

A PRELIMINARY REPORT

INSIDE THE GITXSAN

THE GWALAX YEE'NST

A cursory description of
innate traditional Gitxsan
processes, structure, and teachings

Prepared for the

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DISCLAIMER

This treatise is not exhaustive, rather a purposeful and directed dissertation of the Gitxsan process, steeped in the many millennia past, as described by highly respected and knowledgeable Gitxsan who could only be Simgigyat and Sigidimhanak, the national treasure of the Gitxsan.

As well, the norm for both informal and formal communication in Gitxsan Society is the oral-mode and in Gitxsanimax, the language of the Gitxsan. This document is penned using the written-mode and in English, the pervading global language of business. The preferred mode to describe innate Gitxsan processes and structure is in Gitxsanimax, orally. Nevertheless, a sincere effort is put to describing very Gitxsan concepts in English. Therefore, please know that the translation in English will be subordinate to the same in Gitxsanimax.

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INSIDE THE GITXSAN

The Gwalax̓ Yee'inst

*A cursory description of innate traditional
processes and structure of the Gitxsan*

LOCATION OF GITXSAN TRADITIONAL TERRITORIES

Gitxsan Dax̓gyat (authority and jurisdiction) manifests within *Gitxsan* traditional territories located in northwest British Columbia. The aggregate of individual *wilphl Gitxsan* (the most fundamental entity in *Gitxsan* Society) territories total 30,000 square metres.

See Figure 1: Location of Gitxsan Traditional Territories, page 5.

The territories encompass nine (9) watersheds, also described as administrative units: Babine, Kispiox, Gitsegukla, Lower Skeena, Middle Skeena, Nass, Suskwa, Sustut, and the Upper Skeena.

See Figure 2: Watersheds Within Gitxsan Territories, page 6.

GWALAX̓ YEE'NST PRE-DATES 1846

The Supreme Court of Canada in their December 11, 1997 *Delgamuukw* Decision, explicit legal bench mark of pronouncements regarding aboriginal rights and title, determined that time immemorial ended 1846; thereafter, to the present, is post-time immemorial. Remarkably and in spite of the pressures and distractions deriving from apparatus and processes of pioneer and modern mainstream Canada, *Gitxsan* Society is very much in existence and thriving. Its roots began about 10 millennium from today.

See Figure 4: *Gwalax̓ Yee'nst* In Perspective, page 9.

Why is acquiring an understanding of *Gitxsan* Society vital? In their December 11, 1997 *Delgamuukw* Decision, the Supreme Court of Canada ordered that the pre-

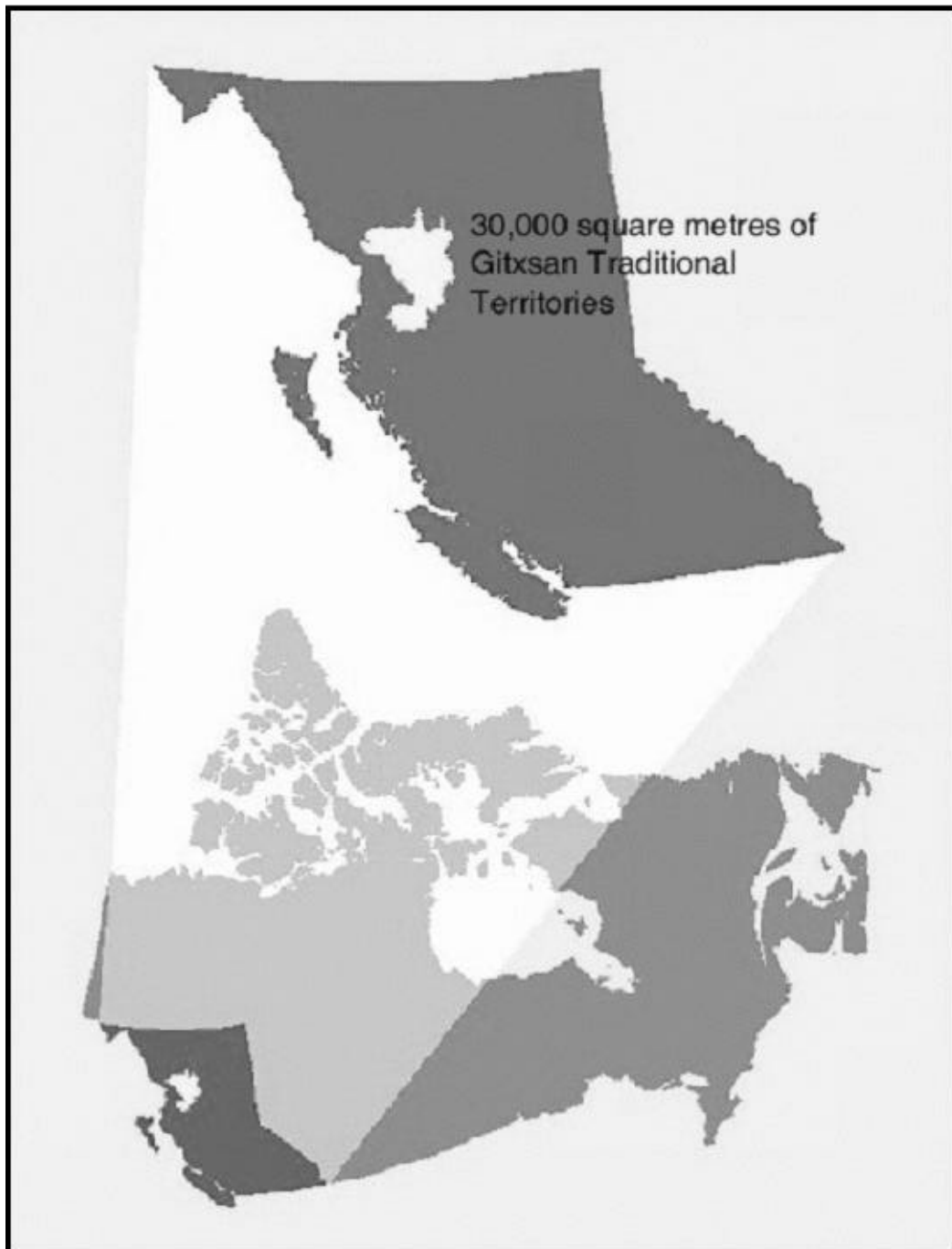


Figure 1: Location of *Gitxsan* Traditional Territories
(Source: Gordon Wilson, GIS Technician, *Gitxsan* Watershed Authorities)

