but we are not much closer to understanding the Indians' actions after all this time: they have remained bit players in a nationalist, political drama. In the only recent scholarship, E.A. Schwartz cast Native war-efforts in 1855-1856 as impromptu defensive actions and dismissed the idea that any forethought was involved among the Indians. Similarly, he concluded that no ties existed among the bands of southern Oregon, Puget Sound, and the Columbia Plateau. Although the violent outbreaks all occurred nearly simultaneously in 1855 and concerned resource control, reservations, and increasing incidents of inter-racial violence, he considered them unrelated types of Indian war.<sup>62</sup> As well, he pointed to an intra-Indian conflict among the Shastas to demonstrate that Native wars were "formalized and almost benign" and not, in the least, extermination-minded.<sup>63</sup> However, the action described seems to have been a ceremony; it was a settlement dance between two Shasta bands, *Ikiraku'tsu* and *Ahōtirē'itsu*, not a war: they were settling a dispute between individuals through an elaborate ceremony common to the southwestern Oregon – northern California border region. The nature of Indian warfare was complex.

Settlement dances did not prevent further conflict, indeed in their martial posturing, they sometimes instigated further conflict. As well, they had little or nothing to do with slave raids in which all men were sometimes killed and villages eradicated, and should not be taken as the only representation of Indian war.<sup>64</sup> To do so is to give in to a well-intentioned but inaccurate interpretation of conflict among Native peoples and inhibit an historical understanding of their actions in the colonial wars with Euro-Americans.

The Native peoples of the Columbia Plateau have received more scholarly attention, and the histories reflect greater imagination. In particular, Christopher Miller has portrayed the Native combatants as millenarians striving towards a revitalized world prophesized decades earlier and which clashed with another millenarian movement, that of the Euro-American Second Great Awakening and Manifest Destiny. Thus Miller, like Elizabeth Vibert, argues for a very early beginning to a concerted prophet movement on the Plateau.<sup>65</sup> Recently, however, anthropologist Theodore Stern debunked this cosmological thesis, arguing that the Plateau millenarian movement had yet to begin and would not reach maturity until the reservation era under Smohalla and the Dreamer Cult. And the American millenarian movement was essentially over and in its post or fulfillment stage.<sup>66</sup> Instead, Stern explained the Plateau violence and the apparent Indian alliances through practical experiences, traditional spiritualities, and kinship ties that he compiled with the aid of Indians from the Umatilla Reservation in eastern Oregon. Further, Stern did not find evidence of a larger Indian confederation in the Oregon Country.

Indeed, there was no grand confederacy of tribes from northern California to

British Columbia, as claimed by colonists. In fact, there were no tribes, per the definition of a tribe as a coherent body politic, to form such a confederacy. Rather, the vast region was inhabited by groups of linguistically and culturally diverse peoples who were connected to other groups by kinship. Kinship ties largely shaped many forms of interaction such as trading, raiding, and distributing land and resources, all of which created a complex web of loyalties and identities that crossed linguistic barriers and confound attempts at simple classifications such as tribe or linguistic group.<sup>67</sup>

As well, the notion of race as understood by nineteenth-century Euro-Americans was not part of Native identities or politics. Certainly, Indians could and did distinguish between Natives and non-Natives, but the concept of race, as in the antebellum notion of "race war," was entirely foreign. American racial thinking in the 1850s was the product of two and a half centuries of a particular history of numerous, contingent power-relations, which the various Native peoples of the Pacific Northwest obviously did not share.<sup>68</sup> White-male-supremacist notions of Manifest Destiny helped to define racial distinctions and to fuel American beliefs in the inevitability of race war, a clash between superior and inferior peoples. Granted, many Indians who spoke the trade language Chinook Jargon to communicate across linguistic barriers used the term *siwash* quite freely to indicate a Native person. However, few if any Indians would likely have been aware that the word derived from savage (more properly, the French *sauvage*) or that Euro-Americans considered savages to be the lowest form of human being or that western thought had conceived of a Great Chain of Being or Evolution. More commonly, Indians such as the multi-ethnic Wascopam used the jargon word *tillicum* or people to

distinguish themselves from slaves or other Native groups with whom they felt little affinity.<sup>69</sup> The distinction Indians often made among whites throughout the Oregon Country – King Georges (Hudson's Bay Company English and Canadians) and Bostons (Euro-Americans) – was presented to them by competing traders and was not in any sense racial. Other Native terms reflected the place Euro-Americans took in Native historical experience. The Modocs experienced devastating raids from the Columbia River peoples (*Yámakni* or north people) during the 1830s. The term *Yámakni* conferred a sense of ambivalence and trepidation as well as a cardinal direction. Later, the Modocs called Euro-American colonists *Yámakni Bóshtin*, probably for their similarly disruptive presence, in addition to *Oregínkni* for the colonials' claimed identity, "Oregonians."<sup>70</sup> As noted in the previous chapter, Euro-Americans who raped or otherwise abandoned Native wives and mixed-blood children earned the name "moving people" on the south coast. Native terms for and considerations of the colonists were grounded in recent historical experiences and were often highly localized.

Simply put, racialization was a peculiarly western European construction, not one which the Native peoples would easily have grasped let alone employed in an attempt at unification.<sup>71</sup> Racial views were enough to justify extermination of Indians among Euro-Americans, but Indians had no such intellectual foundation. A union against "whites" would have to be based on a different set of intellectual beliefs such as defense of home or *Illehee*. In other words, Euro-Americans did not deserve death because of supposed natural, innate differences or quasi-religious rationale but because they threatened to drive all Native peoples from their homes. Nevertheless, I do give some credence to

Euro-American observations: colonists were not simply ethnocentric ignoramuses or delusional paranoiacs. They witnessed the complex relations among the Indians and interpreted them in ways that were advantageous and made sense for colonization; Euro-Americans reached rational, if inaccurate, conclusions such as the threat of a pan-Indian alliance.<sup>72</sup> What were Euro-Americans observing in Indian Country?

Native kinship relations had been greatly expanded from their early fur-trade local networks to encompass huge distances by the 1850s. Although the Indians of the Pacific Northwest had maintained various networks for centuries, the effects of colonization drastically altered them. Trade goods, slaves, and knowledge that would have passed slowly from one neighboring group to another now passed directly among groups that had formerly been separated by long distances and by Native intermediaries such as bands of Kalapuyas and Mollalas. The deaths of so many Native peoples on the lower Columbia River and the lower Willamette Valley left a vacuum, which horse-riding Sahaptian peoples commonly called Klickitat Indians filled. As early as the 1830s, autonomous bands of Klickitats traveled from their homelands north of the lower and middle Columbia River to trade and raid among the Native peoples of the Willamette Valley and southern Oregon. By the 1840s, Klickitats outnumbered indigenous Kalapuyas and established relations with the Indians of southwestern Oregon, some settling in the Umpqua Valley. At the same time, Klamaths from south-central Oregon increasingly traveled to Oregon City and The Dalles on the Columbia River, both reflecting ties with peoples of these areas and facilitating further ties. By the 1850s, Shasta bands and possibly others from the Rogue River Valley and Siskiyou Mountains



had also established relations with Native groups on the Columbia Plateau. The latter is notable especially given the fact such people had formerly only been in the northern area as slaves of the Chinookan and Sahaptian peoples. Southern Oregon Natives had established more equitable relations through intermarriage and other forms of exchange.<sup>73</sup> One observer noted that many of the Cayuses' one hundred warriors in 1853 were, in fact, Shasta Indians.<sup>74</sup> Though he called them slaves, it is important to note that the Cayuse did not practice chattel slavery, though such men would likely have been of lower status. Kinship ties among the Plateau peoples were long-standing and, at least by the 1840s, stretched across the Cascades from the Yakamas to the Nisquallys in the Puget Sound region. Together, I think it is quite clear that the Native peoples had extended their kinship networks throughout Oregon Territory by mid-century, though such relations hardly substantiated a pan-Indian alliance or confederacy. Instead, they maintained lines of communication and had common cause in preserving their homelands.<sup>75</sup>

Euro-Americans often became unnerved when diverse bands of Indians gathered for trade fairs, ceremonies, or to settle disputes at locales such as The Dalles on the Columbia River, the Grande Ronde Valley on the Plateau, Yainax Butte on the Klamath Basin, and Horse Creek on the upper Klamath River. These larger meetings were in addition to the much more frequent small-scale gatherings that had developed throughout the region. While nearly all such gatherings had nothing directly to do with Americans, there is evidence that some meetings were held expressly to discuss the Euro-American colonization.

To illustrate, we can look at two famous examples from 1854 at Horse Creek and the Grande Ronde Valley. In both cases, Native headmen subsequently informed Euro-Americans that the purpose was to determine a unified Native response to encroachments by emigrants, settlers, and miners as well as the looming possibility of removal and reservations.<sup>76</sup> And in both cases, individual headmen reportedly argued for a regional pan-Indian effort to drive out the Euro-Americans, seize their lands, and some called for their deaths or enslavement. Neither council produced such an alliance or an offensive, which is not surprising given the extremist and unprecedented nature of such a union and the decentralized nature of Native politics and society.

Nevertheless, many of the hostilities that occurred in 1854 and 1855 as well as the final Rogue River war in late 1855 and 1856 featured a "combination of tribes," as Euro-American observers typically put it. Such combinations reflected kinship ties among supposedly distinct tribes as well as an outlet for militant individuals. The large councils of 1854 at Grande Ronde and Horse Creek allowed likeminded men to come together even as the majority apparently rejected the larger plan of unification. Local bands had enough common experiences with troublesome emigrants, farmers, and miners for some individuals to become convinced of the necessity to fight.

Euro-American colonization thrust a complex, political choice upon Native peoples between fighting, best done united, and accommodating, best done separately on the local level. The numerous murders of Native headmen in the mid-1850s demonstrate the internal conflict tearing apart Indian country in southern Oregon and northern California. In the interior, one Shasta headman, well known for his militancy against

colonization, was killed along with several members of his band by other Shasta Indians. And a Takelma headman, who worked diligently to maintain the peace between his people and the miners of the Jacksonville district was gunned down, apparently for his resistance to fighting and, according to the Indian agent, to spark an Indian alliance.<sup>77</sup> On the coast, Lottie Evanoff, a Coos informant for John Harrington, stated that this was a time when “[i]t seemed that every Ind[ian] chief [would] get murdered.” Both her paternal and maternal grandfathers were killed, the first for his accommodative stance by a man who “wanted to kill off the White people awful bad. He foresaw the disappearance of the Ind[ian]s.” And the second for his militant stance by a group of men from his own village because “[h]e did not want to make friends with the white people.”<sup>78</sup>

Evanoff’s reference to her paternal grandfather’s foreseeing the colonial wars and removal does not seem to be indicative of a prophet movement among the Coos. At least, I have been unable to find corroborating evidence for one. Instead, her explanation may reflect a common mode of rendering oral history among indigenous peoples: prophecy narratives. Julie Cruikshank has offered some convincing analyses that prophecy narratives often play a critical role in the way in which Athapaskans of the Yukon speak of historic events, creating “order and continuity from the disorder of experience.” “Even when prophecy does not lead to short-term political and social transformations,” Cruikshank argues, “it nevertheless may reproduce shared cultural meanings and underscore the importance of using a familiar narrative framework to explain the present, particularly as it is now invoked by indigenous people to claim authoritative

interpretations of their past." Speaking through prophecy grants indigenous people legitimacy, control of their past, and "invokes ethnographic authority." Prophecy narratives are similar to changing historical perspectives among academics in that they are shaped by the present, rather than being ahistorical or existing in "mythic-time" as Calvin Martin would have it. Rather, prophecy narratives "may be viewed as successful engagement with changing ideas" and a changing world.<sup>79</sup>

Colonization caused violent altercations among Indians in ways other than intra-village diplomatic disputes. As discussed earlier, slave raids by Columbia River peoples had spread south with the fur trade reaching the Klamath Basin and the Rogue Valley, at least, by the 1820s. The Klamaths were able to transcend the position of raid victim within a decade. They succeeded in part because the Plateau Sahaptian peoples also desired cattle, and rather than becoming dependent on the Hudson's Bay Company, they sought the British source: John Sutter's little empire in the Sacramento Valley in Alta California.<sup>80</sup> Centrally located, the Klamath Basin was a much-needed rest and supply point between the Plateau and the Sacramento. More importantly, the Klamaths learned to be the raiders instead of the raided, and Yainax Butte, within their domain, became an important Native trading site. Between 1842 and 1844, colonists noted slave trade interactions between the Klamaths and Columbia River peoples both in the Klamath Basin and around the settlements on the lower Willamette River and at The Dalles. Through this trade, the Klamaths obtained horses and guns, and thus gained the advantage over their southern neighbors such as the Native peoples of the Rogue and Pitt River valleys in the southwest Oregon-northern California borderland.<sup>81</sup> As evidenced by

Ogden's 1826-1827 expedition journal, this warfare was well underway by the late 1820s.<sup>82</sup> Since the Shoshone raids in the Oregon Country began in the late eighteenth-century, the Klamaths had some prior experience; this may explain how they were able to turn the tables so quickly after the Sahaptian raids began. The aging warrior Chiloquin lumped all the conflicts together: "[t]hose wars lasted a great many years. We found we could make money by war, for we sold the provisions and property captured for horses and other things we needed... We made war because we made money by it and we rather got to like anyhow."<sup>83</sup> Slave raids from the Klamath Basin and Klickitat raids from the Willamette Valley struck the Takelma, Shasta, and Athapaskan peoples of southwestern Oregon particularly hard. Like the Klamaths, the Native people of the Rogue River region sought a better position and began raids of their own, forming temporary alliances across ethnic lines for security and to prosper through the slave trade.<sup>84</sup> By the mid-1840s, some headmen in southwestern Oregon sold their own people to the Klickitats; according to Native informants, the unfortunate individuals were "poor" who had lost their status through debts and many were likely "bastard" children of "unpurchased" mothers.<sup>85</sup>