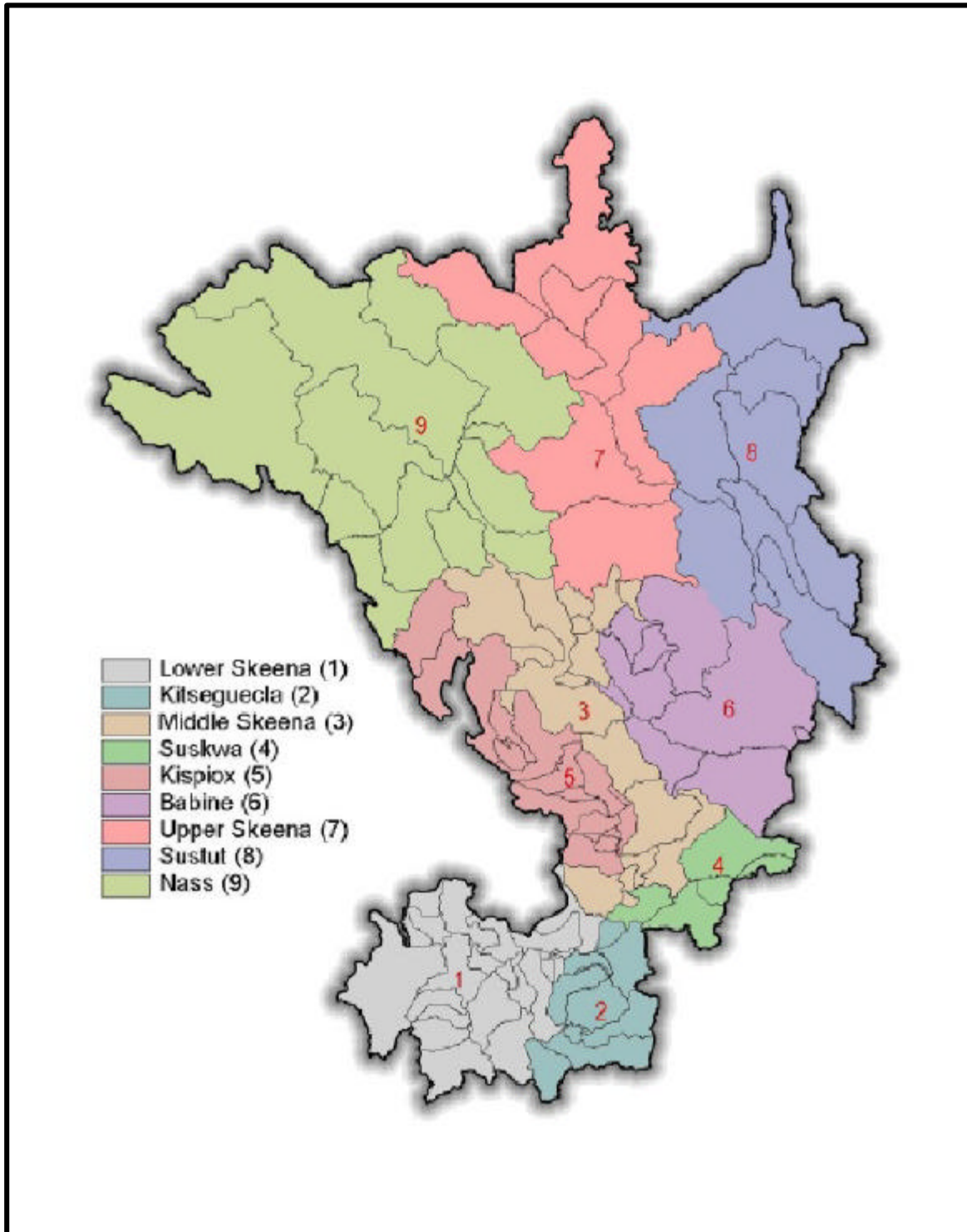


Figure 2: Watersheds Within *Gitksan* Territories

(Source: Gordon Wilson, GIS Technician, *Gitksan* Watershed Authorities)

December 11, 1997 Delgamuukw Decision, a pre-requisite to reconciling the pre-existence of aboriginal society with the sovereignty of the Crown is to garner an understanding of *Gitxsan* Society as described by the *Gitxsan*. In understanding the *Gitxsan* Society, a reference point is thus created from which reconciliation can commence. Then, the pre-existence to the sovereignty of the Crown will have substance from which reconciliation can be measured against.

As well, the Crown has a legal obligation to consult with the aboriginals if their respective aboriginal rights will be potentially infringed by proposed developments on aboriginal territory. The question is “who will the Crown consult with?” The convention now is that Crown will consult with bands, pursuant to the Indian Act, and their band councils, pursuant to the Indian Act, because traditional aboriginal entities have been subordinated, forgotten or dismissed by the respective tribes in favour of the band and or the band council entity. The bands and their band councils do not pre-date 1846. Traditional aboriginal entities pre-date and existed at the time of confederation. Therefore, the correct entities that must be reconciled with the sovereignty of the Crown are the traditional aboriginal entities that existed 1846 and beyond, not the bands nor the band councils.

AN OVERVIEW OF GITXSAN SOCIETY

Gitxsan Society is complex and exist under rule of law. It could only be more accurately described in *Gitxsanimax*, the language of the *Gitxsan*. Nevertheless, a description of *Gitxsan* Society in English is valuable and vital for the purposes of reconciling the pre-existence of *Gitxsan* Society with the sovereignty of the Crown.

See Figure 3: An Overview of *Gitxsan* Society, page 8.

The Wilphl Gitxsan: The Most Fundamental Entity of Gitxsan Society.

Gwalax yee'nst

Each wilphl Gitxsan has its treasure: its inherency, assets that are real and not real, handed down from generation to generation, held in perpetuity, never extinguished. Assets include: its wilnaatahl (close relatives), lax yiphl wilp (lands and resources therein), adaawx (ancient oral history), ayook (laws that dictate behavior), limx oo'ii (time immemorial songs that link the wilp to its lax yip), waaim taa (ancient potlatch seat names). Wilp essence and identity derive from **gwalax yee'nst**.

Adaawx

Each wilphl Gitxsan has an oral history. The adaawx identifies the wilphl Gitxsan as a Gitxsan entity with associated assets. It may include their creation and migration since the ice age, associated animal crests, symbols, limx oo'y (time immemorial songs), limx sinaahl (breath songs), and limx nox nok (spirit songs).

Liligit

The liligit, the feast, is the most significant venue where the very essence of gwalax yee'insw is formally given cadence. It is a gathering of high ranking guests of other pdek (phratries) to witness the inner workings of the hosting wilp and its pdek.

Daxgyat

Each wilphl Gitxsan has the daxgyat, authority and power, to manifest their essence as they see fit for the best good of the wilp..

Yuuhlimox

This term refers to ancient Gitxsan teachings that shape and define the behavior and posture of the Gitxsan especially expected of the Simogyat. Typically, maternal uncles and aunts are charged with teaching, shaping, and defining heirs to a chieftainship.

Ayookim Gitxsan

Each wilphl Gitxsan and its citizens are required to behave in accordance to Gitxsan Law. They include citizenship, adoption, marriage, property, use of resources, contact at potlatches, etc.

Pdek

Each wilphl Gitxsan is also associated to a pdek (aka phratry, clans). Each wilphl Gitxsan is also one of four pdek: Gistkaast (Fireweed), Lax Seel (Frog), Lax Gibuu (Wolf), or Lax Skilk (Eagle)

LaxYip

Each wilphl Gitxsan hold rights and title to and thus have jurisdiction over their territory and resources therein, surface and sub-surface.

Gitxsan Society is **matrilineal**; that is, citizenship and inherency flow through the mother's side.

Members of same color denote they are members in the wilphl Gitxsan.

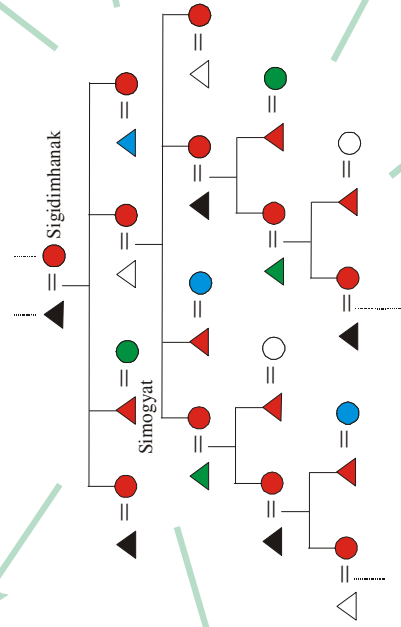


Figure 3: An Overview of Gitxsan Society

Gwalax Yee'nt In Perspective

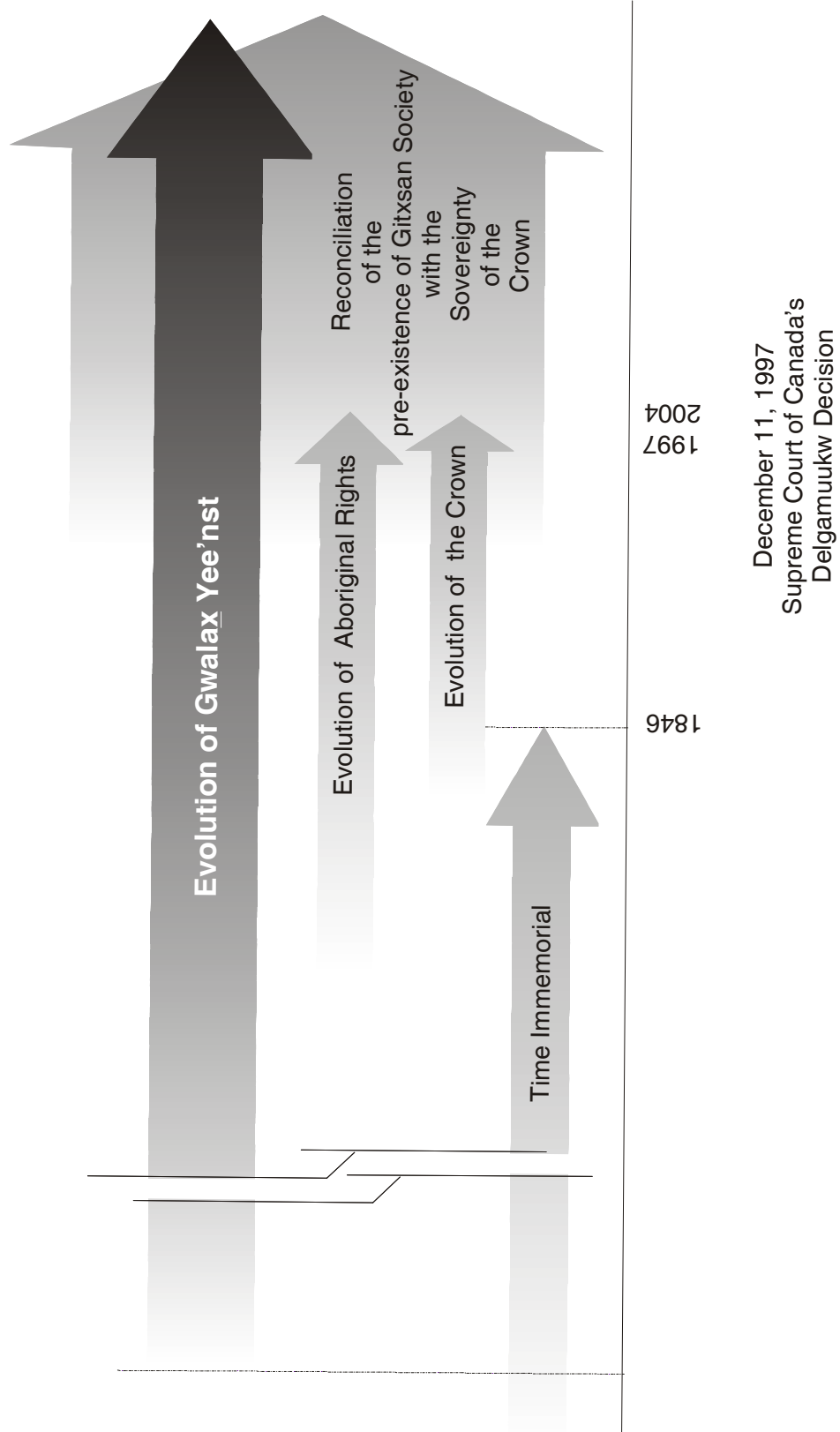


Figure 4: *Gwalax Yee'nt In Perspective*

‘AN SKIMHLUUXW: BEGINNING OF GITXSAN LIFE

“All That Is” is the domain of the Creator, the Highest and Most Holiest. The life a human being is but one. Like other tribes, the starting point of life is the ‘*An Skimhluuxw*, the womb. And within the womb of the Gitxsan mother, a miracle unfolds. Ancient influences and memories embedded in *Gwalax Yee’nst*, Gitxsan inherency, surround and blend with the Gitxsan mother. And in turn, the Gitxsan mother surrounds and blends the spark of new Gitxsan life in the womb, thus already influencing, shaping, and defining its character in accordance to *Gwalax Yee’nst*.

And so it is, a Gitxsan mother, not only gives birth to a child, but gives birth to a particular Gitxsan child, a new addition to a particular *wilphl Gitxsan*, the Gitxsan extended family, in accordance to ancient Gitxsan process. Thus, new Gitxsan life is literally born into a richness and abundance that can only be Gitxsan, predestined in accordance to its ancient Gitxsan inherency.

Childrearing is in accordance to Gitxsan norms and customs applied within its particular *wilphl Gitxsan*, from which its essence, identity, personality, character, and domain are shaped, defined, and refined, in accordance to its particular *Gwalax Yee’nst* peculiar to its *wilphl Gitxsan*. Although the mother is the primary caregiver, the new born soon discovers that maternal aunts, uncles, and cousins correctly and constantly nurture and reinforce a Gitxsan essence particular to their *wilphl Gitxsan*. *Ts’iits*, the maternal grandmothers, and *Agwi Nii Ts’iits*, the maternal great grandmothers, are ever watchful and oversee the child’s upbringing, and in character with Gitxsan elegance, gently and tactfully apply a correction when needed.

Simultaneously, the child is surrounded by and influenced by the *wilsiiwitxw*, the child’s paternal relatives. They too invoke and fulfill ancient tribal obligations at certain and correct times. As well, the connectedness and influences from the paternal grandmother and grandfather are bestowed on the child. Typically, at times of

celebration of life special events, the child is surrounded with a richness and abundance of up to four, sometimes five, generations of maternal and paternal relatives.

As the infant grows and gets stronger, his domain becomes wider and wider, ever nurtured and protected by its *wilphl Gitxsan*. He soon out grows its 'Ax K'opin, the pissy-pants stage, into the realm of the 'thin skin' stage, where the *yuuhlimox*, the ancient teachings, is actively applied to further shape, define, and refine Gitxsan character and behavior, vital to its survival in perpetuity. The maternal uncle and aunts are role models from which the child's character and personality take on their likeness.

The *Simogyat* and *Sigidimhanak* of the attending *wilphl Gitxsan* are ever watchful and constantly scanning, measuring, and sizing up their *kuubawilsuux*. The *kuubawilsuux* are Gitxsan persons whose lives are not yet full; they are still in the process of receiving *yuuhlimox*; characterized as 'thin skin'. Typically, a few of the *kuubawilsuux* are singled out for more intense deliberate shaping, defining, and refining reserved for candidates likely to inherit the title, status, and associated power, responsibility, and burden of a *Simogyat*. Concerted and sustained training take place to imprint a particular Gitxsan essence in character with and in accordance to the *wilphl Gitxsan*. Vital loyalty is imprinted. Instructions on the fulfillment of ancient tribal obligations and responsibilities are imparted to the *kuubawilsuux*. Instructions on the *adawaḱ* and associated *limx o'y*, their uses and functions are committed to memory. The connectedness to and value of their *lax yip* is reinforced. They are coached in the proper behavior around the *Simgigyat* and others. Their deliberate active and proper participation in the *wilp li'iliget* is mandatory to hear and learn how a *Simogyat* conduct themselves and speak. Omni-present is the nature, scope, and depth of his *gwalax yee'nst*. They receive instruction on the different levels of traditional Gitxsan knowledge; those who have acquired the highest levels are truly a national treasure and sought after for the special insight and understanding they have accrued from a life time of experience and learning, vital, not only to the *wilphl Gitxsan* but also, for the *gali aks*. The training is deliberate and directed for the health, well-being, and vital survival and continuation of the *wilphl Gitxsan*, in perpetuity, depend on it.

The preparedness of the attending *wilphl Gitxsan* comes to the fore and into fruition at the death of a *Simogyat*. The years of nurturing, grooming, shaping, defining, and refinement are finally realized when the attending *wilphl Gitxsan* plays out the ancient script of bestowing the ‘chief in waiting’ or selecting one of the candidates to inherit and continue the manifestation of the title, status, associated power, responsibility, and burden chieftain for the remaining of his life span in accordance to Gitxsan law. Although this moment is critical for the well being of the *wilphl Gitxsan*, the family never leaves this to chance; they have invested heavily in the *kuubawilsuux*, anticipating this moment. The new *Simogyat* will have ‘thick skin,’ will be *wiixo’osxw*, will be poised to actively demonstrate leadership, will add to the *gwalax yee’nst*, and will sit, mingle, visit, and collaborate with the *Simgigyat* of other *wilphl Gitxsan*.