In much of this discussion, colonialism is implicated only indirectly in the intra-Native raiding (e.g., introduction of horses and guns, spreading fur trade, and the demand for cattle), however, Euro-American colonization had direct effects as well. David Hill (*Wawa'liks*) a "sub-chief" of the Klamath Lake band described two of the three slave raids in which he was personally involved to Gatschet. He boasted of "the Lake tribe's" predominance over other southern Oregon Natives. However, the impetus for the raids in

which he was actually involved was not Klamath but Euro-American. Regarding the first raid, he did not elaborate beyond mentioning that an American aided the raid on a band of Achomawi or Pitt Rivers. But in the second, he explicitly mentioned that the raid began with an ox feast held by a Euro-American, stating "he had become angry at the Pitt Rivers." In a footnote, Gatschet explained that the Euro-American was a farmer on Lost River who with other local colonists wanted the Achomawis punished for an earlier attack on "whites."<sup>86</sup>

Euro-Americans were not the only people on the scene influencing political decisions; Metis and eastern Indians who had worked for the fur companies, government expeditions, and overland parties lived throughout Oregon Territory in the 1850s. The role of such individuals on the Plateau has been well documented, particularly Tom Hill and Joe Gray, Delaware and Iroquois respectively, who explained American frontier history and Iroquois anti-colonial tactics to Cayuse and Nez Perce audiences.<sup>87</sup> In southwestern Oregon, several Metis had established themselves near the mouth of the Rogue River. One of these, a man named Enos, had come to the region as a guide for the Wilkes Expedition in 1841 and apparently took an active role in joining coastal bands with interior Indians in the winter and spring of 1856. Taking advantage of his mixed blood status to broker relations between colonists and indigenes, Enos had earlier convinced Euro-Americans that they had nothing to fear from the coastal bands. Euro-Americans subsequently hanged him for that service.<sup>88</sup>

The diverse Native peoples of southwestern Oregon never coalesced into a confederacy despite incendiary and fearful reports by colonists to the contrary.<sup>89</sup>

Throughout the winter and early spring, most Indians remained in small bands of six to twenty individuals, surviving as best they could.<sup>90</sup> The long-established norm of Native life in the region was to occupy sedentary winter villages appropriately stored with harvests of roots, nuts, berries, smoked meats, salmon, and eels.<sup>91</sup> Roaming in the Coast Range with its wet, blustery winter storms took its toll and contributed to the late spring, early summer surrender of almost all the Indians who managed to survive the elements and the militias. Many Native people in the region did their best to stay out of the fighting, many refused to leave the reservation and many others sought refuge from federal agents and local settlers with whom they had highly localized friendly relations. But many others chose to fight, burning a swath of American structures throughout the Rogue River Valley, along the river's course, and torching Prattsville (now Gold Beach) at the mouth. They burned Euro-American ranches and killed entire families along the middle and lower Rogue River, temporarily clearing the area of most colonists. The violence was not random, some ranches and colonists (mostly Metis) were spared because of previously peaceful relations while others such as Benjamin Wright, notorious for earlier massacres of Indians and abuse of women, was beheaded and his scalp ceremoniously danced over in apparent celebration of the event.<sup>92</sup>

According to combat reports and the eventual bureaucratic sorting of Indians for removal, the fighting had attracted Native people from well beyond the local villages. One local resident and witness to the burning of Prattsville noted the presence of "many strange Indians" taking part in the combat, and "Colonel" Drew of the volunteers claimed the participation of Klamaths.<sup>93</sup> The "Klamaths" probably referred to Shastas from

northern California's Klamath River, the Wirūhikwai'irukla, as the Klamaths-proper never joined the conflict. And, although many people fought as bands in small groups of about twenty, Tecumtum ("Elk Killer"), commonly known to Euro-Americans as "Old John," led a substantial inter-ethnic force through the spring of 1856. Some reports claimed that he had hundreds of men.<sup>94</sup> Originally from Shasta Valley, California, and with kinship ties to the headwaters of the Applegate River (a tributary of the Rogue River) in Oregon, Tecumtum was well positioned to attract widespread allegiance. Tecumtum had also established relations with warring bands on the Columbia Plateau through his son-in-law and boasted of his intelligence regarding the activities of militias throughout Oregon and Washington territories.<sup>95</sup> The Metis Enos reportedly met with Tecumtum in the early winter of 1856 and coordinated efforts with coastal bands, also buttressed by relatives from across the California border, later in the spring.<sup>96</sup>

Thus far, I have presented the Indian unity, as limited as it was, in political terms. The current literature on Indian alliances such as the work of David Edmunds and Gregory Dowd on eastern, anti-colonial movements suggests that a spiritual component would be likely if not necessary.<sup>97</sup> Did spirituality or a prophet movement play a significant role in southwestern Oregon or the Pacific Northwest in the mid-1850s? Inter-ethnic gatherings in the southern region were traditionally necessary for maintaining a natural balance of the world. The many sacred rites of the region required wealth items such as Pileated Woodpecker visors, dentalia shells from Vancouver Island, enormous obsidian blades, or albino deerskin robes that single communities often did not possess in sufficient quantities.<sup>98</sup> The cooperation and participation of villages among multiple



language groupings or “tribes” was common. Thus, the inter-ethnic connection through spirituality would not have needed a new prophetic movement. Indeed, prior relations among villages and bands fostered by intermarriage and spirituality certainly played a significant role in allowing for the limited unity in war.

Nevertheless, two features of the mid-1850s might suggest that a new movement had emerged. In 1854, Leschi, a Nisqually man from the Puget Sound region, ventured to the Table Rock Reservation and surrounding environs in southern Oregon telling of a vision. The vision was of a land of darkness, or *Polaklie Illahee* in Chinook Jargon, where Euro-Americans were going to take all the Indians, where the sun never shined, and where they would be damned to live out there days in a cold, dark, barren world.<sup>99</sup> This dystopic vision, I would argue, came directly from the early dispossession and reservation experiences of western Washington, western Oregon, and perhaps northern California. Indeed, early Seattle resident Dr. William Tolmie recalled that Leschi “shared at this time in the dread generally entertained by the Puget Sound Indians that the buying of their lands was a prelude to shipping them off in steamers to an imaginary dark and sunless country.” Tolmie added that “the Indian agents of that day will remember how widespread and universal that apprehension was – how an Indian, seemingly convinced of its absurdity, would be back in a few days, as much alarmed as ever.”<sup>100</sup> At the Table Rock reserve in southern Oregon, one-fifth of the people had died in the first winter, and Native peoples throughout the Oregon Country were understandably distraught by the prospects of removal and confinement.<sup>101</sup> Likely, the Nisqually vision was well received by many among the Table Rock residents. That Leschi was from a

distant country would not likely have rendered his message as foreign or alien. The Klamath seer and orator Cumutni ("living in a cave") reportedly consulted with many Native visitors who traveled as far as two hundred miles to meet with him before his death in 1866.<sup>102</sup> Still, was Leschi a prophet spreading a nativist spiritual movement?

Although Indian historians have made important steps in the direction of recognizing the roles of indigenous worldviews or "ethno-intellectual history"<sup>103</sup> as Christopher Miller eloquently expressed it, we should be careful not to look too hard for general Indian features such as prophet or revitalization movements. The ethno-intellectual tradition should include room for Indians as being capable of making political decisions within preexisting, if badly tattered, relations even during periods of cataclysmic upheaval. As Michael Dorris, the Modoc novelist, chastized in Calvin Martin's *The American Indian and the Problem of History*, Indians, as human beings, were quite capable of empiricism, and were not bound by "mysticism." Dorris attributes the insistence on mystical Indians to "the long standing tendency...to regard Indians as so 'Other,' so fundamentally and profoundly different, that [Europeans and Euro-Americans] fail to extend to native peoples certain traits commonly regarded as human."<sup>104</sup>

In line with Dorris's argument, and regarding the Columbia Plateau, I judge that Stern's version of the alliance achieved through family connections and practical, political decisions to be more viable than the workings of a millenarian movement. Similarly, the hostile "banditti" of the Puget Sound who attacked Seattle in 1856 can similarly be explained through kinship ties between the Nisquallys and the Yakamas as

well as coercive threats from bands already at war with U.S. citizens.<sup>105</sup> The *Polalklie Illahee* vision was likely coded spiritually by the legitimacy accorded to prophetic dreams throughout much of the Native world and, perhaps, reflected the inherent problems of communicating through Chinook Jargon as well. The trade language seems to have lacked the nuances of a formal language and made literal translations of abstract concepts – such as removal and confinement – difficult. A contemporary governmental investigator offered a fairly accurate description, despite his racist phrasing, when he explained “[i]t may readily be supposed that a rude and ignorant people, naturally prone to superstition, were not slow in giving credence to these fearful stories. Each tribe had its grievance from the north to the south. Common interest bound them in their compact against a common enemy.”<sup>106</sup> Earlier, in 1853, Father Panderoy and Major Alvord at The Dalles had warned of the Wascopam and Plateau Indians’ beginning to see common cause and an effort “to unite the hearts of Indians...[because] the Americans are going to take [all] their lands.”<sup>107</sup> Tecumtum in southwestern Oregon claimed a connection to these groups, and numerous south coast Native peoples had joined him in an effort to reclaim their homes.<sup>108</sup>

In 1855-1856, the Native peoples certainly did not instigate the colonial “race wars” through an alliance and offensive action. But the manner in which so many bands came together and concerted efforts so quickly following the attack on their reservation as well as their possession of weaponry, supposedly banned to them previously, strongly suggests a good deal of contingency planning.<sup>109</sup> The unity that suggested an inter-tribal alliance to Euro-American observers and the numerous limitations that reduced the

movement's effectiveness were shaped by the individual and collective Native historical experiences with colonialism in Oregon Territory. In 1855, confronted daily by Euro-Americans and the changes that they brought, the Native peoples were forced to make a decision – unite and fight or keep the peace and work towards other solutions. Some unity existed across cultural, linguistic, and geographic zones but it was limited and appears to have been strictly defensive and mostly devoid of the extermination goal. The connections among the combative Indians in southern Oregon, the Columbia Plateau, and Puget Sound were tenuous and never approached the scope of a grand tribal alliance. Indeed, within each subregion, not all bands participated. Kinship relations could and most often did work in favor of settlement rather than war, but we do need to work to understand the more militant side as well in order to understand the complex resistance to colonialism in the Pacific Northwest. Still, regardless of the nature of Native militancy, the limited movements succeeded only in stalling the volunteer militia campaigns, an effort aided by Oregon's winter storms that track from the Gulf of Alaska each season.

In the early spring of 1856, the regular army intervened and eventually ended the conflict but not without considerable acrimony between federal and territorial officials. By early February 1856, it was obvious that the Oregon militias could not finish what they had begun and even Charles Drew, a principal architect of the colonial militia and Indian extermination efforts, was among eighty-one Jacksonville men to sign a petition begging General Wool to enter the fray. They, of course, blamed the "Barbarous Indians" who have "murdered whole families," "pillaged and burned," and kept the people from trading, mining, and tilling. The volunteers were "wholly

inadequate...[poorly] organized, and though brave, are undisciplined."<sup>110</sup> Wool blamed the colonists for the wars (hostilities also broke out in Washington Territory in the fall of 1855) but promised troops to end them after the winter, and he made his stance against extermination clear. "Whilst I was in Oregon, it was reported to me, that many citizens, with a due proportion of volunteers, and two newspapers, advocated the extermination of the Indians." "This principle," he continued, "has been acted on in several instances without discriminating between enemies and friends, which has been the cause, in Southern Oregon, of sacrificing many innocent and worthy citizens, as in case of Maj. Lupton and his party, (volunteers) who killed 25 Indians, eighteen of whom were women and children." Yet, he would use his forces to end the conflict. Similarly, Wool advised Governor Isaac Stevens of Washington Territory, he would close the war on the Columbia Plateau after the winter, "provided the extermination of the Indians, which I do not approve, is not determined on, and private war prevented, and the volunteers withdrawn from the Walla Walla country."<sup>111</sup> Stevens was of a different mind: "The beautiful Walla Walla can never be permitted to remain an uncultivated waste. It wants the flocks and herds of the Willamette. We have gold mines there. The treasure of these must be sought and obtained." Stevens concluded with a call for Wool's dismissal.<sup>112</sup> Similarly, the Oregon press lashed out, condemning the useless "brass buttons" of the regular army and added many inflammatory, genocidal statements such as: "These Indians must be whipped, aye, they must *exterminated* [italics in original], or there will be no peace or safety to any part of portion of the country."<sup>113</sup> The Oregon legislature censured Wool and dispatched a memorial to President Franklin Pierce requesting his

removal from the office of commander of the Pacific Department.<sup>114</sup>

Wool had a different vision of the Rogue River War than the extermination-minded volunteer militias: the mission was to "bring in" the Indians, protect them from the colonists, and remove them to the new Coast and Grand Ronde Reservations. His plan to use three forces to converge on the lower Rogue River where most Indians had fled, "ferreting out...hostile bands" and establishing a peace council with the regions' headmen at Oak Flat was largely successful.<sup>115</sup> In March 1856, Colonel Robert Buchanan led a small regular army force to reinforce Smith's sole company of fifty dragoons and several dozen infantry, and with the help of the militias and "friendly Indians" (those who fought colonialism with diplomacy) "rounded-up" most of the Native bands by early summer 1856. The militias' methods infuriated Buchanan, as reported by one of his captains in May; he reported to the colonel that the volunteers had sent "two squaws ... to say if the Indians wanted peace they must send in the head of Enos. Col[onel was] in a rage at it."<sup>116</sup> The brutality of the request undermined the army's efforts. Still, although the regular army intended a forced removal strategy rather than one of extermination, green recruits became enraged by a "treacherous attack" against Captain Smith and retributive massacres resulted.<sup>117</sup> Captain Edward Ord who commanded a company of regulars noted "that I am glad I didnt go down [to an Athapaskan village] for I should have attacked before day light and many women & children would have been killed. [F]or since the treacherous attack on Capt Smiths command [it is] difficult to show any quarter, the men are disposed to kill all."<sup>118</sup>

Indeed, in practice, the combined force of regulars and volunteer militias

approached the war similarly, attacking and torching Native villages regardless of evidence of any offense by the occupants: all Indians outside the temporary refugee camps on the lower Rogue River were fair game. Many of the coastal peoples (north and south of the Rogue River) probably did not know that their particular bands were at war with the Americans until they were attacked and rounded up. Through the late spring and early summer, hundreds of weak, sick, and hungry Indians including those who had fled the Table Rock Reservation and those who had not yet experienced the horrific conditions of reservation life turned themselves in to the federal authorities. The temporary camps grew daily with despondent Native refugees, and the regular army was careful to put its own troops in charge of guarding the "Rogues," understandably not trusting the volunteer militias with this delicate task.<sup>119</sup> Career military man Captain Ord could barely contain his emotions witnessing the human misery surrounding him daily, as local Native villagers lost their homes, possessions, and family members despite having successfully removed the colonists.<sup>120</sup> He complained to his diary that he could not sleep because of "the never ending melancholy wail of the Squaws in mourning from the officers tents" and the "old squaws... a howling the medicine song over sick babes." As well, the hills resounded nightly with the solemn rhythms of dancing and chanting men in the refugee camps who reached, perhaps, for some unattainable power at this excruciating time of loss.<sup>121</sup>