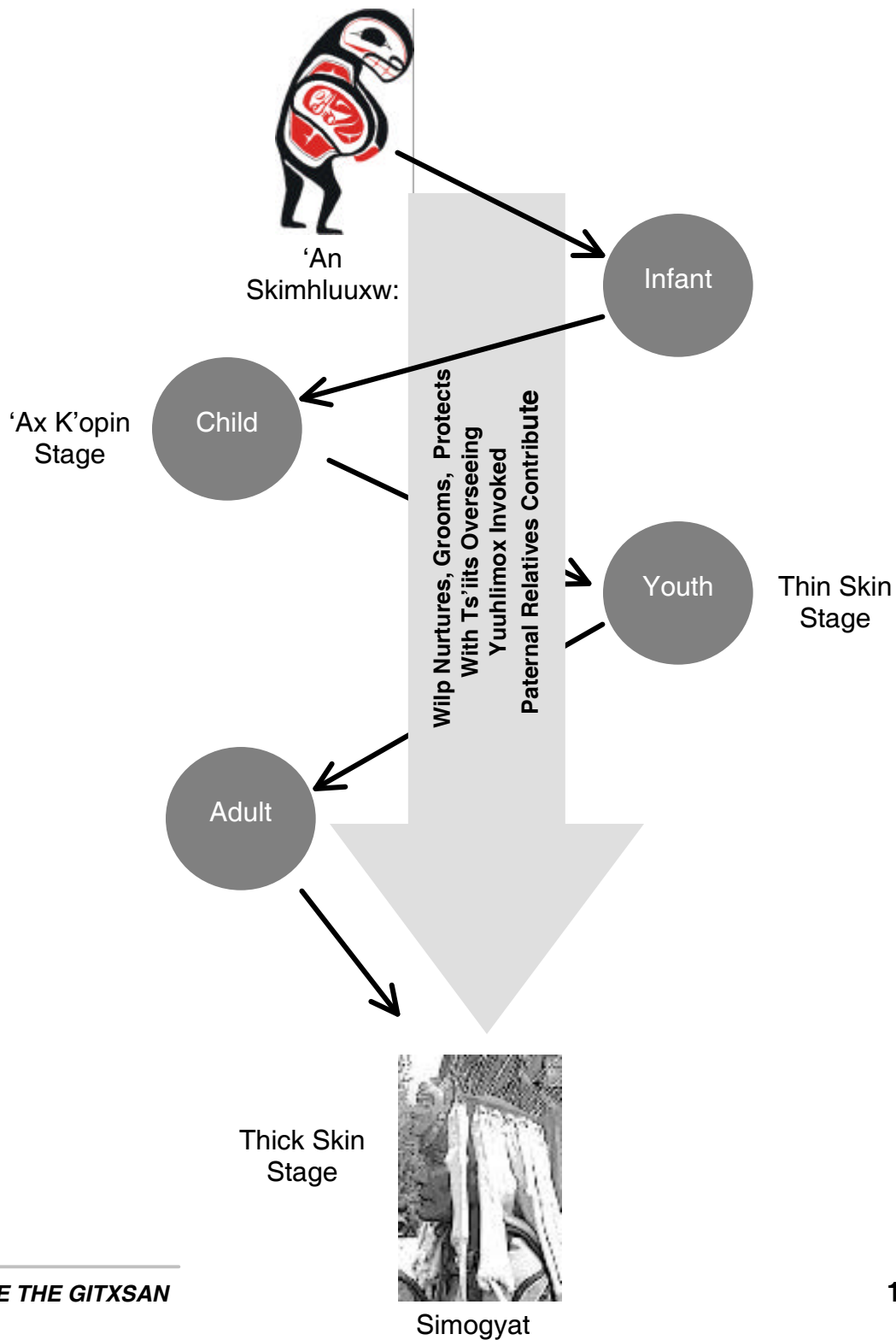
The heir is properly ushered in as the reigning *Simogyat* for the *wilp* in the *wilp li’iliget* for all the *Simgigyat* to witness and to subtly measure, for he too will be sitting amongst them hereon in.

See ‘**An Skimhluuxw**, a schematic diagram, on page 13.

See Appendix 1, **Yuuhlimox Text**, page 20.

'AN SKIMHLUUXW

The Mother and Mother's Side are vital and highly valued because the Gitxsan are matrilineal.



DECISION-MAKING PROCESS OF THE WILPHL GITXSAN

The *Simgigyat* are responsible for the well-being and of the *wilphl Gitxsan*. And because of their training, tempered by life experiences, and acquisition of a high level of understanding and insight, they alone together with others of high status and maturity determine the pathway the *wilp* must navigate to insure is well-being and sustainability. The relatives within the *wilp* depend on them exclusively for correct decisions critical for the well-being and livelihood of the *wilp*.

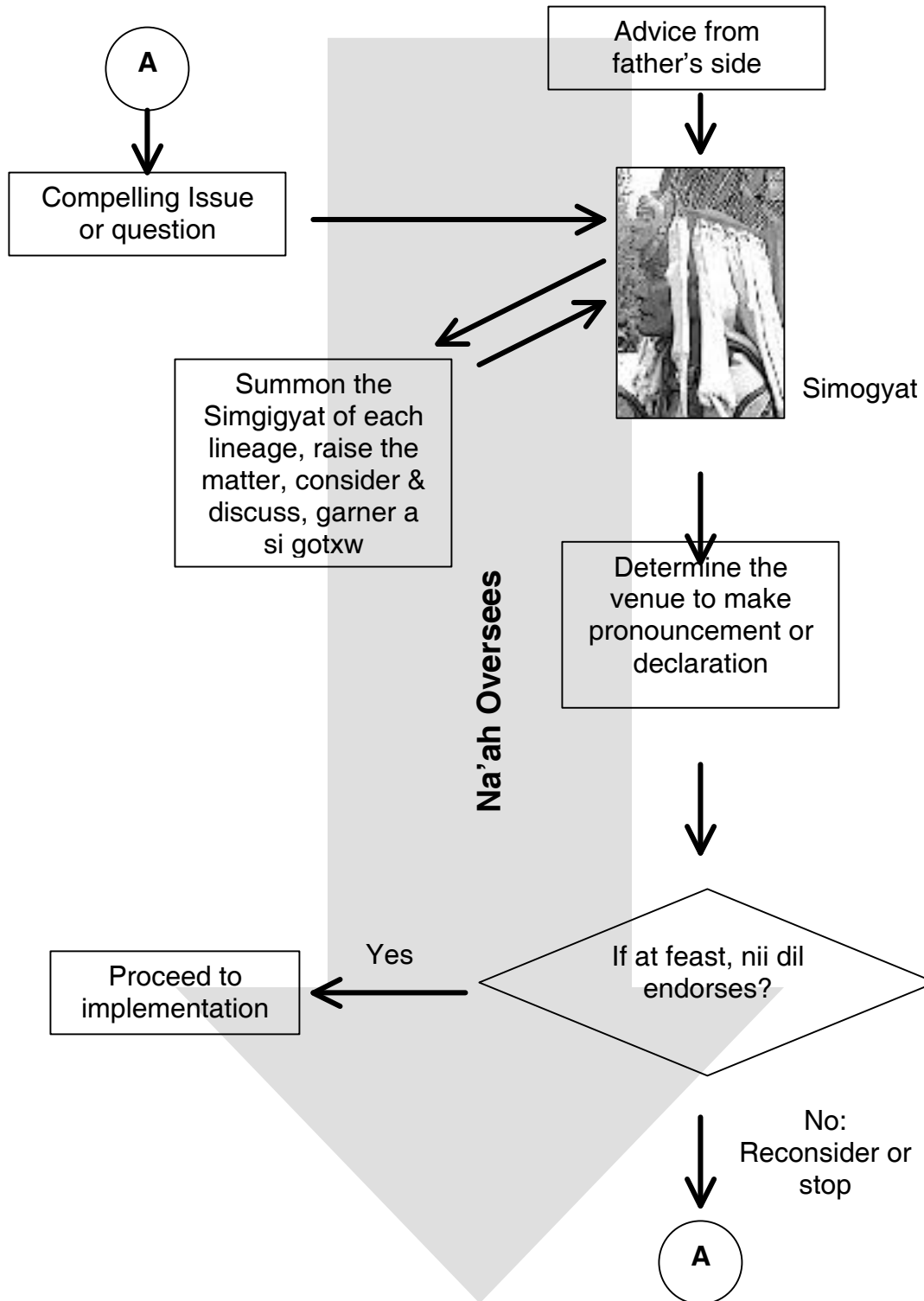
As always, *Na'ah*, usually the eldest of the *Sigidimhanak*, the overseer of the family, is acutely aware of pulse of the *wilphl Gitxsan*. At her discretion, she may invoke her considerable influence that may compel the decision-makers to comply her wishes.

❶ Because an important question or issue arose that has ramifications that may, say, impinge on the *wilphl Gitxsan* is brought to the attention of the *Simogyat*. After serious consideration, ❷ the *Simogyat* simultaneously seeks advice from his father's side and summons the *Simgigyat* of each member lineage and formally raises the matter with them. ❸ After consideration amongst them, a *si gotxw*, a decision from the heart, is arrived at. At this time, typically, the *Simogyat* restates the decision for all to hear. ❹ The venue from which the decision will be pronounced and or implemented is determined. Plans of actions ensue, ready for implementation. ❺ If *li'iliget* is selected, then preparations ensue. *Simgigyat* are *t'eets* – ed. ❻ At the *li'iliget*, the *Simogyat* or designated *galdim 'algyax* make the pronouncements or declarations decided upon witnessed by the attending *Simgigyat*. ❼ The *wilphl Gitxsan* who made the pronouncement and or declaration through its *Simogyat* seek an explicit nod of endorsement from its *Nii dill*. ❽ If the *Nii dill* endorse the pronouncements and or declarations, then the *wilphl Gitxsan* as led by the *Simogyat* will proceed to implementation. If not, the *wilphl Gitxsan* must reconsider or stop.

To reconsider, the *Simogyat* may have to start over again culminating into another *li'iliget*. And because the *li'iliget* is very costly, the *Simogyat* of the *wilphl Gitxsan* is compelled to get it right the first time.

See **Decision-Making Process of the Wilphl Gitxsan**, a schematic diagram, page 15.

DECISION-MAKING PROCESS OF THE WILPHL GITXSAN



THE GALI AKS PROCESS

Gitxsan domain is vast. Within each *gal ts'ap* within Gitxsan territory, the resident *wilphl Gitxsan* enjoy their prerogative to exercise their associated full powers. Visiting *Simgigyat* conventionally are respectful when visiting or attending a meeting or attending a *li'iliget* outside the influence of their full power. Typically, the visiting *Simgigyat* will diplomatically suspend their full power in favour of the host while they are in the host's domain.

The *gal ts'ap* within Gitxsan territory: *Gitwangak, Gitsegukla, Gitanmaax, Kispiox, Gisega'as, Gulto'o*. Individual Gitxsan may reside in any one of these *gal ts'ap* pending their circumstances. For whatever reason, a Gitxsan may not reside within their *gal ts'ap* but still reside within proper Gitxsan domain, nevertheless, their representation as a Gitxsan still stem from one of the *gal ts'ap*. As well, individual Gitxsan may reside entirely outside of proper Gitxsan domain, nevertheless their representation as a Gitxsan still stem from one of the *gal ts'ap*.

Associated with each *gal ts'ap* are resident *huwilphl Gitxsan*. It makes practical sense to allow each of the resident *huwilphl Gitxsan* to exercise their *daxgyat* accordingly when considering issues peculiar to their *gal ts'ap* domain. As well, it further makes practical sense for the *gal ts'ap* to convene their resident *huwilphl Gitxsan* to manifest their respective *daxgyat* when considering issues and matters on the *gali aks*, the collective Gitxsan, agenda:

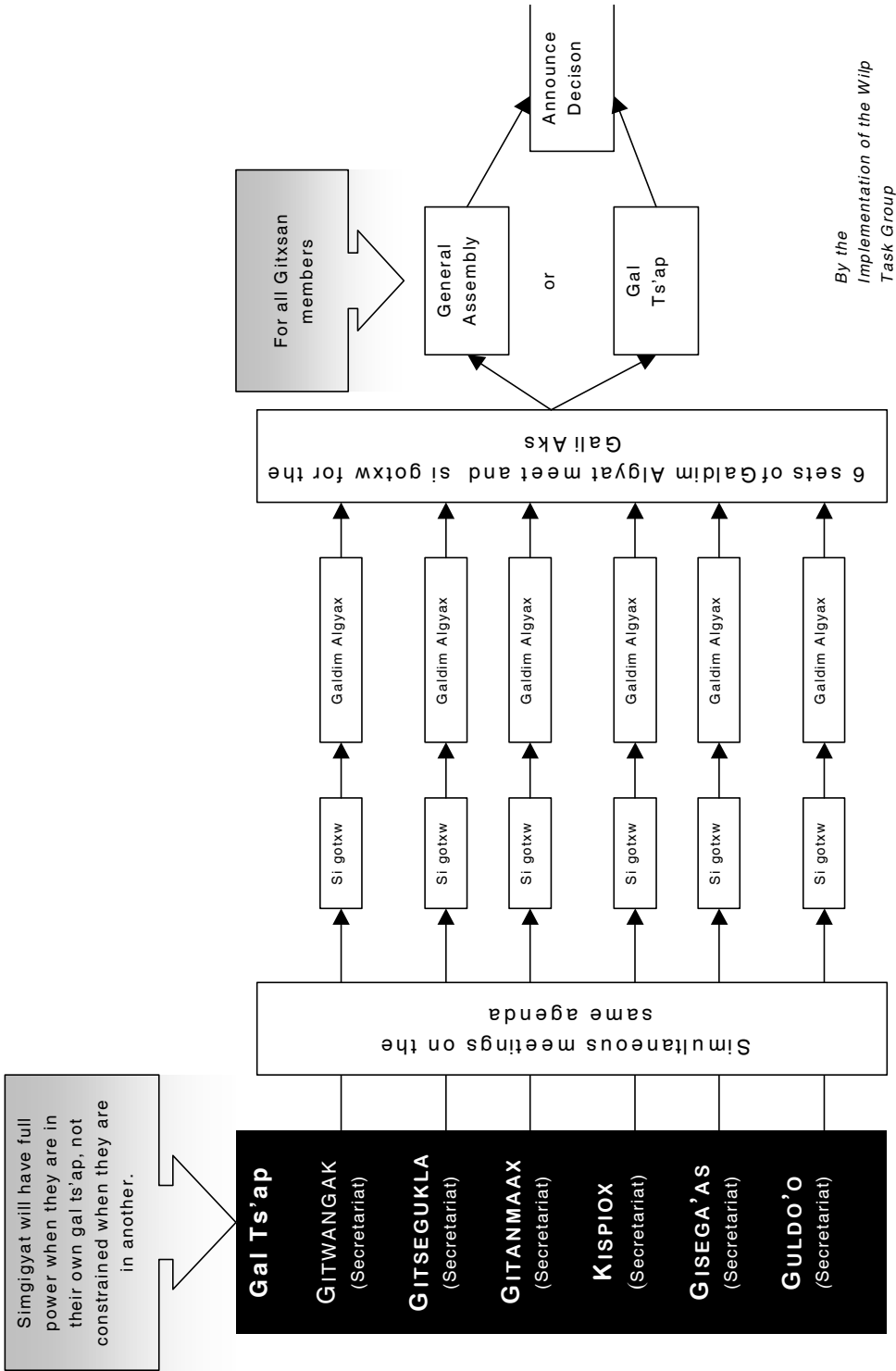
1. **Tier One: Simultaneous Gal Ts'ap Meetings.** Each *gal ts'ap* invokes their secretariat who perform administrative functions only. Each *gal ts'ap* convenes at the same time to consider the same *gali aks* agenda items. Each *gal ts'ap* conducts business according their convention. The only requirement is for each *gal ts'ap* to arrive at a *si gotxw* regarding the *gali aks* item on the agenda. And further, that the *gal ts'ap* conference instruct their respective *Simgigyat* to appoint

their *galdim algyax* in the event they are not able to attend the subsequent round of meetings to consider the same *gali aks* agenda item.

2. **Tier Two: Meeting of the *Simgigyat* From the Respective *Gal Ts'ap*.** The host for these level of meetings will alternate between the *gal ts'ap*. At this time, while considering the *gali aks* agenda item, the host *gal ts'ap* will agree for each visiting *gal ts'ap* that their attending *simgigyat* will be allowed to exercise their full power while considering the *gali aks* agenda item. The *Simgigyat* from each *gal ts'ap* will collectively consider and arrive at a *si gotxw* that will apply to the *gali aks*. That is, each *wilphl Gitxsan* will comply and enforce the *si gotxw* deemed to be for the best good of *gali aks*.
3. **Tier Three: A Gitxsan Summit.** To pronounce and declare the *si gotxw* from Tier Two, a summit meeting of the Gitxsan will be convened. The alternative will be to convene simultaneous *gal ts'ap* meeting to do the same.

See **The Gali Aks Process**, a schematic diagram, page 19.

The Gali Aks Process



Appendix 1

Yuuhlimox Text

This text is not exhaustive, rather an initial attempt to record the ancient teachings, wisdom, and knowledge of the Gitxsan.

This text is recorded by Art Wilson using the Implementation of the Wilp Task Group (Alice Jeffrey, Barb Clifton, Beatrice Rabocz, Alvin Weget, Frank Benson, and Vernon Smith) as informants. Art Wilson, together with his particular cultural skills, background, traditional nurturing and upbringing, and accompanying cultural insight qualifies him to record and write in Gitxsanimax.