The Native peoples of southwestern Oregon were "removed" to a swath of land on the central coast (its rugged topography made it temporarily undesirable to most colonists and seemingly a natural barrier to escape) and the nearby Grand Ronde

Reservation created for the Willamette Valley tribes.<sup>122</sup> The regular army had to detach a force to escort the Indians through the Umpqua and upper Willamette Valley settlements after colonists there had threatened to kill the surviving "Rogues" from the southwestern interior.<sup>123</sup> The army also established Fort Umpqua at the southern end of the Coast Reservation to keep Indians from trying to return home and to protect them from vengeful militias. The colonists of nearby Empire City on Coos Bay announced their intention to kill any Native people who left the reserve, including those granted permission by Agent E.P. Drew to gather salmon for the winter.<sup>124</sup> As mentioned earlier, subsequent militia endeavors such as the "Gold Beach Guard" and Tichenor's "round-ups" of Indians from the Chetco and Pistol rivers continued intermittently on the south coast through 1858 to rid the area of bands still "infesting" the south coast hills. Similarly, in the Rogue River Valley, in January 1857, colonists around Jacksonville attacked a small band of "Rogues" who had avoided the removals of the previous spring and summer. The militia killed all ten men and brought the sixty to sixty-five women and children to Jacksonville where they remained in undisclosed conditions until their May 1857 removal to Grand Ronde.<sup>125</sup> The gross disparity in the band's gender-ratio and the fate of the men suggest the powerful effect of the militias' hunting of Indian men during the 1850s in southwestern Oregon. A military post was erected in 1864 on the Klamath Basin, partly to keep the Rogue Valley environs clear of Indians from the east. The colonists of southwestern Oregon had not fought the Rogue River War so that Klamaths, Modocs, and Northern Paiutes could move into the region recently cleansed of the "Rogues,"<sup>126</sup> though exceptions for individual women continued. An 1865 round-up



at Kanaka Flats outside of Jacksonville included members, mostly women, of several Native ethnicities including banned "Rogue" groups.<sup>127</sup> Similarly, on the coast, miners and loggers continued to harbor Native "wives," as the manual and sexual labors of Native women continued to be in demand in the forest camps.<sup>128</sup>

For Native women, marriage to or, more commonly, cohabitation with Euro-American men was a means of remaining in their homelands and avoiding the depredations of the reservations. Soldiers continued the rape and abuse of Native women perpetrated by colonials before removal.<sup>129</sup> In vain, headmen complained to a federal investigator about the violence against Native women as well as the deplorable conditions on the reservations, stating that it was not war but the peace that was killing their people.<sup>130</sup> Coquille Susan Ned explained the "choice" she faced: "sometimes when you are cold and hungry [on the reservation] you change your mind" and accept a Euro-American husband as a means of escape and survival.<sup>131</sup> Some women who took that route were able to aid others who otherwise escaped from the reservations. Susan Adulsah Wasson, who married a Scottish-Canadian, illegally housed her aged mother Gisgiu who had miraculously evaded the soldiers and made her way down the rugged coastline from the Yachats Agency to her daughter's house on the South Slough of Coos Bay. She traveled at night, swimming the treacherous currents around the headlands and across river mouths. As a tribal storyteller, Gisgiu helped preserve the little that remains of Coquille oral history by relating many legends and tales to her children and grandchildren before her death in 1894. She also charged her fourth grandson with getting the tribal lands back. He was defeated by twentieth-century bureaucracy and

racism, but successive generations of Wassons and their Coos-Coquille relatives have worked to keep his charge alive.<sup>132</sup> Susan Wasson was one of the non-reservation Coquilles who eventually claimed an allotment under section four of the Dawes Act. Her allotment, patented in 1895, was 160 acres of land adjacent to her "white" husband George's claim on the South Slough. Several Native relatives moved onto the allotment, as did the Wassons after George lost his land in a failed logging venture. Other Coquille Indians cited Susan Wasson as their relative in affidavits for allotments in the early 1900s and, ironically, for termination claims in 1954.<sup>133</sup> Following the Rogue River War and forced removal, Native peoples struggled to create new lives on the multi-ethnic reservations and some, mostly women, as minorities within colonial communities in their former homelands.

The Native peoples of southwestern Oregon joined the peoples of the Willamette Valley and lower Columbia River environs at the new Grand Ronde and Siletz Reservations. Between March 1854 and January 1855, Indian Superintendent Joel Palmer had affected treaties containing the removal clauses favored by colonialists, which Dart had earlier failed to produce in 1851. Palmer took an effective tack of approaching the largest band (other than the Klickitats who were again ignored by the treaty commission), the Tualatin Kalapuyas, who reluctantly, but understandably given the public mood among Euro-Americans, ceded their homeland.<sup>134</sup> The numerous smaller bands followed suit. The actual removal of the Willamette Indians did not occur until the outbreak of war to the north and south in October 1855 when the Euro-Americans' extermination cries reached a fevered pitch. The Willamette Indians did not

resist, though some individuals obtained official permission to continue working as laborers on the farms and in the towns that had once been their homes.<sup>135</sup> Even this could be dangerous, as evidenced by the citizens of Yamhill County who resolved in the spring of 1856 that all off-reservation Indians “shall be declared enemies” and assumed to be in communication with the “hostiles.”<sup>136</sup>

For Euro-American colonists of Oregon Territory, the political struggle over the cause of the war was just beginning: Was it a speculative scheme of “private war” as charged by Wool and other critics? There was certainly money involved. The colonial warfare of 1855-1856 in southwestern Oregon, the Puget Sound area, and the Yakama Country on the Columbia Plateau followed the arrival of monies from the national treasury reimbursing militia expenses from the Cayuse War and an earlier, limited Rogue River War of 1853. As well, Drew and Ross – masterminds of the Walker Expedition to the Klamath Basin – were in the midst of trying to convince Governor Curry to make good on former Governor Davis’s promise to obtain remuneration for their 1854 militia efforts. The best place to begin sorting out the supposed speculation schemes and conspiracies is with the political climate of the Oregon Territory, which produced the original accusations of speculation.

The control of Oregon politics was at stake with an old-line Democratic establishment known as the “Salem Clique” desperately trying to hold on against insurgents, particularly from burgeoning Jacksonville. Indeed, Drew, Ross and several of their compatriots – Whigs, disaffected Democrats, and Know-Nothings – were part of simultaneous movements to overcome the Salem Clique’s stranglehold on territorial

government and, more radically, to secede from Oregon. Their secession scheme called for stalling Oregon's statehood until southwestern Oregon and northern California were allowed to form a new territory as Washington had done the year before in 1853.<sup>137</sup> The new territory would remove substantial numbers of voters (necessary for statehood), the most mineral-laden portion of Oregon, and the remaining "unsettled" farmland of the southern valleys from the territory's resources. Not surprisingly, the clique cried foul. As the territorial representative to Congress was clique member Joseph Lane, the secession attempt was dead on arrival at Washington, D.C. The clique's newspaper owned by Democrat Ashael Bush, the *Oregon Statesman*, also attacked his rivals' remuneration attempt, printing a lampoon of the 1854 Walker expedition – "The Campaign to Fight the Emigrants" – and accusing Ross, Drew, and company of speculating treasury funds to discredit them.<sup>138</sup>

Speculation, though engaged in by nearly all colonists, still carried the haunting image of moneyed interests infringing upon the rights of citizens; thus, it was an effective political tool in the mid-nineteenth century western colonies. William J. Martin, the author of the humorous spin on the expedition, asked rhetorically, "[h]ow can the Whigs be trusted in or out of office[?] They are all gobbling claims, ready to cheat Uncle Sam at all times whenever they can." Martin also called for an official investigation and recommended that Captain Smith of Fort Lane conduct it.<sup>139</sup> Through the pages of the *Oregonian*, a Whig newspaper, the southwestern colonists fired back and carefully explained why the Walker Expedition and future militia efforts were absolutely necessary to the "public welfare."<sup>140</sup> The outbreak of the 1855-1856 Rogue River War added some

new dimensions to the factional squabbling – control and supply of the militias, for example – but the speculation accusations soon waned in importance for territorial politicians. After Lupton's massacre of the Quachis Ikiraku'tsu on Little Butte Creek, the politicians had a war to win and benefit from.<sup>141</sup> The rival newspapers and political factions largely agreed that extermination was the only practical solution to the Indian problem though they disagreed how long it would take.<sup>142</sup> Indeed, Martin, author of the incendiary lampoon, was the commander of the "southern army" who subsequently issued the "take no prisoners" order.<sup>143</sup>

Once conjured, however, the speculation genie could not be controlled, and federal officials subsequently grabbed hold and expanded the speculation charges to declaim the territorial factions as a single avaricious colonial entity. Martin's hyperbolic attack on the Walker Expedition had unwittingly added fuel to the fire by confirming Captain Smith's (and, in turn, Wool's) suspicions about the untrustworthy nature of colonial militias in 1854.<sup>144</sup> From early November 1855, General Wool was utterly convinced that the extermination efforts in southwestern Oregon – indeed, the entire volunteer effort in Oregon and Washington territories – were speculative endeavors to make money from war remunerations.<sup>145</sup> Again, if we look at the political context, the speculation charges can be understood.

Quite simply, the colonial militias infringed on the regular army's turf. Much of Wool's criticism came from jurisdictional jealousies: the governors of Oregon and Washington Territories had not requested his permission before putting militias into the field and they operated independently of the regular officers representing Wool's

command.<sup>146</sup> As Captain T.J. Cram of the U.S. Topographical Engineers complained to Congress, “[t]o say nothing of the legality of those [volunteer military] measures, one familiar with military usage cannot fail to perceive in them either a marked contempt of the authority of the President’s commander of the department [Wool], or else a total want of knowledge of that courtesy which of right and by usage is due to such officer.” He also tied a condemnation of the territorial militias into a plea for more funding and men, explaining that, “it is certainly much more economical to have sufficient force to prevent a war between the Indians and whites than to suffer it to be created, thereby affording a pretext for volunteers to be called out by the territorial governors, and afterward be obliged to bring the regular army into requisition to suppress it.” Capitalizing on the speculation charges flying about, Cram concluded: “The truth of this will be fully sustained when the bills for the services of the Oregon and Washington volunteers are rendered to Congress.”<sup>147</sup> The clashes between federal and territorial interests regarding the Indians, particularly extermination, lasted for years, as Wool and others effectively stymied federal remuneration efforts for the territorial militias for decades.<sup>148</sup> Other contemporary critics agreed and saw the attempted extermination of Indians merely as despicable private wars to defraud the public treasury.<sup>149</sup>

Indeed, speculation probably played some role in the final Rogue River War, as charged by contemporary critics and as recently championed by historian E.A. Schwartz as the principal cause of the war.<sup>150</sup> After all, the entire colonial project of western Oregon was based on economic speculation. War profiteering and shenanigans with remuneration claims would be expected if countless other wars are indicative, including

the "Cayuse War" of 1848 and the contemporaneous "Yakama War" of 1855 – 1856. Still, only one case of an illegal war claim from the Rogue River War was ever proven in court, and the scam actually occurred long after the war, during the protracted remuneration phase.<sup>151</sup> As well, the territorial government did not offer cash to suppliers or militiamen, instead offering pledges for future payment and scrip, which many merchants refused to accept.<sup>152</sup> Previous remuneration attempts had taken years and the contemporaneous political morass regarding the Walker Expedition suggested that such payments were hardly automatic or immediately forthcoming. Thus, it seems doubtful that hundreds of individuals would launch into a bloody conflict because it may or may not bring payment at some indefinite point in the future. Indeed, as proclaimed in the *Oregonian* at the outset of the war, the federal government's inaction in "suppressing of Indian hostilities in years past, has destroyed the confidence of many, that the general government would render compensation for services rendered or supplies furnished, consequently the requisite supplies for this emergency are compelled to be raised by direct contributions of money, provisions &c from our citizens; a burden which they are illy able to bear."<sup>153</sup> Moreover, an 1857 investigation by the United States Treasury Department determined that remuneration speculations did not cause the war. Instead, the investigator J. Ross Browne faulted the confusion over jurisdiction caused by the ill-considered donation land laws, the failure to extinguish Indian title, and the "natural" results of a "superior race" coming into contact with an "inferior" one.<sup>154</sup>

Browne's conclusions are revealing: To comprehend the "Indian wars" of 1855-1856, one must place them within the larger context of white supremacy and Euro-

American settler-colonialism in western Oregon. The Donation Land Laws (1850-1854) had created a sovereignty swamp: as a territory, Oregon should have been legally Indian Country (until ceded by treaty) but the colonists were acquiring title preemption to aboriginal lands. Similarly, mining claims were completely unregulated and Indians had no recourse from miners' intrusions and ecological devastation caused by their endeavors. Thus, it was "Indian Country and it is not," according to one befuddled Indian agent.<sup>155</sup> The result, in the words of a contemporary critic, was "the mischief-making policy of Squatter Sovereignty...and violence and outrage" against the Indians.<sup>156</sup> Investigator Browne concluded "That [the confusion regarding sovereignty] has been a fruitful source of difficulty there can be no doubt. It was unwise and impolitic to encourage settlers to take away the lands of the Indians." He noted that Indians "could never be taught to comprehend that subtle species of argument by which another race could come among them, put them aside, ignore their claims, and assume possession, on the ground of being a superior people."<sup>157</sup> The supposed racial superiority represented popular folk-beliefs linking whiteness, citizenship, and the rights of property which undergirded this murderous example of Native dispossession.<sup>158</sup> Attributing the brutal slaughter of Native peoples, the open calls for their extermination, and the seizure of their lands solely to the speculative machinations of a handful of greedy men such as John Ross, James Lupton, and Charles Drew in 1855 misses the forest for the trees and takes at face value accusations leveled by self-interested political factions.<sup>159</sup>

Euro-American colonialists wanted to possess Oregon – more, to create Oregon according to a vision that left little or no room for aboriginal inhabitants. As post-



colonial theorist Patrick Wolfe recently explained, "settler colonies...are premised on displacing indigenes from (*replacing them on*) the land." Indeed, they are "premised on the elimination of native societies."<sup>160</sup> From the mid 1840s, attempts of physical extermination by colonial militias occurred when Native bands contested colonization through "annoyances" and raids on mining camps, settlements, and emigration parties and when so-called Indian wars erupted intermittently from 1847 to 1856. Ending perceived and real threats to the "public welfare" by eradicating feared bands of Indians – particularly the men, as women could still be useful for gaining larger land claims (320 acres for single men and 640 for married men) as well as domestic, agricultural, and sexual labors.<sup>161</sup> The extermination of the Native peoples of southwestern Oregon, defined as "rogues," comprised an important part of colonization as conceived and affected by Euro-Americans who were convinced that profitable exploitation of Oregon was their birthright as United States citizens. Nineteenth-century Euro-Americans understood extermination to be a component of conquest and colonization. Not all colonials favored extermination nor did all militia members participate in massacres, but support for extermination was high and remained so for years after the war.<sup>162</sup>

Unlike many present-day historians, Victorian-era historian Frances Fuller Victor had no qualms about the link between Euro-American colonization and the extermination of Indians.<sup>163</sup> She wrote in the last decades of the nineteenth-century, during an era of blatant United States' imperialism overseas and local memory-building at home in which self-ascribed "Oregonians" constructed a past which legitimized, mythologized, and sanitized their oft-violent colonial actions.<sup>164</sup> Victor blamed the territory's "Indian wars"

on the federal government's poor administration of Indian affairs and credited the "heroic pioneers" (to whom she dedicated her work) with guarding the frontier. "The preservation of their lives and property forced upon them the alternative of war, even to extermination, the end of which was...first conquest, and finally banishment for the inferior race...in consonance with that law of nature which decrees the survival of the fittest."<sup>165</sup> Such a grossly racist explanation suited the Gilded Age. Over a century removed from the pioneer generation, however, we should be able to analyze the relationship between the colonization of western Oregon and Native genocide without the need to justify or deny it. Euro-American colonists reserved settlement and economic speculation of southwestern Oregon's resources for themselves and ensured that "birthright" through extermination efforts. Although they failed, their efforts nevertheless produced a federal action of forced removal of the Indians; that is, the fewer than 2,000 survivors of an estimated 1851 population of 11,500 were removed to the Coast Reservation.<sup>166</sup> The fact that Euro-Americans often discussed extermination and sometimes attempted it as a central component of settler-colonialism makes it an important topic for historical analysis and one that should not be ignored, buried in guilt and shame, or left to racist, archaic histories like Victor's to explain.

Notes

<sup>1</sup> *Cayuse Papers*, folder 1 box 6, "Undated; fragments" – a petition from Josephine County residents to Curry, probably summer of 1855 given reference to an early July event and Curry's position.

<sup>2</sup> Harlow Zinser Head, "The Oregon Donation Claims and Their Patterns," (Ph.D. diss., University of Oregon, 1971), 56-58.

<sup>3</sup> Thomas Smith, *Account of the Rogue River Indian Wars of 1853 and 1855*, MS P-A 94, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 6-7.

<sup>4</sup> The dichotomy typical of the region's historiography – settler versus miner – is misleading. The settlers or "hardy pioneers" were the initial miners of the California Gold Rush and continued to feed the ranks for years, particularly in southwestern Oregon, which was a northern extension of the rush. Such notables of southern Oregon history as William Packwood, Pleasant Armstrong, Charles Brown, John Groslius, Peter Hunter, John Kirkpatrick, John B. Long, James Lowe, Dr. James McBride, and Benjamin Wright had filed provisional land claims before moving south to the gold fields of California and southwestern Oregon. See Gurley *Geneological Material*, respectively, 103, 33, 19, 95, 111, 213, 230, 219, 102, and 231.

<sup>5</sup> Ross, *Narrative*, 11.

<sup>6</sup> For example, see Hastings, *The Emigrant Guide*, 65; Joel Palmer, *Journal of Travels Over the Rocky Mountains*, reprint (1847) ed., (Fairfield, WA: Ye Galleon Press, 1983), 90; Johnson and Winter, *Route Across*, 50; and passage from General George B. McClellan's Mexican War diary quoted in Dorothy Sutton and Jack Sutton, ed., *Indian Wars of the Rogue River* (Grants Pass, OR: Josephine County Historical Society, 1969), 20.

<sup>7</sup> Senate, *Message of the President of the United States of America to Congress*, 31st Cong., 2nd Sess., S.Ex.Doc. 1, 1851, Serial 587, 164. See also Anson Dart to William Spaulding, October 14, 1850, *Oregon Superintendent: Letters Received, 1824-1881*, roll 607, frame 730.

<sup>8</sup> Applegate in Victor, *Early Indian Wars*, 149.

<sup>9</sup> For a narrative of early Indian-white conflicts, see Stephen Dow Beckham, *Requiem for a People: The Rogue Indians and the Frontiersmen* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 1971), 23-46. The depredations against Euro-American travelers served the purpose of justifying colonial bellicosity and militia remuneration, though the accounts did not explain provocations by colonists or the number of Indians wounded or killed. See, for example, the "history" provided by territorial secretary B.F. Harding in his

attempt to secure remuneration for the 1854 militia campaigns to the Snake River and Klamath Basin, House, *Papers Transmitted by the Secretary of Oregon Territory, Relative to the Protection Afforded by the Volunteers of Oregon and Washington Territories to Overland Immigrants in 1854*, 35th Cong., 2nd sess., 1859, Misc. Doc. 47, Serial 1016, 57-60.

<sup>10</sup> Victor, *Early Indian Wars*, 12-13, and Beckham, *Requiem for a People*, 34.

<sup>11</sup> Quoted in Victor, *Early Indian Wars*, 238.

<sup>12</sup> Ross, *Narrative*, 13-17.

<sup>13</sup> See, for example, Albert L. Hurtado, *Indian Survival on the California Frontier* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988); James J. Rawls, *Indians of California: The Changing Image* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1984); Sherburne F. Cook, *The Conflict Between the California Indian and White Civilization* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976); and Clifford E. Trafzer and Joel R. Hyer, ed.s, *Exterminate Them!: Written Accounts of the Murder, Rape, and Enslavement of Native Americans During the California Gold Rush* (East Lansing: Eastern Michigan State University Press, 1999).

<sup>14</sup> For description of Wright's décor, Ross, *Narrative*, 24. The massacre of the Modocs generated some controversy, see Meacham, *Wigwam and Warpath*, 677-678 and for a Native account see Albert Samuel Gatschet, *The Klamath Indians of Southwestern Oregon* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1890), 13.

<sup>15</sup> Senate, *Message of the President of the United States, communicating...the Instructions and Correspondence between the government and Major General Wool*, 33rd Cong., 2nd Sess., 1855, Ex. Doc. 16, Serial 751, 15, 18-19. B. F. Dowell, MS P-A 133. The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 5-6.

<sup>16</sup> Allan R. Millett and Peter Maslowski, *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States of America* (New York: The Free Press, 1984), 122, 136.

<sup>17</sup> Davis to Wool, December 13, 1854 in Sen.Ex.Doc. 16, 125-127.

<sup>18</sup> Wool to Major General Winfield Scott, February 28, 1854, in Sen.Ex.Doc. 16, 11.

<sup>19</sup> Sen.Ex.Doc. 16, 50-58.

<sup>20</sup> Frustrated with the volunteer militias authorized by territorial governors, Wool claimed the sole right to call for militias and that he "should have all the staff departments within his command under his immediate and direct control." Wool to Jefferson Davis, January

7, 1854, in Senate Executive Document 16, 5-6. Wool blamed the Oregon volunteers, "mustered into service, by the authority of the governor," for speculating supply funds; Wool to L. Thomas, Headquarters of the Army, New York, September 14, 1854 in Sen.Ex.Doc. 16, 103-104.

<sup>21</sup> Section 15 of the 1854 territorial militia law. see Drew to Davis, July 7, 1854 in House Miscellaneous Document 47, 3-5. The national Militia Act of 1792 had stipulated that all states and territories maintain trained, equipped, and regulated militias, but few localities abided by its tenets, which required regular musters, self-support (taxation), and a subservience to federal command during war. Numerous debacles from the War of 1812 and the 1847 conquest of Mexico spoke to the deficiencies of the law in practice. Indeed, military historians generally agree that militias of this design had withered into non-existence by 1830. Jerry Cooper, *The Militia and the National Guard in America Since Colonial Times: A Research Guide* (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1993); Jerry Cooper, *The Rise of the National Guard: The Evolution of the American Militia, 1865-1920* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997); Tom D. Dillard, "An Arduous Task to Perform: Organizing the Territorial Arkansas Militia," *Arkansas Historical Quarterly*, 1982, 174-190; James B. Whisker, *The Rise and Decline of the American Militia System*, (Selinsgrove, PA: Susquehanna University Press, 1999). The frontier versions like those of Oregon, Washington, and California in the 1850s were distinctive from federal law in their independent, temporary, and racially charged anti-Indian actions. Nonetheless, the mid-nineteenth-century far-western militias certainly drew upon a preexisting cultural tradition of volunteer Indian fighting, which they carried with them from the earlier eastern frontiers. Mary Ellen Rowe, "The Sure Bulwark of the Republic: The Militia Tradition and the Yakima War Volunteers," (Ph.D. diss., University of Washington, 1988).

<sup>22</sup> Broadside circulars in 1847 "informed" the public of these supposed speculations regarding the "road of starvation," George N. Belknap, *Early Oregon imprints in the Oregon State Archives* (Worcester, Mass.: American Antiquarian Society, 1981), 30-31; see also Buena Cobb Stone, "Southern Route Into Oregon: Notes and a New Map," *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, 1946, 135-154.

<sup>23</sup> Jeff C. Riddle, *The Indian History of the Modoc War and the Causes That Led To It*, (Medford, Oregon: Pine Cone Publishers, 1973), 22.

<sup>24</sup> Senate, *Report of the Secretary of the Interior, 1854*, 33rd Cong., 2nd Sess., 1854, Ex. Docs., Serial 746, 470.

<sup>25</sup> Riddle, *The Indian History*, 27.

<sup>26</sup> Schonchin quoted in Theodore Stern, *The Klamath Tribe: A People and Their Reservation* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1966), 38-39.

- <sup>27</sup> Drew to Davis, July 7, 1854; Davis to Ross, July 17, 1854; Ross to Davis, August 5, 1854; and Ross to Curry, November 10, 1854 in B. F. Dowell, MS P-A 133. The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, folder 4.
- <sup>28</sup> Ross to Walker, August 8, 1854 in Dowell, MS 133, folder 4.
- <sup>29</sup> Walker to Ross, November 11, 1854 in Dowell, MS 133, folder 4.
- <sup>30</sup> Palmer letter appointing a sub-agent for eastern Oregon, September 28, 1854 in Folder 47 Box 1/4 "1851-1855" in Cayuse, Yakima, and Rogue River Wars Papers (1847-1858), MS 72-322, Box 47, The Knight Library, University of Oregon.
- <sup>31</sup> Dowell, MS 133, 5.
- <sup>32</sup> *Report of the Secretary of the Interior*, 1854, 465-467.
- <sup>33</sup> Sutton and Sutton, *Indian Wars*, 258.
- <sup>34</sup> William Tichenor, Among the Oregon Indians, MS P-A 84. The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 25-31, 82-85, 105-106; Senate, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1857*, 35th Cong., 1st Sess., Ex. Doc. 2, 1858, Serial 919, 324; and A.Z Hedges to Commissioner George Manypenny, November 19, 1856, *Oregon Superintendent*, roll 609, frame 244.
- <sup>35</sup> ARCIA, 1857, 324.
- <sup>36</sup> Tichenor, *Among the Oregon Indians*, 25, 27.
- <sup>37</sup> *Report of the Secretary of the Interior*, 1854, 476-495.
- <sup>38</sup> Roberta L. Hall and Don Alan Hall, "The Village at the Mouth of the Coquille River: Historical Questions of Who, When, and Where," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, 1991, 107.
- <sup>39</sup> George B Wasson, "The Coquille Indians and the Cultural "Black Hole" of the southwest Oregon Coast," (master's thesis, University of Oregon, 1994).
- <sup>40</sup> *Report of the Secretary of the Interior*, 1854, 480-481.
- <sup>41</sup> Bonnycastle to Wool, May 28, 1854, S.Ex.Doc. 16, 80-83.
- <sup>42</sup> S.Ex.Doc., 78.
- <sup>43</sup> S.Ex.Doc.16, 14-15.

<sup>44</sup> *Cayuse Papers*, folder 1 box 6, "Undated; fragments" – a petition from Josephine County residents to Curry, probably summer of 1855 given reference to an early July event and Curry's position.

<sup>45</sup> B. F. Dowell, MS P-A 137. The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 31, 102, 136, 152, 160, 164, 180, and 230.

<sup>46</sup> Dowell MS 137, 230.

<sup>47</sup> For numerous examples of such discourse, see Dowell, MS 133 and 137. Dowell was an attorney for numerous federal remuneration claims on behalf of Oregon citizens, seeking to recover costs and damages from fighting Indians. His scrapbooks are replete with relevant testimony, editorials, and personal correspondence, much of which predates the remuneration attempts but served subsequently as evidence.

<sup>48</sup> John Beeson, *A Plea for the Indians; with facts and features of the late war in Oregon* (New York: John Beeson (self), 1857).

<sup>49</sup> Beeson in *Oregon Superintendent*, roll 609, frame 19.

<sup>50</sup> Thomas Smith, *Account of the Rogue River Indian Wars of 1853 and 1855*, MS P-A 94, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 73.

<sup>51</sup> House, *The Topographical Memoir and Report of Captain T. J. Cram, Relative to the Territories of Oregon and Washington, in the Military Department of the Pacific*, 35th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1859, Ex. Doc. 114, Serial 1014, 44-46. For a recent discussion of the Lupton Massacre, see Schwartz, *The Rogue River Indian War*, 85-86. For volunteer's quote, see Beeson, *A Plea*, 54-55 and Schwartz, 86.

<sup>52</sup> Sutton and Sutton, *Indians Wars*, 172.

<sup>53</sup> Dowell MS 137, 172.