*Please note that under each **HEADING** is a statement in Gitxsanimax after which is a description and or discussion thereof. Gitxsan Society is not only ancient but also richly blessed by the Creator, like other aboriginal tribes, for its unique world view of its environment, themselves, and others.*

GITXSAN

Xwsiiyeen diyaahl 'wahl'n 'algyax. Look'n jook 'nuu'm ahl Xwsan, 'kali 'aks. Dip wila gya'adihl naahl Gitxsanit. Ha'anuu hanak' yuuhuum, d'jida Lax Gibuuhl nox, 'y Lax Gibuuhl hlgit. Laxha gi ant wan'd'm 'ahl K'aly Xwsan. Need'y skihl adawak ji het' tuun ji' lixs bagw'm.

The literal translation of “Gitxsan” is the **People of (Git) the River of Mist** (Xwsan). However, territories were acquired through spoils of warfare years past and also through *Xwsiiisxw*, the acquisition of lands for compensation of injury incurred by neighboring tribes.

MATRILINEAL.

A child born of a *Gitxsan* mother is automatically *Gitxsan*. Case in point: a woman of *Wilps Xhliiyemlaxha*, a *Gitxsan* extended family, bears a child, the child automatically is a member of *Wilps Xhliiyemlaxha* and because *Wilps Xhliiyemlaxha* is of the *Lax Gibuu* then the child is also of the *Lax Gibuu*.

It is our belief that the Almighty Chief put us here, with a particular Language and a distinct philosophy and value system that encompasses trust, honor, respect, humility, honesty and sharing . No *adawak* of any *Gitxsan Wil'na taahl* says we came from anywhere else.

P'DEEK

T'xhaalpxhl gabihl p'deekhl *Gitxsan*. 'Tuunhl hehl gyat wila 'witxwhl P'deek. N'dawil luugiisdix yalg'y la'o'y , 'iit guuth Djagwasxwhl gyat. Lip ski't wila amagya'ad'mhl Laxhag'y. Ganwila guun yeehl 'Uu'n Djiits dimt mahl'e dim win mii Xwsi'akxwin. 'Anhalagyaxhl gyathl d'jagwasxw 'y 'nit wil sit'aatxws wilt.

The four Clans are

Lax Gibuu or the Wolf phratry,
Lax Skiik or the Eagle phratry,
Ganada / Lax Se'el or the Frog phratry, *ganhl*
Giskaast or the Fireweed phratry.

The origins of the Clans stem from the animal world. The Almighty Chief in the Universe had a real connection unique to the *Gitxsan*. That is, *Uuw'n D'jiits* (a little mouse) is commonly known as the spiritual helper from the Almighty Chief in the Universe that connected directly to the *Gitxsan*. Say, a *Gitxsan* was in difficulty and needed help and answers. The '*Uuw'n D'jiits* would be summoned or appear and would give instructions how free himself. The instruction given must be followed. Answers and advice are not free; thus, payment is given to the little mouse subsequently the mouse's dress is said to be bulging out stuffed with gifts that they are known to like.

An Ancient Story: An Experience that would Lead the Beginnings of a P'deek.
A woman goes missing for some time. She was eventually found. She was no longer alone; she had two children. She explained that a bear captured her. The woman in captivity was married to the bear. The bear that was referred to as the father of the children was killed.

WIL'NA T'AAHL

Walka 'nithl luugyadihl t'sim Wilphl Miin Wilp. Hoxd'y luudjok Xha'a ganhl Wa'tuux. Jida nakshl hanak 'y tsil'm luukhl naks'd, lixgyathl p'deek'd.

The extended family may include a number of closely related sub-families called lineages. *Gitxsan* law does not allow one to marry within their own clan. While maintaining their own membership to their respective family, typically, husbands literally moved in with the bride's family. Captured slaves would be in the House as well but will acquire no status. The male is called Xha'a and the female would be called *Wa'tuux*. The *ga'wis* (house members) are very important because numbers translate to power in the *wilp*.

There are different levels of *daxgyat* in the *Wilp* or *wil'na' taahl*. The *daxgyat* is *gwalax yee'nst*; that is, upon the *simogyat's* death the heir to the chieftainship will also inherit the predecessor's chieftain name; thus, continuing the *daxgyat*. The chieftainship and name is handed down from generation to generation, in

perpetuity. The status of the *simogyat* is so exclusive, no one else sits in the *simogyat*'s specific seat in the feast hall.

MIIN WILP

Dee'antxwithl Wilp. Skoog'm 'algyagat wila wihl 'Anyuuxw, ganhl ('an siilinasxw) Lax yip. Hoxd'y di'akwihl Sigidim Hanak dim Sim'oyget'd.

The Head Chief oversees the *wilp*. The *lax yip* is cherished by the Head Chief especially if family blood was spilled in acquiring the *lax yip*.

KAAXHL MIIN WILP

Dee'animaasxw. Gald'm algyax 'ahl Miin Wilp jidaat gaakt'diit 'nit. Hooxd x'algyax'diit hl'kaphl lax yip ji' amawihl Wil'naa'taahl.

The wing Chief (*Kaax*) can yield similar powers to the Head Chief. This person will get the nod from the Head Chief to be *gald'm 'algyax* on occasion. The Wing Chief is often seen as Head Chief in waiting.

SIGID'M HANAK

Nakshl Sim'oygyet – Hooxd'y 'nii gya'ahl Wil'na taahl wilt xwsiga'adiit naadi'm Sim'oygedit. 'Kwihl hooksxw 'ahl gwid'm djabihl Gal'tsap. Hoo 'ki'it, Hoogyagam didi'ydiit. 'Wii'tisit ganagwihl didils'd. Luu'wyit gan wiixhoo'osxw. Hlaat gya'a wil kyaahl da'wihl Wil'na t'aahl 'y. A lgyax'd, 'Ama lidithl gyat. Moo'oxhl didils'd, need'y guus maahlxw'd.

The wife of a Chief is automatically a *Sigid'm Hanak*. The wife could be a deciding factor when the new Chief is considered because the *Sigid'm Hanak* is often prominent when her husband *Simogyat* feasts. She takes great interest in the happenings and life in the village. The *Sigid'm hanak* is seen as a Matriarch. Because they comprehend all of the *Yuuhlimox* in her lifetime, she is typically a national treasure of traditional knowledge with profound insight. Subsequently, she leads a life that is well groomed and emanates wisdom, politeness, and respectfulness. Her actions do her talking. In other words she does not *Guuxs mahlxw*. She never elevates herself; that is, she never refers to herself as a matriarch. If the *Wil'naa 'taahl* wanders or strays, the *Sigid'm Hanak* usually emerges to nudge the *Wil'naa 'taahl* back on track.

A *Sigid'm Hanak* can aspire to be Head Chief (or *kaax*)

KUUBAWILSUUX

Ha'wend'y luumitxwhl diidil't, 'k'y 'min yuuk'd. Hoxd'y't si'watdiit 'ky 'maasit 'kaax, Hlo'omsxw ganeeidiit.

This is a person whose life that is not yet full. They are still in the process of receiving *yuuhlimox*.

The term is also used in reference to a young 'Kaax to accord utmost respect to the *kuu'wilsuux*, also *kuubawilsuux* but of royalty because their parents are chieftains and are deemed more destined to become chieftains pending their maturity and acquisition of demeanor akin to chieftainship.

If a *kuubawilsuux* misbehaves, they are typically referred to an uncle for discipline and or to be reprimanded. The desired goal is for the *kuubawilsuux* to adopt the uncle's mature character.

Moo'yasxw is a term that implies that the *kuubawilsuux* will take on the same traits, actions, character, mannerism as the role model.

Gitxsan insult: "Do you have a *ts'iits*?" inferring that the person has no relatives to teach, nurture, and discipline them towards behaving like a *Gitxsan*.

Ant'imahlasxw told to each generation of 'ax k'opin or axdi 'oot'sin to teach respect for the salmon: A young boy played with salmon. He cut off their fins and released them. He continues. He cuts off their tails and releases them. He does not stop there. He cuts out their eyes and releases them. One day a man in a canoe arrives and beckons him to accompany him. The boy may have been mesmerized and being *hax'l k'an*. The canoe soon arrives at a village. The boy sees that the people were maimed just the salmon he had injured. He asks, "What happened?" The man says, "You did it because of what you did to the salmon. This is what happens when you show disrespect. It comes back in ways that you will be ashamed of. Do you see the consequences of maiming those salmon. It came back on you." The man takes the boy to his village and tells the villagers of his experiences. The *Simgigyat* impose restrictions so that this will never happen and, most of all, to show utmost respect to the salmon, the main food staple in the diet of the Gitxsan. Also to instill *xhootxw*. See *syán*.