<sup>54</sup> Wool to Thomas, November 3, 1855 in B. F. Dowell, MS P-A 138. The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 131.

<sup>55</sup> *Report of the Secretary of the Interior*, 1854, 463.

<sup>56</sup> An anonymous letter (probably Charles Drew) to the editor proclaimed that "the predictions ... have been more than realized." *Oregonian* October 12, 1855.

<sup>57</sup> For the Olalla massacre, *Reminiscences*, Virginia McKay, 5-6.

<sup>58</sup> Victor, *Indian Wars*, 423.

<sup>59</sup> George B Roberts, *Recollections of George B. Roberts*, MS P-A 83. The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, pages 20, 32, 34, 39, 41, 77, 90, and 94.

<sup>60</sup> Gustavus Hines, *Life on the Plains of the Pacific*, (Buffalo: George H. Derby and Co, 1851), 143-44.

<sup>61</sup> Isaac Stevens address to "Fellow Citizens of Portland and Oregon Territory," *The Standard*, October 16, 1856 in Dowell, MS 134, 100.

<sup>62</sup> Frances Fuller Victor, *The Early Indian Wars of Oregon. Compiled From the Oregon Archives and Other Original Sources with Muster Rolls*, (Salem, OR: Frank C. Baker, State Printer, 1894); Stephen Dow Beckham, *Requiem for a People: The Rogue Indians and the Frontiersmen*, (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 1971); E. A. Schwartz, *The Rogue River War and Its Aftermath, 1850-1980*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997).

<sup>63</sup> Schwartz blithely concluded regarding inter-ethnic Native relations, "They do not seem to have gotten on well with their Shasta neighbors," *The Rogue River War*, 3-4, 11. Beckham noted issues such as slave raiding and "fighting" but did not analyze them, *Requiem for a People*, 10, 22. The original description is found in James A Cardwell, Emigrant Company, MS P-A 15. The Bancroft Library. University of California, Berkeley, 17-18.

<sup>64</sup> Regarding intra-Indian extermination, Coquille Thompson in *Harrington Papers*, 25: 907-908, Tichenor, "Among the Indians," 105-106. For a discussion of settlement ceremonies in the region, Gray, *The Takelma and Their Athapascan Neighbors*, 40, 60, 73, 88-92; Lucy Thompson, *To the American Indian: Reminiscences of a Yurok Woman* (Berkeley: Heyday Books, 1991), 185-88; Kroeber and Gifford, "World Renewal," 110, 128; Philip Drucker, "The Tolowa and Their Southwest Oregon Kin," *University of California Publications in American Archaeology and Ethnology*, 1937, 221-300, 251; A. L. Kroeber, "A Yurok War Reminiscence: The Use of Autobiographical Evidence," *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology*, 1945, 318-332; William W. Elmendorf, *The Structure of Twana Culture: With Comparative Notes on the Structure of Yurok Culture* by A. L. Kroeber (Pullman: Washington State University Press, 1992), 466-8, 475.

<sup>65</sup> Christopher L. Miller, *Prophetic Worlds: Indians and Whites on the Columbia Plateau* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1985) and Elizabeth Vibert, "Early-Nineteenth-Century Prophetic Movements in the Columbia Plateau," *Ethnohistory*, 1995, 197-229.

<sup>66</sup> Theodore Stern, *Chiefs and Change in the Oregon Country: Indian Relations at Fort*



*Nez Percés, 1818-1855* vol. II, (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 1996), 93.

<sup>67</sup> See intermarriage discussion, chapter four. As well, The above statements are in keeping with contemporary anthropological scholarship. For a good introduction, see the several applicable articles in Wayne Suttles, vol. ed., *Handbook of North American Indians* vol. 7, William C. Sturtevant, series ed., (Washington DC: Smithsonian, 1990). For excellent analyses of Native identity over time in the neighboring Puget Sound region, see Alexandra Harmon, *Indians in the Making: Ethnic Relations and Indian Identities around Puget Sound* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998); Alexandra Harmon, "Lines in the Sand: Shifting Boundaries between Indians and Non-Indians in the Puget Sound Region," *Western Historical Quarterly*, 1995, 429-453.

<sup>68</sup> Audrey Smedley, *Race in North America: Origin and Evolution of a Worldview*, Second ed., (San Francisco: Westview Press, 1999); Theodore W Allen, *The Invention of the White Race*, (New York: Verso, 1994); Theodore W Allen, *The Invention of the White Race* (New York: Verso, 1997).

<sup>69</sup> Boyd, *People of The Dalles*, 112.

<sup>70</sup> Gatschet, *The Klamath Indians*, vol. 2, 617.

<sup>71</sup> For the history of race in the early U.S. history, particularly regarding Indians and westward expansion, see Tomas Almaguer, *Racial Fault Lines: The Historical Origins of White Supremacy in California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994); James Campbell and James Oakes, "The Invention of Race: Rereading White over Black," *Reviews in American History*, 1993, 172-83; Richard Drinnon, *Facing West: The Metaphysics of Indian Hating and Empire Building* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1980); Barbara Fields, "Ideology and Race in American History," in *Region, Race and Reconstruction*, edited by J. Morgan Kousser and James M. McPherson, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982); Ramon A Gutierrez, *When Jesus Came, the Corn Mothers Went Away: Marriage, Sexuality, and Power in New Mexico, 1500-1846* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991); Reginald Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981); Albert L Hurtado, *Indian Survival on the California Frontier* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988); Patricia Nelson Limerick, *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1987); Tessie Liu, "Race," in *A Companion to American Thought*, edited by Richard Fox and James Kloppenberg, (New York: Blackwell, 1995), 564-67.

<sup>72</sup> Social action may be immoral and based in ignorant fear but when directed by common purpose such as "Manifest Destiny," it is not irrational. Pierre Bourdieu, *Practical Reason: On the Theory of Action* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998).

<sup>73</sup> Robert Boyd, *People of The Dalles, The Indians of Wascopam Mission: A Historical Ethnography Based on the Papers of the Methodist Missionaries*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), 157; and *Report of J. Ross Browne*.

<sup>74</sup> *Report of Brevet Major Benjamin*, 34<sup>th</sup> Cong., 3<sup>rd</sup> Sess., 1856-1857, Doc. 76, Serial 906, 11.

<sup>75</sup> See Tecumtum's speech in *Report of J. Ross Browne*, 44-47.

<sup>76</sup> For Horse Creek, see House, 35<sup>th</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> Sess., 1854, Misc. Doc. 47; Senate Misc. Doc. 59; and ARCIA, 1854, 262, 277, 278. Also see correspondence, C.S. Drew to Oregon Governor Davis July, 7, 1854 in B. F. Dowell, MS P-A 133. The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley. For Grande Ronde, see Stern *Chiefs and Change*, 275-6.

<sup>77</sup> Senate, *Report of the Secretary of the Interior, 1854*, 33<sup>rd</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> Sess., 1854, Ex. Doc., Serial 746, 464.

<sup>78</sup> Harrington, *The Papers of John Peabody Harrington*, reel 24, frames 937, 939.

<sup>79</sup> Julie Cruikshank, *The Social Life of Stories: Narrative and Knowledge in the Yukon Territory* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998) 118, 122, 136. For the "mythic time" concept, see Calvin Martin, *Keepers of the Game: Indian-Animal Relationships and the Fur Trade* (Baltimore: Johnson Hopkins University Press, 1978); Calvin Martin, *In the Spirit of the Earth* (Baltimore: Johnson Hopkins University Press, 1995); Calvin Martin, ed., *The American Indian and the Problem of History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987); Calvin Luther Martin, *The Way of the Human Being*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999) and for well-reasoned criticisms, Kerwin Lee Klein, *Frontiers of Historical Imagination* (Berkeley: University of California, 1998) and Shepard Krech III, ed., *Indians, Animals, and the Fur Trade: a Critique of Keepers of the Game* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1981).

<sup>80</sup> Stern, *Chiefs and Change*, 170-172; regarding Sutter, Hurtado, *Indian Survival*, 80-81.

<sup>81</sup> Boyd, *People of The Dalles*, 157, Leland Donald, *Aboriginal Slavery on the Northwest Coast of North America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 141; Gatschet, *The Klamath Indians*, vol. 1, 20.

<sup>82</sup> Lalande, *First Over the Siskiyou*, 34-35, 39.

<sup>83</sup> Chiloquin quoted in Theodore Stern, *The Klamath Tribe: A People and Their Reservation* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1966), 23.

<sup>84</sup> Gray, *The Takelma and Their Athapascan Neighbors*, 17, 18, 52, 62; Robert F. Heizer and Thomas Roy Hester, "Shasta Villages and Territory," *Contributions of the University of California Archaeological Research Facility: Papers on California Ethnography*, (Berkeley: Contributions of the University of California Archaeological Research Facility, Department of Anthropology, 1970), 144.

<sup>85</sup> Ruby and Brown, *Indian Slavery*, 211, Coquel Thompson in *Harrington Papers*, 25: 944, Peterson in Jacobs, "Coos Narratives," 84-88.

<sup>86</sup> Gatschet, *The Klamath Indians*, volume 1, 16, 20, 26. This may be the same incident covered in "The Late Indian Outrages in Pitt River Valley," *Yreka Union*, February 12, 1857.

<sup>87</sup> Stern, *Chiefs and Change*, 71, 111.

<sup>88</sup> William Tichenor, Among the Oregon Indians, MS P-A 84. The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 39; Beckham, *Requiem for a People*, 173-176. For "culture brokers," Alan Taylor, "Captain Hendrick Aupamut: The Dilemmas of an Intercultural Broker," *Ethnohistory*, 1996, 431-457 and Clara Sue Kidwell, "Indian Women as Cultural Mediators," *Ethnohistory*, 1992, 97-107.

<sup>89</sup> The belief was especially acute regarding the events of 1855, see correspondence from J.W. Nesmith, Superintendent of Indian Affairs for Oregon and Washington territories, to J. Denver, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, September 1, 1857 Senate, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1857*, 35th Cong., 1st Sess., 1858, Ex. Doc. 2, Serial 919, 315.

<sup>90</sup> Dowell, MS 137, 172, 208.

<sup>91</sup> Kay Atwood and Dennis J. Grey, *People and the River: A History of the Human Occupation of the Middle Course of the Rogue River of Southwestern Oregon* vol. 1, (Medford, Oregon: USDI - Bureau of Land Management, 1996) and Dennis J. Gray, *The Takelma and Their Athapascan Neighbors: A New Ethnographic Synthesis for the Upper Rogue River Area of Southwestern Oregon*, University of Oregon Anthropological Papers, 37 (Eugene: University of Oregon, 1987).

<sup>92</sup> Nunis, *The Golden Frontier*, 95. South coast Indians removed to the Siletz agency after the war ceremoniously recreated Wright's death nightly, dancing around his scalp. The agent, Robert Metcalf, sent soldiers to capture and threaten the lives of two Native men unless the Indians' surrendered their trophy, which they reluctantly did, in *Report of J. Ross Browne*, 48.

<sup>93</sup> Palmer's annual report included a letter from W. H. Dunbar, November 22, 1855: "He

states that he [a survivor hiding in a thicket] saw the Too-too-to-teis [and]...Many strange Indians have made their appearance well armed and have actually committed many depredations," in Dowell MS 133, C.S. Drew to Col Williams January 4, 1856, reports that the Indians involved in recent shooting were not "'Johns' Indians' they are Klamaths." Dowell MS 138, 21.

<sup>94</sup> For recent narratives of the spring 1856 campaigns, Beckham, *Requiem for a People*, 147-190, Schwartz, *The Rogue River Indian War* 136-147.

<sup>95</sup> *Report of J. Ross Browne*, 44-47; Senate, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1856*, 34th Cong., 1st Sess., 1856, Ex. Docs., Serial 810.

<sup>96</sup> Ord, April 13, 1856 entry, Tichenor, "Among the Indians," 39, Sutton and Sutton, *Indian Wars*, 201.

<sup>97</sup> Gregory Evans Dowd, *A Spirited Resistance: The North American Indian Struggle for Unity, 1745-1815* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992); Joel W. Martin, *Sacred Revolt: the Muskogees' Struggle for a New World* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1991); Joel W. Martin, "Before and Beyond the Sioux Ghost Dance: Native American Prophetic Movements and the Study of Religion," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, 1991, 677-701; and R. David Edmunds, "Tecumseh, the Shawnee Prophet, and American History: A Reassessment." *Western Historical Quarterly*, 1983, 261-276.

<sup>98</sup> See chapter three discussion.

<sup>99</sup> "Report of J. Ross Browne," 11.

<sup>100</sup> Dr. William F. Tolmie to Gov Fayette McMullen in Meeker, *Pioneer Reminiscences of Puget Sound*, 449.

<sup>101</sup> Palmer ARCIA 1854, 463.

<sup>102</sup> Gatschet, *The Klamath Indians of Southwest Oregon*, volume 1, lix and the *Overland Monthly*, June, 1873, 540.

<sup>103</sup> Miller, *Prophetic Worlds*.

<sup>104</sup> Michael Dorris, "Indians on the Shelf," in *The American Indian and the Problem of History*, edited by Calvin Martin, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 98-105, quoted, 101.

<sup>105</sup> Henry L. Oak, "Notes on Indian Wars in Washington Territory, 1855-1856," MS P-B 69, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 8-9, Dr. William F. Tolmie

to Governor Fayette McMullen, in Meeker, *Pioneer Reminiscences of Puget Sound*, 448-449. Governor Isaac Stevens coined, "banditti," for the Seattle assailants to distinguish them from the Yakamas, ARCIA, 34th Cong., 3rd Sess., 1857, Ex. Doc. 37, Serial 899.

<sup>106</sup> "Report of J. Ross Browne," 12.

<sup>107</sup> "Report of J. Ross Browne," 10, Stern, *Chiefs and Change*, 273.

<sup>108</sup> "Report of J. Ross Browne," 44-47, Sutton, *Indian Wars*, 133-134.

<sup>109</sup> Euro-Americans asserted that much of the weaponry was obtained through prostitution, Sutton and Sutton, *Indian Wars*, 74-75.

<sup>110</sup> Petition of citizens of Jacksonville to Wool, February 2, 1856 in Dowell MS 138, 40-45.

<sup>111</sup> Wool quotes appear in a unnamed newspaper clipping from February 12, 1856 in Dowell, MS 134.

<sup>112</sup> *The Standard* October 16, 1856.

<sup>113</sup> *The Oregonian - Extra*, March 28, 1856.

<sup>114</sup> Cram, *Topographical Report*, 104-5.

<sup>115</sup> For Wool's strategy, see Cram, *Topographical Report*, 48-49.

<sup>116</sup> Edward Ortho Cresap Ord, Edward Ortho Cresap Ord Papers, MSS C-B 479, Box 7. The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, May 6, 1856.

<sup>117</sup> Cram, *Topographical Report*, 51-53; It remains unclear whether the "Battle of Big Meadows" was a failed truce attempt resulting from poor communication or a sneak-attack by Tecumtum and his people, as charged by Euro-Americans.

<sup>118</sup> Ord diary entry, June 6, 1856.

<sup>119</sup> Ord diary entry, June 17, 1856.

<sup>120</sup> Ord diary entry, June 8, 1856.

<sup>121</sup> Ord diary entry, June 7 and 12, 1856.

<sup>122</sup> For geographical description, see Cram, *Topographical Report*, 53-54.

<sup>123</sup> Cram, *Topographical Report*, 46; and Sutton and Sutton, *Indian Wars*, 216.

<sup>124</sup> E.P. Drew Umpqua agency to Nesmith, June 30, 1858. Drew had allowed "a party of Indians to return to Kowes river and Ten-mile creek for the purpose of subsisting themselves for a time, and also to procure salmon for their winter's use." However, "The residents of Empire City...urgently petitioned this office to recall them, stating, in their petition, that the prevailing opinion in that vicinity was to the effect 'that any Indian found off the reserve could at once be shot, and no law or justice reach the offender.'" ARCIA, 1858, Doc. 1, 254-257.

<sup>125</sup> ARCIA, 1857, Doc. 149, 361-362.

<sup>126</sup> House, *Report of the Secretary of the Interior*, 38<sup>th</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> Sess., 1864, Ex. Doc. 1, Serial 1182, 171.

<sup>127</sup> *Kanaka Flats Inventory, April 12, 1865*, Takelma Indians File, Southern Oregon Historical Society, Medford, Oregon.

<sup>128</sup> Royal Augustus Bensell in Shannon Applegate and Terence O'Donnell, eds., *Talking on Paper: An Anthology of Oregon Letters and Diaries* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 1994), 56.

<sup>129</sup> Beverly Ward, *White Moccasins* (Cottage Grove, OR: B.H. Ward, 1986), 57-58.

<sup>130</sup> *Report of J. Ross Browne*, 44-47 and J.W. Nesmith to Commissioner J.W. Denver, September 1, 1857, in ARCIA, 1857, 316.

<sup>131</sup> Ned quoted in Ward, *White Moccasins*, 58. See also Johnny Waters statement regarding his grandmother, in Harrington, *The Papers of John Peabody Harrington*, roll 24, frame 797.

<sup>132</sup> George Bundy Wasson, Jr., *Growing Up Indian: An Emic Perspective* (Ph.D. diss., University of Oregon, 2001), 187, 217-220.

<sup>133</sup> The land also served the purpose of burial ground until 1934 and remained in the Wasson family until 1956. In 1956, an anonymous descendant sold the property to Coos Head Timber Company and, in January 1979, the land became an ecological sanctuary of the state of Oregon, Roberta L Hall, *The Coquille Indians: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow* (Lake Oswego, OR: Smith, Smith and Smith Publishing Company, 1984), 114-115, 68, 70-73. Several of Susan Wasson's descendants still live in the immediate area.

<sup>134</sup> Spores, "Too Small a Place," 181.

<sup>135</sup> Spores, "Too Small a Place," 185.

<sup>136</sup> Incomplete newspaper clipping following the March 1856 attack on the Cascades settlement, in Dowell, MS 34.

<sup>137</sup> Sutton and Sutton, *Indian Wars*, 121-123.

<sup>138</sup> See *The Oregon Statesman* June 2, 1855 for the initial charge and use of the phrase, which appeared as a broadside against a faction of supposed Know Nothings.

<sup>139</sup> *The Oregon Statesman*, May 20, 1855; July 14, 1855; and Benjamin Franklin Dowell, Mss 209. Oregon Historical Society, Portland, Oregon, 89-191.

<sup>140</sup> *Oregonian* June 13, 1855 and October 12, 1855. The newspaper rivalry was fierce. The *Oregon Statesman* (December 8, 1855) charged that "Last Spring [Charles Drew] formed a partnership with the *Oregonian* to incite Indian hostilities south, for the patriotic purpose of furthering the payment of the yet unpaid bills of the famed expedition to 'fight the emigrants' and opening an opportunity for another grab."

<sup>141</sup> Schwartz, *The Rogue River Indian War*, 93-112.

<sup>142</sup> For examples of this factional sniping regarding the Walker expedition, see Dowell MS 209, 154-156, 189-191 and Dowell, MS 34, 23. For disagreements about the required time for extermination, 72-73. For the proposed territorial cession, see Sutton and Sutton, *Indian Wars*, 121-123. For an early accusation of speculation, Ashael Bush editorial, *Oregon Statesman* October 8, 1855, and for an attempted retraction of this position, *Oregon Statesman*, May 4, 1858.

<sup>143</sup> Sutton and Sutton, *Indian Wars*, 172.

<sup>144</sup> Wool to L. Thomas, September 14, 1854 in Serial 751, S.Ex.Doc. 16, 103-105.

<sup>145</sup> Wool in Cram, *Topographical Memoir*, 125.

<sup>146</sup> Cram, *Topographical Memoir*, 7.

<sup>147</sup> Cram, *Topographical Memoir*, 72.

<sup>148</sup> Wool to Secretary of War John B. Floyd, January 28, 1858 in Cram, *Topographical Memoir*, 124-26.

<sup>149</sup> Of particular frustration to the Oregon politicians and their newspapers were editorials from San Francisco that called the Rogue River War a hoax and invention to market

surplus produce to troops, Dowell MS 209, 75.

<sup>150</sup> Schwartz, *The Rogue River Indian War*, "pork-barrel" thesis, xii, 45-46, 69-90.

<sup>151</sup> Long-time Salem Clique member turned U.S. District Court Judge Matthew Deady gave loaded jury instructions regarding his rival Charles Drew on December 14, 1878, reprinted in the *Albany Register* January 17, 1879, evidencing that Deady still held to his former political enmity. *United States vs. William Griswold* concerned a falsified muster roll, a copy of the original made for submission to the Treasury. The case alleged that Drew and Griswold added false claims to the original and had John Ross sign it in attorney Benjamin Dowell's presence. Drew testified that he never signed the false document and disavowed knowledge of the addition of false claims; handwriting experts confirmed that the signature did not match. Dowell, however, swore that he witnessed Drew sign but that he must have "signed in a disguised hand, so that he might deny it at some future time." Though Drew was not on trial, Deady instructed the jury that he all but admitted to having forged the papers. The substitution of papers was done some time after 1860. The originals were said to have been lost, but Deady advised the jury that it was unlikely that the papers were really lost. The jury ruled in favor of the U.S. in the amount of \$35,228. B. F. Dowell, MS P-A 139. The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 390-407.

<sup>152</sup> Dowell MS 137, 106; and Sutton and Sutton, *Indian Wars*, 295.

<sup>153</sup> "Forest Dale" (probably Charles Drew) to Editor *Oregonian* October 12, 1855.

<sup>154</sup> *Report of J. Ross Browne*, 4.

<sup>155</sup> Agent M.T. Simmons to Nesmith, June 30, 1858, ARCIA, 1858, 225. Although Simmons was describing his district of the Puget Sound, the same conditions had existed in western Oregon.

<sup>156</sup> Editorial from southwestern Oregon settler John Beeson to the *True Californian* in *Oregon Superintendent: Letters Received, 1824-1881*, roll 609, frame 20.

<sup>157</sup> *Report of J. Ross Browne*, 4.

<sup>158</sup> For racism as a folk belief, see Audrey Smedley, *Race in North America: Origin and Evolution of a Worldview* 2nd ed., (San Francisco: Westview Press, 1999). For whiteness as property, see Cheryl Harris, "Whiteness as Property," in *Black on White*, edited by David R. Roediger, (New York: Schocken Books, 1998), 103-118.

<sup>159</sup> The political explanation can be found most recently in Schwartz, *The Rogue River Indian War*, which while containing commendable research nevertheless reinforces the



"naturalness" of extermination by not critically examining it.

<sup>160</sup> Patrick Wolfe, *Settler Colonialism and the Transformation of Anthropology: The Politics and Poetics of an Ethnographic Event* (New York: Cassell, 1999), 1, 2.

<sup>161</sup> White men vastly outnumbered white women, 5,268 to 1,428 or approximately 3.7 to 1 in the six counties of southwestern Oregon (Coos, Curry, Douglas, Jackson, Josephine, and Umpqua). Still, in 1860 after Indian removal, there were only 32 intermarriages on record in the six counties, *The 8<sup>th</sup> United States Census Manuscripts, 1860*. Reminiscence accounts consistently cite land claims for the few intermarriages; see for example *Reminiscences of Southern Oregon Pioneers*, MS CB H629, Knight Library, University of Oregon; Virginia Estes Applegate, 5; "Stonewall" Jackson Chenoweth, 2-3; and Virginia McKay, 3. Unofficial relations certainly occurred as well, though it would be misleading to regard them as necessarily long lasting. In the words of Lottie Evanoff, a Coos woman: "The early whites here were just like Coyote – they would make a baby & just keep on going." *The Papers of John Peabody Harrington*, roll 24, frame 694.

<sup>162</sup> Locked in a tough election and seeking Jacksonville votes, an *Oregon Statesmen* article from May 4, 1858 included a series of earlier quotes demonstrating that they and the Democrats had supported the Rogue River War and the extermination of the Indians all along. Thus, extermination advocacy appears to have continued to be a bell-weather political issue for Rogue Valley residents even after the war and Indian removal.

<sup>163</sup> Victor, *The Early Indian Wars*. For an argument that suggests historians should not address extermination, see Richard White, in Eric Foner, ed, *The New American History* 2nd ed., (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1997); and for a recent example of taking an approach with no villainy (except human ignorance of the environment), see Elliott West, *The Way to the West: Essays on the Central Plains* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995). For historical treatment of extermination, see David Svaldi, *Sand Creek and The Rhetoric of Extermination: A Case Study in Indian-White Relations* (New York: University Press of America, 1989); and for select chapters, Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny*; James J. Rawls, *Indians of California: The Changing Image* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1984); Hurtado, *Indian Survival*.

<sup>164</sup> Gray H Whaley, "Indians Twice Removed: Historical Representations of the Native People of Southwestern Oregon," in *Changing Landscapes: "Telling Our Stories," Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Coquille Cultural Preservation Conference, 2000*, edited by Jason Younger, Mark A. Tveskov, and David G. Lewis, (North Bend, OR: Coquille Indian Tribe, 2001), 84-85. For the preeminent works on the subject, Richard Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment: The Myth of the Frontier in the Age of Industrialization, 1800-1890* (New York: Atheneum, 1985); Richard Slotkin, *Regeneration through Violence: The Mythology of the American Frontier, 1600-1800* (Middletown,

Connecticut: 1973).

<sup>165</sup> Victor, *The Early Indian Wars*, 424.

<sup>166</sup> Beckham, *Requiem for a People*, 9, and Schwartz, *The Rogue River Indian Wars*, 149. As Schwartz notes, the 1857 census figure of 1,943 did not include the few individuals, mostly women, who had avoided removal.

## CHAPTER VII

## CONCLUSION:

*ILLAHEE*, "INDIAN COLONIES," AND THE PATERNALIST STATE

When European and Euro-American mariners first encountered the Native peoples of the lower Columbia, they were not enacting some pre-ordained plan of gradual imperial domination of the region and its inhabitants. Like the merchant-explorers of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, their ultimate goal was to establish a profitable trade with East Asia. The maritime traders recognized that their activities in the modern-day Pacific Northwest could facilitate a strong relationship with Chinese merchants, offering exploitable commodities, cheap indigenous labor, and (for the Russians, British, and Americans) a base of operations on the Pacific Ocean that was removed from the Spanish dominions. Too, the concomitant goal of carrying Christian civilization to the "savages" arguably played some role in the trade excursions, as missionaries accompanied or followed closely in the wake of the merchant ships to the Pacific Islands, East Asia, and eventually the Oregon Country.

Still, the colonial trade in which the Europeans and their American progeny competed with one another and exploited indigenous peoples and resources was well established in the Atlantic realm by the late eighteenth century. Captains Cook, Gray, and Broughton were not carrying out a rigid imperial design, but they nevertheless initiated a history much related to earlier colonization in eastern North America, Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa, and the Indian subcontinent. Great Britain, Spain, the

United States, and Russia experimented with particular forms of imperialism to order their increasingly far-flung enterprises and to compete with one another more profitably. They cast their eyes upon the northern Pacific Coast of North America with a vision keened by two centuries of overseas expansion, learning from both their countrymen and their competitors.

The United States, though young and relatively small, was emerging as a nation-state at a time when the older European countries were similarly modernizing, coalescing into unified cultural, political, and economic states. Although internal divisions, contradictions, and contestation would play as large a role as unification in the ensuing national histories, coherent nation-states have remained the principal entities in the ongoing drama of domestic and global relations. As the Jeffersonian scholar Peter Onuf recently argued, the “‘nation,’ a characteristically modern idea that Americans themselves helped invent, constituted an imaginative bridge across the great chasm between center and periphery, metropolis and provinces.” Nation was inherently linked to empire in the eyes of America’s visionary Thomas Jefferson and many of his contemporaries, friends and foes alike, in the United States and Europe. Moreover, American revolutionaries sought inclusion in the European world not isolation from it: that inclusion meant economic competition for overseas markets and, by the early nineteenth-century, spreading their democratic-republican ideals to distant lands.<sup>1</sup> Thus, the earliest colonial encounters in the lower Oregon Country were part of a larger national and international (imperial) equation. Inasmuch as local contingencies, circumstance, and individual agency shaped the historical events of the early to mid-

nineteenth century in the region, distant decisions and institutional memories of previous and contemporaneous colonial endeavors shaped the early history of western Oregon.