TSIL'M GUU'WA

Gilbil wil yeet, luu sagatsuu ganhl hlaa luuneehl Wilp.

When a *wilp* finds themselves in a predicament of possible extinction, they seek remedy by adopting a closely related woman. Obviously, there is great reluctance by the *wilp* the adoptee is a member of. The receiving *wilp* assures the adoptee's original *wilp* will be accorded full status and is eligible for chieftainship. To signal great emphasis on being accorded full status, the

Simogyat of the *wilp* adopting literally carries the adoptee into the feast house; this action is like the *wilp*'s official stamp.

The adopting *wilp*, at the time of the adoption, pronounces the extent of the privileges attached to the Gitxsan name given.

MIIN LI'ILIGET

Nithl kyaa damswit n'da wil luugwantxw dim lagyadiit. 'Nit 'ant dee'antxwhl wil'nn taahl dim gan yaahlxw dim yeediit.

The *Miin Li'iliget* are the main hosts of a *li'iliget* and subsequently contributes the most dollars and goods at their *li'iliget*. The *Miin Li'iliget* give direction to the *P'deek* (Clan) to ensure the *li'iliget* unfolds properly.

SIGIT'SONTXW

Sagay't yeehl Wil'na 'taahl dim sagagotxwdiit hligook'dm li'iligetdiit.

Sigit'sontxw is to rehearse a very important feast so unfolds properly to achieve its purpose.

HUU WA'

T'suu xwsdinshl wa' iit luu'wahl Simo'gyat.

Conventionally, a person would acquire five levels of names before a chieftainship is bestowed on them.

- Waam tsuuxw or tihlxw): A child's name given by the father clan and may be accompanied with a *limx 'inaaxw*, a lullaby. This transfer is called *si 'angalan*.
- Waam tuu'u: This name mark the beginning of training allowing the person into the feast. The person is designated as *guuxs gyin*; that the person does not have a feast seat and would sit with and by, say, the mother; this person would not get *so'o*, food and dry goods to take home.
- Wam Gwiikxw'd: This person can *hawal* and receive *so'o*.
- Wam Nox Nok: This name denotes that the person is now building character.
- Wam 'Wii Hlguuwilsuuxw: Wii hoo'osxw gi bee asxw dim Sim'ogyat'd. This name indicates that the person is ready for chieftainship.

WILP LI'ILIGET

Goowil d'japxwhl t'xaa 'nitxws Hahla'asthl Wil'na t'aahl, Wilp Ayookxwhl Simgigyat (*Gitxsan*). Wilp hlo'omsxw.

The *Wilp Li'iliget* is the Feast House and is seen as the *Gitxsan* Parliament Building. The *Wilp Li'iliget* is a *Gitxsan* metaphor for *The House of Law* or *The House of Respect*. A *li'iliget* take on different formats pending the type of *Gitxsan* business or obligation to be fulfilled:

- Li'iligid'm 'Nuu'uuhlxw: A Death Feast
- Li'iligid'm X'miiyeenasxw: A Smoke Feast (x'biiyuu'msxw)
- Li'iligid'm Hedins'm Gan / T'saan: A Pole Raising Feast
- Li'iligid'm Bax Magam Lo'op: A Stone Raising Feast
- Li'iligid'm Gawa Gyanny: A Peace Feast
- Li'iligid'm 'Widins'm Gan
- Li'iligid'm Gwalgwa: The drying process; that is, the taking of core out of the raw pole about a year before carving. Also, about a year after the pole is erected, there is a feast to formally indicate that the chief has fulfilled his/her job and is in the mode of retirement, though other feasts will come.
- Li'iligid'm Bagwinsxw: A welcome of other villages. A host Chief's song would be chosen for the occasion.
- Li'iligid'm Bitxw: A Divorce Feast; a song is always composed the commemorate that Feast.
- Li'iligid'm Gyahlas'm gan: This feast is held before the carving commences to ensure that you will not infringe on another Chief's *ayuuks*.
- Li'iligid'm Guux Yoo'ixw: Cleansing Feast.
- Li'iligid'm Guuxs Haldim guutxw: Cleansing Feast.
- Li'iligid'm LiseewaYip: Business at the Pole raising Feast
- Li'iligid'm Lisee'wasxw: General dicussion
- Li'iligid'm P'deek: Often used when deliberating names
- Li'iligid'm Luu Si'gan: Feast to install a Rafter in the Long House
- Li'iligid'm 'Naa Muuxw: A womanhood feast or piercing of the ears; both can be conduct at the time of marriage, at which time the paternal relatives fulfill their obligations
- Li'iligid'm 'Naa 'kets: The installation of wood or stone in the lower lip of a woman; also means of controlling your tongue, implying that a person should think prior to speaking
- Li'iligid'm Skoog'm Ya'a: A thank you to the almighty for the first salmon in the Spring time
- Li'iligid'm Xwsiiisxw: A feast where compensation is offered
- Li'iligid'm Sii Halite: Simogyat Laxha gave us our own doctor to do good as the one chosen to carry on being a medicine man/woman. A feast, typically a week in duration, to acknowledge the person is indeed the chosen one
- Li'iligid'm 'Kil 'Tsaakya / Gitwiltxw: A War Feast where revenge is called and the 'A'alax is called to give leadership. At this feast all planning takes place. This was invoked when the *Gitxsan* land title court case, resulting in

the December 11, 1997 Delgamuukw Decision, was advanced. To demonstrate a concurrence, persons would ceremoniously drink out of one container.

“HAGWIL’Y YEEN SIM’OYGET”

Tuunhl hehl miin li’iliget ‘aloohl sim’ogyethl ‘tsinit, halbaxhotxwit dim balg’y balaxs’m yadjasxw’d. Hlo’od’dit sal Sim’oyget’d.

The host *Miin Li’iget* will say to a guest Chief entering the Feast House “*Hagwil’y yeen Sim’ogyet*,” a respectful reminder to be careful for it can be costly to the guest if they were to have an accident. It denotes that you care for your guest.

SA’ANI’SKIT

Laxni’hihl sim’ogyet ‘am iit Sa’aniskit, t’suux’m si’amithl sigootxw.

In a meeting situation a Chief hears an idea that hits the “nail on the head” and in effect seconds the statement of the Chief to indicate his concurrence. This is consensus building *Gitxsan* style.

‘NAAHISYADJA / SIGENAXS YE’E

Wil yeehl *Gitxsan* go’ohl wilp daphl ‘amxsiwa ‘y xsdaadiit, ‘naahisyadja tuust.

This term is a yardstick to the next major “blaze” as in marking out a trail. Winning the Delgam’uukxw Case is one of them. Recognition, after years of denial is another. The aim is always for the betterment of *Gitxsan* society and moreover those *Gitxsan* not yet here.

SKA’NIST

T’kal’nidinsxwhl gyat ahl Sim’ogyet.

A Chief is compared to the Mountain, stable and unwavering. The winds may blow, come hell and high water, the Mountain will still be there. No flip flopping nor waffling after a decision is made.

GESXWHL T’XAAS YUU’HUUHL SIM’OYGET / HA’UUM JI T’SEETIX’NHL GWILAN.

Tuunhl yuuhlimoxhl ‘wyihl sii Sim’oyget.

The Chief walks a thin line, under a microscope. The common advice to an new Chief is **don't dirty your blanket**. A wrong move or decision could cause embarrassment to the *Wil'na 'taahl* that will inadvertently incur cost.

NEED'Y YALHL SIM'OYGET

Tuunhl hoo 'ki'yhl yuuhlimox 'wyihl sii sim'oyget. T'xa gila'al dih gyat wildix. Nayd'y naa dim ant lax'ni' dim hehl guu yalit.

A Chief does not lie. Such an infraction can be injurious to the whole *Wil'na 'taahl* and may inadvertently exact a cost to the *Wil'na 'taahl* to correct.

SAGAYT KI'Y'M GOOT

Gan 'am dim wila yeehl *Gitxsan*, need'md'y sta k'ya sakyadix diiyaahl t'kal'nidinsxw.

This term is a reference to act in *the spirit of one accord*. What would happen to a team of horses where one horse is pulling and the other not. Both pulling in the same direction would achieve results efficiently and effectively.