An imperial context, however, certainly does not imply a simple historical picture. The land-based fur trade began as a competition between John Astor, a German-born American, and his erstwhile trading partners in Montreal, the nominally British Northwest Company, whose enterprise challenged the imperial monopoly of the Hudson's Bay Company. While neither Astor nor the Northwesters sought to be nationalized companies, both sought to protect their investments by encouraging and fostering the imperial claims of their sponsor states. However, until the Oregon Treaty of 1846 finally established a boundary (between modern Washington and British Columbia), the competitors had to contend with the messy and confusing system of joint-occupation. Importantly, the distant diplomatic morass of the metropolises affected life on the ground level. Such was evident in the relocation of Fort George, competition between the forts and American coasters, the "fur desert" strategy, and the consequent effects on relations between the colonial and indigenous traders.

The Christian American mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church offers one of the best examples of how murky and complex the relationship between nation and empire was in practice. From the outset, Jason Lee and his band attempted to operate within a paradoxical realm of mission and colony. The remote mission and its proposed civilization project necessitated some degree of colonization. However, such actions encouraged the advent of settler-colonialism, which was slowly taking shape with the decline of the fur trade in the 1830s. Colonization undermined the plan of Christian

conversion by attracting competition from individuals only interested in the economic possibilities of the land and invited criticism of the mission's supposedly secular activities. Moreover, what did it mean to spread Christian-American civilization? Conversion of the "savages," certainly, but folk tradition and governmental policies also suggested that occupation of the land and dispossession of the indigenous peoples were the more likely meanings. Elsewhere, Euro-American missionaries to the Indians had to contend with the dilemmas of disease epidemics, whether to attempt conversion or "civilization" first, and how to counter the corrupting influences of the decidedly negative features of western society, particularly alcohol abuse. However, in western Oregon, the competing imperial claims made the situation nearly untenable. In this situation, the Methodists became overwhelmed by the more powerful priorities of colonial land claims, and racial ideologies doomed their Christian enterprise.<sup>2</sup>

With the hordes of settler-colonists from the mid-1840s onward, squatter sovereignty and white patriarchy regarding property ownership and citizenship emerged as the defining visions of western Oregon – a conglomeration of actions and discourse that I have termed folk imperialism. In the absence of a formal state, Euro-Americans drew on established precedents of territorial government and popular renderings of United States history to create a provisional government, which granted them massive land claims and dispossessed Native inhabitants who were reeling from disease. The colonists espoused the ideals of classical republicanism and an unquestioned faith in white supremacy to provide rationales and legitimacy for their individual speculations, which were the economic base of settler-colonialism in western Oregon.

From the earliest encounters of the 1790s through the fur trade and disease epidemics of the 1830s, the Native peoples evidenced a strong ability to adapt and change with historical circumstances. Thousands of individuals, mostly anonymous in the written record, went about their daily lives, balancing indigenous practices and beliefs with the new exigencies of manufactured goods, increased mortality rates, altered ecology, and the redistribution of land and resource sites. Such men and women also helped determine what the colonial traders ate, how well they profited, and how secure they felt and, indeed, were. Leaders such as Madame Coalpo, Concomly, and Cassino variously challenged, inhibited, and aided the colonial traders, evidencing constant Native efforts to benefit individually and communally for their villages and inter-village kin. Although malaria, smallpox, syphilis, and other diseases carried off catastrophically high numbers of Indians, a distinctive Native world continued to be evident through the dawn of settler-colonialism and beyond.

I have used the term *Illahee* instead of the larger and vaguer notion of "Indian Country" to specify experiences in western Oregon and to offer a parallel construction to "Oregon."<sup>3</sup> Just as Oregon has never had a single, fixed, uncontested meaning, *Illahee* was a composite Native realm with multiple meanings that changed over time in relation to Indians' experiences with colonization. Inter-village communication, trade, and other forms of interaction on local and regional levels long predated encounters with Europeans and Euro-Americans, but there was no *Illahee* until there was an external imposition of imperialism. Scholars have long recognized the creation of the "other" in European-world history in which indigenous peoples came to be defined against idealized self-

identities of westerners. Thus, there were no "Indians" or "savages" in the Americas before 1492. Similarly, the Americas as a place came into existence through western cartography and attempts at imperial (or perhaps empirical) dominion. The idea of a Pacific Northwest or Oregon Country would have been meaningless to Native peoples initially. "Northwest of what?" Alexandra Harmon has examined the ways in which Europeans and Euro-Americans introduced the concepts of Indian identity to the Puget Sound region in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and how Native peoples took up these identities and put them to use in the twentieth century. Katherine Morrissey has analyzed the cultural geography through which Euro-Americans created a place on the Columbia Plateau, the "inland empire," through their "mental mapping" and economic endeavors. Such creative phenomena had been ongoing on both macroscopic and microscopic levels, arguably, since the arrival of humans. Constructions of identity and place are fundamentally historical creations, deriving from the ways in which people understand themselves, "others," and their environment.<sup>4</sup>

The planned and unplanned effects of the fur trade, missions, and settler-colonialism created a dynamic and often dangerous world through which the Native peoples had to navigate. By the 1840s, many Indians of the Willamette Valley, lower Columbia environs, and Columbia Plateau took wage work on the farms and in the towns and industries that had displaced their traditional subsistence economies. In the 1851 treaty negotiations, local bands of Kalapuyas, Clatsops, and Chinooks requested only to maintain a core of their former homelands; these checkered holdings were *Illehee*. The Klickitats who took up land in the Willamette and Coquille valleys and the Umpquas who



homesteaded along the river that bears their name established *Illahee*. *Illahee* existed in the two Chetco villages that combined a traditional economy with a ferry business servicing traveling colonists during the gold rush. More infamously, *Illahee* was evident in the limited defensive alliances from 1855 to 1856 and the political struggles for unified action that cost the lives of several headmen among the Coos, Takelmas, and others. There was also the dystopian alternative vision of *Illahee*, the *Polaklie Illahee* prophecy of the land of darkness. Each of these manifestations of *Illahee* was simultaneously externally imposed (colonialism) and internally directed (indigeneity), demonstrating continued Native adaptation and negotiation of historical change.

The causes of the so-called Rogue River Wars of the mid-1850s were complex, as evident from the previous chapter's discussion of economics, politics, and ideology. The California Gold Rush and the Oregon Land Rush collided in the canyons and river valleys of southwestern Oregon. The Native peoples, who had been largely tangential to the fur trade and less devastated by disease than the Indians of the Willamette Valley, suddenly faced tremendous competition for resources. Colonialists knew little of the Shastan, Takelman, Penutian, and Athapaskan speaking peoples other than that they were treacherous "rogues." Such Indians were not going to be allowed to stand in the way of a deserving citizenry. The earlier history of Willamette Valley colonization and the war with Mexico strengthened the Euro-Americans' beliefs in their racially exclusive birthright to possess Oregon. Congress obliged by granting territorial recognition, donation claims, and by remunerating the expenses of militias. The United States did little to prevent the resulting atrocities and, indeed, fostered white supremacist views of

the land and its use. The genocidal wars of southwestern Oregon stemmed as much from the Euro-Americans' refusal to share resources with the Native peoples, which would have allowed Indians to adapt to the local colonial economy, as the fear of Indians' retribution for the destruction of their traditional subsistence economy. This, I believe, is a crucially important but poorly understood Oregon story.

Removal and confinement to reservations or as Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles Mix called them, "Indian colonies," in no way signaled the end of Native experiences with colonialism. In many ways, it was just the beginning, as their lives would be largely dominated by paternalist federal administration and shaped by their exclusion from dominant white society. When Treasury Department investigator Ross Browne interviewed the principal headmen of southwest Oregon at the Coast Reservation in 1857, they believed that their entreaties to the "Great Father," as Browne described the president, would have some effect. Cholcultah explained that he had never agreed to sell his homelands near Table Rock and Evan's Creek and had agreed to leave temporarily because "We are told that if we go back the white people will kill us all..." He questioned Browne's paternalist depiction of the president, if "is our Great Father[,] Why, then should he compel us to suffer here?" He felt that the president should be able to control his people. "Let us go back to our homes," he implored, "and our hearts will be bright again like the sun." Tecumtum had similar pleas based on his agreement to removal as having been temporary. As well, he noted the problem that the peoples of southwestern interior did not know how to get food on the central coast; the country was

foreign and "covered with great forests. It is hard to get through them." Agent Robert Metcalfe also noted the problem that most of his charges "know nothing of the natural products" having never "seen this country" before confinement. As well, Tecumtum claimed that the president owed him: "My son-in-law went to the Dalles to live with the Yakimas and Klickitats. I made peace, and sent word to him, and to all the hostile tribes, to quit fighting." While certainly an overstatement of his authority, Tecumtum felt credit was due. "I told him to tell them I had made peace, and it was no use to fight any more. For this I think we deserve well of the President." His people could not stay on the reservation because "we are all dying." Indeed, the "Rogue Rivers" had the highest death rate among the reservation population, and this fact was hardly bemoaned by the Euro-Americans. Browne recorded the headmen's "many complaints" but advised them that they could not go home, ever. He expressed regret that Joel Palmer had misled them about their permanent removal, but "if they undertook to go back to their homes they would be shot down, and then the President's heart would be sad, because he could no longer protect them." The Native peoples would continue to press their case for returning home for several years to no avail.<sup>5</sup>

The reservations were a stopgap measure to end the Rogue River War by removing the Indians from the path of Euro-American settlement and bullets. The majority of the Native peoples at the Siletz Agency did not even have a treaty agreement ratified by the Senate and were effectively "prisoners of war," according to their agent.<sup>6</sup> Without treaties, no annuity payments were forthcoming. Consequently, monies for food, clothing, and housing were completely unpredictable and fell far short of sustaining

the reservation population. According to Superintendent Absalom Hedges in 1857, the Indians "must be fed...or must be fought," and he pressed for more funding.<sup>7</sup> Agent John Miller at Grand Ronde advised that without government aid, the Willamette tribes would starve or leave; if they left, the Euro-Americans would renew "the war of extermination."<sup>8</sup> The Secretary of the Interior changed these reports somewhat, casting them as two policy alternatives. He advised in his annual report in 1858 that the federal government had to provide sustenance or "the only alternative...is to exterminate them."<sup>9</sup> However, he was probably striving for effect rather than actually suggesting genocide. The business of administering Indian affairs proved quite lucrative for the agents involved, and the often corrupt men had a personal stake in increasing monies for the reservations.<sup>10</sup>

The Native desire to leave was strong initially. Siletz agent Robert Metcalf worried that he could not keep the Indians on the reservation and suggested that some bands were conspiring to return home. Tecumtum reportedly tried to initiate such an effort to return to the Rogue Valley in 1858, and Agent Metcalf "banished" him and his son "Adam" (also known as "Cultus Jim," meaning worthless or no good Jim in Chinook Jargon.) Military authorities agreed to take them to San Francisco's Alcatraz Island. Aboard the steamer *Columbia*, the two supposedly attempted escape while the ship was in Humbolt Bay near the California - Oregon border. In the fray, Tecumtum was shot through the nose and his son suffered a broken leg, which was subsequently amputated. Five years later after pleas from Tecumtum's daughters, Metcalfe's replacement W.H. Rector agreed to have the old warrior and his son returned to the reservation. The years

on "the rock" understandably changed both men. According to their agent in 1863, "they exert a very salutary influence over other Indians in inducing them to remain at home [reservation] and live like white people."<sup>11</sup> Although agents would occasionally complain that members of south coast bands threatened to burn reservation buildings in protest of their non-ratified treaties, which meant no annuities and little provisions, the days of violent resistance to colonization were past.

In the first difficult years of reservation life, relations among the different Native ethnicities were often strained. Some violence occurred because people blamed each other for the wars and removal. Sickness and disease were rampant, and resulting deaths were sometimes blamed on Native doctors who failed to produce a cure or who were believed to have conjured the illnesses. Grand Ronde agent John Miller cited "frequent serious quarrels," and in one instance, the Takelmas had a bloody altercation or "open warfare" with the Umpquas. Tecumtum's son had also been implicated in a doctor killing, possibly related to this episode. Schoolmaster John Ostrander stated that one "doctress" sought blame for illnesses she could not cure, attempting to save her life. She blamed the school's trumpet for emitting sickness like "a mist" that settled "upon the camp." At a headman's request, Ostrander agreed not to sound his trumpet, sarcastically stating that he "was not such a monster...so the Indians 'still live.'" Siletz agent Metcalfe stated that the people "live in constant terror of their doctors and doctresses..." He claimed that he knew "more than one hundred doctors and doctresses murdered, and many of them by the hands of their own brothers." His figure was certainly an exaggeration, and one soldier put the figure at six killed over the first thirty months. The

death tolls from unknown diseases clearly had effects beyond individual deaths; they were assaulting Native belief systems and producing tremendous fear. Metcalfe aptly compared the situation to the Salem witch trials, which also occurred during a time of social upheaval. As late as 1871, Joel Palmer complained that "superstitious" ideas "that their 'medicine-men' can 'will' their death," was still maintained.<sup>12</sup> Doctor killings, however, had apparently stopped.

Capitulation to the colonial administration also produced strained relations among Native peoples. The Kalipuyas, who had been working on Euro-American farms for years before removal, accepted agriculture much more readily than the recently removed bands from southwestern Oregon. There was not much good soil at Grand Ronde, but the Kalapuyas and Umpquas were trying to make the best of it. Agent John Miller stated that, as a result, the name "Calapooias...has become a byword or term of reproach with the braver and more warlike Indians..." At Siletz, Metcalfe similarly noted that "some in each tribe" castigate and discourage "those who will work, by calling them fools, slaves &c." Down the coast on California's lower Klamath River reservation, the agent also complained that many "look with contempt upon [agricultural] labor, and to taunt those who are willing to work with the epithet of 'white man's slave.'" For many Native people, to accept agriculture was to reject who they were as a people.<sup>13</sup>

The few Native peoples who had tried "to live like white people" in the late 1850s found that some Euro-American citizens would not tolerate their land ownership. Louis Napesa and his Umpqua band had cultivated land and owned "improvements" in the Umpqua Valley but were compelled to depart for Grand Ronde in 1856 to avoid the

wrath of Oregon militias. All their properties were seized by Euro-Americans. Napesa and his people spent years trying to recover equitable remuneration.<sup>14</sup> A Klickitat man known as Dick Johnson, his Umpqua wife "Mummy," and some extended family occupied a homestead in the Umpqua Valley. Johnson had labored on Jesse Applegate's farm in the 1840s, and Reverend Josiah Parrish helped him get his own claim. Parrish wrote a letter of explanation for Johnson to show anyone who inquired, as he was ineligible to file an official claim at the land office, which barred non-whites. Johnson and his family established their farm after the fashion of their Euro-American neighbors complete with a house, fencing, and outbuildings. When the colonial wars broke out in 1855, Superintendent Palmer gave them special dispensation to remain on their claim and avoid removal. Well after the war, in November 1858, a small group of Euro-American men attacked the homestead, killing Dick and his brother-in-law. Mummy fled to relatives on the reservation, and as an "Indian," she could not testify against the murderers. Indeed, the killers could not be tried without witnesses; and they filed a donation claim on the property, taking legal possession.<sup>15</sup> Indians were increasingly tolerated off-reservation as manual laborers, but property ownership – the prerogative of citizens – was another matter entirely.

By the 1860s, without money to provide sufficient food for the reservation population, agents issued "passes" so that Indians could leave to hunt, fish, and take work on the farms and towns of the Willamette and Umpqua Valleys.<sup>16</sup> Many left without passes. Some returned to the reservation, others did not, and occasional round-ups continued through the 1860s. Several young women fled to Portland where they obtained

domestic work and did their best to blend into the bottom rung of white society. Another group of 75 Molallas and Mohawk Valley Kalapuyas left Grand Ronde for six years before being forced to return in 1863.<sup>17</sup> The population dropped when harvesting jobs were available and rose when those eligible for annuities could get them.<sup>18</sup> Illicit work, particularly prostitution, became a last resort for some women and their families, and alcohol abuse made the situation worse. Joel Palmer claimed to be putting an end to both alcohol abuse and Indian prostitution, which were annoying some citizens in the towns of the Willamette Valley in 1871. However, in 1878, Martha Minto claimed that "Today in Salem an Indian will take his squaw and meeting any white man or boy will offer her to them for money." She was likely exaggerating the frequency, but the problem had obviously not been solved by Parrish's renewed attempts at reservation confinement in 1871.<sup>19</sup> As mentioned, some women married Euro-American men to escape the reservations, the soldiers who raped them there, and return to their former homelands. Others such as "Mummy Johnson" escaped to relative safety of family on the reservation. There were no easy answers, and Native people went back and forth from the reservations, as individual circumstances dictated, trying to forge lives in a hostile landscape.

Enumeration of Indians was as problematic as it had ever been and was still highly political. When the Oregon legislature petitioned Congress to open the reservation lands to Euro-Americans in 1870, they claimed there were only 800 Indians there. Contemporaneously, Indian officials whose living depended on the reservations claimed there were 2,800: 2,300 at Siletz and 500 at the Alsea Agency.<sup>20</sup> Other enumeration



problems stemmed from confusion about the rising mixed-blood population. In Coos County, for example, children of Euro-American fathers and Native mothers were "1/2 Ind" in 1860 and "white" in 1870.<sup>21</sup> Typically, however, mixed bloods were not considered white but were rather derided as "half-breeds" among Euro-Americans. The manner in which one lived seemed to determine identity among Indians. Without a biological conception of "race," Annie Peterson considered herself and her children Indian, though she had a Euro-American father as did her children. Meanwhile, she spoke of another Native woman's children as "white person children" seemingly because they lived in town with their Euro-American father.<sup>22</sup>

With statehood in 1858, the relationship between Oregon and the United States was no longer a colonial one. Territorial governments were politically akin to colonies in that the President of the United States appointed their governors and territorial representatives to Congress could not vote. Statehood ended this dependency. Western states with small voting populations would not achieve the political power of eastern states or California, but the notion that "empire and colony" continued to define the federal-state relationship in the West is not sustainable. Nevertheless, western communities would face famous "boom and bust" cycles and often be at the mercy of external capital; but politically, this was not a colonial relationship.<sup>23</sup>

The ambivalent attitudes of the Oregon territorials regarding the federal government – desiring protection, free land, and full reimbursement for their wars without outside interference or limits imposed by "brass buttons" from Washington, D.C.

– continues to be reflected today.<sup>24</sup> The current controversy over water rights in the Klamath Basin offers one such example, pitting local farmers and ranchers against federal biologists, Native peoples, and commercial fishers. The agriculturalists who castigated federal officials, illegally released irrigation water in the summer of 2001, and proudly trumpeted militant anti-federal rhetoric to the media are, nevertheless, wholly dependent upon federal subsidies for their existence. They argued that the federal government owes them the right to farm and raise cattle on the land, based on promises from the turn of the last century, before public priorities included Native sovereignty and environmental protection. Similarly, voters of Grant County on the Columbia Plateau passed legislation in May 2002 granting themselves permission to harvest timber on public lands without approval from or restrictions of the U.S. Forest Service. Like their provision on the same ballot that declared the county a “U.N. Free Zone” to prevent a take-over by an international conspiracy aided by the federal government, the vote is legally meaningless. However, recent events in Klamath and Grant counties point to an ongoing tradition in rural Oregon of construing their demands for public monies and resources as rights and setting themselves off from the rest of the country (and the world) in a self-serving “us versus them” myth.<sup>25</sup> That they are citizens of a large republic that ideally tries to balance numerous, often conflicting, concerns instead of supporting only the desires of male Euro-Americans seems to elude their logic. By the late 1850s, Oregon was no longer a place disputed by imperial powers and populated by a subject “white” population despite continued rhetoric and the legacies of frustration with the harsh economic realities of the Jeffersonian “promised land.”

Conversely, the Native peoples would continue to experience the realities of colonialism, as they were legally and popularly defined as the "other," separated from dominant society, denied access to most of their resources, and refused both the legal recourse of citizens and the right of self-determination. Between 1856 and 1859, the United States Army forced the Sahaptian peoples of the Columbia Plateau onto reservations. In 1864, the Klamath Tribes accepted a reservation within the range of their former homelands. In 1873, several Modocs went to war to avoid removal and lost. Later in the 1870s, it was the Northern Paiutes, Shoshones, and then the Nez Perce. Chief Joseph's famous surrender near the Canadian border in 1877 ended the military subjugation of the Native peoples of the former "Oregon Country." In western Oregon, state officials, squatters, and speculators pressed for reductions of Indian reservation lands. In 1865, Yaquina Bay was removed from the Coast Reservation, splitting it into the Siletz agency in the north and the Alsea and Yachats agencies to the south. In 1875, the two southern agencies were closed and those lands as well as the vast majority of those of the Siletz agency were seized for the public domain. In less than two decades, the Indians of western Oregon lost approximately 80% of their reservation lands.<sup>26</sup> The remainder was slowly reduced to zero by the mid-1950s when Congress "terminated" the tribes of western Oregon. Tribes elsewhere in the region, notably the Klamath Tribes, had similar experiences. Only in recent years have some western tribes regained "federal recognition" and reclaimed a tiny fraction of land, which is nevertheless managed through the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Neither the Native peoples nor the federal officials seemed to have had any idea in 1856 that the colonial relationship would continue

indefinitely. The administration of "Indian affairs" and the nascent reservation system of the mid-1850s constituted the beginning of a paternalist structure that still dominates much of Native life, similar to the British bureaucratic regime in India until 1947 and the United States in the Philippines until 1934 and, arguably, in Puerto Rico to the present.

However, the colonial administration of the reservations also had an ironic, unintended effect as well; it fostered Native unity and an Indian identity. At the Grand Ronde agency, for example, the children spoke several different dialects and languages, which the teachers did not understand. The administration's initial solution was to teach in Chinook Jargon until the children could master English.<sup>27</sup> The children learned an identity; they were *tillicum*, the people. Where did they live? *Illahée*. Adults intermarried with peoples of different ethnic and linguistic backgrounds, sometimes causing problems such as unions between people who disagreed about cultural practices such as flattening the heads of infants.<sup>28</sup> But Chinook Jargon, for a time, was likely the lingua franca of the reservation homes and facilitated a transition to an identity as "Indians."<sup>29</sup> Bureaucratic administration also created tribal identities by confederating different bands. Some such as the confederation of "Rogue Rivers" and "Shastas" merged peoples who had previously fought with one another before removal. Certainly, the bands initially remained aloof, but shared experiences broke these barriers over time. Modern descendents know their lineage, but their legal and social identities stem from the confederations and the reservation experiences. Today, cultural heritage efforts at Grand Ronde include teaching children Chinook Jargon, which played such an important role in the formative years of the reservation community; and the Confederated Tribes of Siletz

Tribes hold an annual powwow which they call *Nesika Illahee*, "Our Land." The Native peoples and their descendents continue to create ways to be and remain Indian in the face of changing realities and continued colonial administration.

"Takelma invocation for a new moon"<sup>30</sup>

I shall be blessed,  
I shall go ahead.

Even if people say of me,  
    'Would he were dead,'  
I shall do just as you,  
    I shall still rise.

Even if all kinds of things devour you,  
    Frogs eat you,  
Everything,  
    Lizards,

Even if they eat you,  
    Yet you shall still rise,  
I shall do just as you from this on—  
    'Bo-----!'"

Notes

<sup>1</sup> For detailed discussion of the modern nation-states and their relation to imperialism, see Ashcroft, Griffiths, et. al., *Key Concepts*, 149-155. Peter S. Onuf, *Jefferson's Empire: the Language of American Nationhood* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2000), 5-6.

<sup>2</sup> In other regions, conversely, Methodism would emerge as nearly synonymous with local dominant society. For an excellent review essay of recent works on American Methodism and Euro-American culture in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, see Richard D. Shiels, "More New Light on Early American Methodism," published as "Review of Dee E. Andrews, *The Methodists and Revolutionary America, 1760-1800: The Shaping of an Evangelical Culture*," H-SHEAR, H-Net Reviews, January, 2002, URL: <http://www.h-net.msu.edu/reviews>.

<sup>3</sup> I use quotes here to stress the continuing evolution and presence of cultural geography, the definition of places and assignment of names and meanings. My use of terms such as western Oregon, Oregon-California borderland, and Columbia Plateau are modern creations, a "necessary evil" for conveying this narrative.

<sup>4</sup> The literature on identity of self and others is voluminous, see for example, Robert F. Berkhofer, *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1978); Karen Kupperman, *Settling with the Indians: The Meeting of Indian and English Cultures in America, 1580-1640* (Totowa, New Jersey: Rowman and Littlefield, 1980); Harmon, *Indians in the Making*. For the "inland empire" example of cultural geography, see Katherine G. Morrissey, *Mental Territories: Mapping the Inland Empire* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997).

<sup>5</sup> *Report of J. Ross Browne*, 47-48, ARCIA 1858, 252-3.

<sup>6</sup> ARCIA 1857, 358; ARCIA 1861, 772; ARCIA 1871, 316.

<sup>7</sup> Hedges to CIA Manypenny, 34<sup>th</sup> Cong., 3<sup>rd</sup> Sess., H.Ex.Doc. 37, serial 899.

<sup>8</sup> ARCIA 1857, 368.

<sup>9</sup> ARCIA 1858, 137.

<sup>10</sup> Schwartz devotes much of his discussion of the early reservations to exploring possible corruption, *Rogue River Indian War*, 161-213.

<sup>11</sup> ARCIA 1858, 252; ARCIA 1862, 399; Suttons, *Indian Wars*, 261-2.

<sup>12</sup> ARCIA 1857, 361, 369; ARCIA 1859, 793; ARCIA 1871, 323; Suttons, *Indian Wars*,

261.

<sup>13</sup> ARCIA 1857, 364; ARCIA 1859, 795; ARCIA 1858, 286-7.

<sup>14</sup> ARCIA 1857, 363-4.

<sup>15</sup> ARCIA 1859, 796-7; A. B. Meacham, *Wigwam and War-Path; or the Royal Chief in Chains* (Boston: John P. Dale and Co., 1875), 667-9; Josiah L. Parrish, MSS 2320. Oregon Historical Society, Portland, Oregon; and Stephen Dow Beckham, *Land of the Umpqua: A History of Douglas County, Oregon* (Roseburg, OR: Douglas County Commissioners, 1986), 106-7.

<sup>16</sup> For some examples of passes, ARCIA 1860, 441; ARCIA 1861, 773; ARCIA 1871, 323.

<sup>17</sup> ARCIA 1863, 201. See also Schwarz, *Rogue River Indian War*, 171, 175.

<sup>18</sup> ARCIA 1862, 420.

<sup>19</sup> ARCIA 1871, 323; Martha Ann Minto, *Female Pioneering in Oregon*, MS P-A 51. The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 26.

<sup>20</sup> Schwartz, *Rogue River Indian War*, 183.

<sup>21</sup> *Eighth United States Census Manuscripts*, Coos County, Oregon, 1860, 1870.

<sup>22</sup> Melville Jacobs, *Coos Narrative and Ethnologic Texts*, *University of Washington Publications* (Seattle: University of Washington, 1939), 102.

<sup>23</sup> While I disagree with William Robbins larger attempt to describe the West, he offered the best case study of a coastal Oregon community, Coos Bay, and their repeated booms and busts. William G Robbins, *Hard Times in Paradise: Coos Bay, Oregon, 1850-1986* (Seattle : University of Washington Press, 1988); William G Robbins, *Colony and Empire: The Capitalist Transformation of the American West* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1994).

<sup>24</sup> For a discussion of antipathy toward the federal government among residents of the West, see Limerick, *Legacy of Conquest*.

<sup>25</sup> For the Klamath controversy, see *The Register Guard*'s coverage from July through September 2001; and for Grant County's vote, same newspaper, June 3, 2002, 1.

<sup>26</sup> Cynthia Viles and Tom Grigsby, "The Confederated Tribes of Siletz," in *The First*

*Oregonians: An Illustrated Collection of Essays on Traditional Lifeways, Federal-Indian Relations, and the State's Native People Today* edited by Carolyn M. Buan and Richard Lewis, (Portland: Oregon Council for the Humanities, 1991), 106.

<sup>27</sup> ARCIA 1863, Doc. 23, 204.

<sup>28</sup> Harrington, *The Papers of John Peabody Harrington*, roll 24, 868.

<sup>29</sup> Dell Hymes and Virginia Hymes, "Chinook Jargon as 'Mother Tongue,'" *International Journal of American Linguistics*, 257.

<sup>30</sup> The invocation, originally entitled, "A Takelma Invocation," is meant to be shouted at a new moon, per contributor Frances Johnson in Dell Hymes, "Languages and Their Uses," *The First Oregonians*, 34.



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