“LUU 'IXDAAHL 'ALGYAX'S_(NAME).”

'Amhl het duulbinhl naa wil luuskihl 'amma 'algyax. Lax'nitxwhl gan wiixho'osxw.

This term refers to a person that is pleasant to listen to, no negative tone. Usually this speaker offers constructive criticism without getting on anyone's nerves. The term literally means the words from the person mouth sounds sweet and subsequently easy to listen to.

NEEDIIT GIPYGWINHL SYM'OGYETHL GWILAAT'

Neediit di'hisgyatxwshl sim'oygethl gwilaat'

A Chief does not recklessly flaunt nor show off nor parade his power for all to see.

D'JABAGANTHL GOOT'D

Ji'daat lax'nihl ligitnaahl hat'aga'm 'algyax iit' 'kaa 'tiixhootxwdiit hligook'dm algyaxed. 'Ki'iit 'y need'y dilimox'd.

This term refers to a preferred behavior where one does not reply immediately when the person experiences or hears a direct attack. That is, one does not

reply right away; rather, one takes the time to think about it. Literally, it means to labor over it. Sometimes, the appropriate response is not to respond at all.

T'IM 'ALGYAX

Hasak'd dim 'ap x̣sdaad.

When you speak, you feel that you have to win.

HALAKS'M GOOT

Ayeehl a'alax'd.

Quick tempered.

LAXHOOSINSXW

Hetxwihl goodinhl Gap 'capxwihl ligit'naa , hlo'odi'n 'nidiit 'y neediim lisseexwihl naa 'ant liseew'n.

When someone treats you badly, you chose to bite your lip, and not take action. The reason why adopt this posture is because you respect the family of the one whom is causing you grief. More than a reasonable time is allowed until that *laxhosinsxw* runs out. The delay is allowed for corrective action to avoid embarrassment.

T'SI'OYXWHL YUUXDIIT / GUUS SIGYEEWTXW

Need'y gid'y skihl hahla'alst yuuk'ja si'hat'agamhykxwshl gyat.

You ignore all the negative, knowing that you have done nothing wrong and keep working for the common good emphasizing humility.

'TAAMS LO'OPXWHL SIM'OYGET

Need'y 'wihl yaltxwihl Sim'ogyet, laxnisuuxw 'ahl hehl miin Li'iliget. Hlo'omsxw gwingya'adit 'ahl t'sim 'an gyat.

Literally, this means that a Chief sits like a rock. The Chief is there to witness what the host is saying and doing. In the end will agree or on a rare occasion say what he heard was not quite right. This is a Chief's posture whereby he is not distracted so as not to miss vital information critical in making a determination or making a decision. More over, this is an expected behavior of a Chief, not only in a feast, but also appropriate in a meeting situation.

‘AM KI’IHL HETWH SIM’OYGET

‘Tiixhootxwihl Sim’oyget dim het, need’y helda hal’m bax’d.

A Chief gets up once to speak once. He does not get up time after time like popping corn. This action denotes that the Chief thinks things through and addresses the highest priority item. Although there may be pressure to address and solve all the problems of the world in one shot, the Chief opts to demonstrate control and focus, one problem or issue at a time.

LUUMAKD’YHL LO’OP T’SIMAG’Y / HAT’SIHL LO’OP

Need’y xstaltxw’d wilt lax’nihl hat’agam ‘algyax.

This literally means you chose to put a stone in your mouth upon hearing something bad leveled directly or indirectly at you.

SIMETXWS

Jida dip wilaax lip ‘nuu’m ‘y luu skihl am ‘ahl gwihl dim d’jab’m.

“Spirituality is knowing yourself” including all of the preceding as taught through the *anskimhl* process, to become a healthy *Gitxsan* through *yuuhlimax*, knowing how to act and behave.

‘MAASXW’D ‘Y XWSAAXW’D

T’sin tuun t’sim Wilp Sagyt wan, gi’naamithl hat’taga’m ‘algyax ‘y xwsaaxw’d. Neediit giba’hl dim’t sa’aniskidihl ligit’naahl het.

This behavior is not encouraged. This refers to a person who attends a meeting, spews negativity and leaves prior to anyone who might *sa’aniski* what was said. Typically, the person who portrays this behavior seem to enact it over and over, particularly entertaining to the one’s who exercise *‘Taams lo’opxw*.

GYAAHLAS’M ‘ALGYAX

Guundiseekxws hehl algyaxhl hagwin ‘atixsit, gyahlxwit ‘niin.

This means someone needling you with words, trying to get a rise of you.

‘AN SKWATXW

‘An halagyaxdix ‘ahl ligitnaa, gan ligi gwihl d’jab’n. ‘Anx hat’akxw, lak’a algyax.

One who makes fun of another or how someone behaves. This is a display of ignorance showing they were not brought up with *yuuhlimox*.

GUUXS WILAKXWS / 'IHLAGANSXW

Will kya x'staahl ha'taga'm hahla'alst ligitnaa, 'wiitis'm 'ihlagansxw.

The above term is the ultimate description of someone or a group of people who have done the ultimate screw-up. This describes the screw up as literally wallowing one's own thinnest poop (*laat*).

SAL'UUMST

Hat'ag'm haahla'alst 'aneediit, guuxs baax diiyaahl hli'ki'iit.

This term means that your bad deeds will catch up to you; what goes around, comes around.

SI'HAT'AGASXW

Goosgi'aa gi' 'aa hehl hliga'tsuuhl gyat, hat'agam 'algyax, luubagayt heh.

This term refers to one who habitually says and does bad things. The do not offer any constructive criticism, only negativity.

'ANXWLAAGYA'ALASXW

Dim 'wihl 'anx hatakxdix ahl ligitnaa.

This refers to a person who look down on someone or what they do, another example of a lost *Gitxsan*.

'ALGYAGAM LAX'TSEEHL LAKXW

Ndawil algyaxdix sa'ap 'atsip, yuuk ji' ligi sildix.

This describes when persons engage in serious discussion on important issues, say, on the street where they are powerless to contribute to resolve the matter under discussion. Another example would be when a person is not in the right frame of mind, say intoxicated from the consumption of alcoholic beverages, and carry on a very serious subject in the bar. Essentially, this behavior describes an inability to recognize that there is a time and place to address serious matters. There would be concern if that person a *gald'm* 'algyax if they portray such a behavior. A Gitxsan person would not engage in such a situation.

LUU SIILIN

Hla yuukd'mt 'maaluudihl ligitnaa 'niin.

This term refers to once becoming a nuisance by continuously bothering by some means.

SKWATXW'M 'ALGYAX, XWSI 'AYEEMAX

Gal 'apx'n wila magahl 'algyax. 'An skwatxw'd.

This term refers to one being too loose with the lips with no concern for the consequences of what he is saying.

'NIIYEETXW

Dasxwihl hat'agam hahla'alsthl Wil'naa'taahl

This infers that the effects of one's negative actions will befall negatively on his *Wil'naa 'taahl*, and others.

GUUXS MAAHLXW

Lip gya'ahl gyathl hahla'alst'n, 'nithl dii 'algyagat.

This infers that your actions does your talking. One is encouraged not to blow their own horn and not to try to impress another, like saying "I'm Chief so and so. I've done this and that!"

NEEDY 'AYOOKD'M LOO'K'N 'ALGYAX'D

Jida sagayt wanhl T'simsan 'y needy loo'k'n algyaxhl *Gitxsan*. "Needy Wilsigwit"

This counsels one as a *Gitxsan* to not dare participate when, say, the T'simsan were meeting. *Gitxsan* should not dare participate in their discussions because it is not the place to comment; it is none of the *Gitxsan* person's business.

SYAN

Ha'wahlxws gyat dim wiliit 'ahl ligi'a guu. Dim balgy, syan diitda.

The *Gitxsan* have a belief to not do certain things at particular time. The spiritual being may take offense of the lack of respect and therefore something may happen, like inviting danger that may lead to death.

WIIXO'OSXW

Giddy doogothl yuuhlimox, wilyithl ligi'ya gu'

This person has absorbed a lot of advice, thus becoming wise with life experience.

HAX'L 'KAN, LUU NEE

Luuneehl wiixo'osxw

This is the opposite of *Wiix'o'sxw* denoting and emptiness of wisdom, no beans.

GLOK

Helt wil la yeehl wihl gyat 'y glok'd. 'Aspa 'algyax, Si'hatagasxw, jida 'ihlagantxwhl ayookhl Wilp Li'iliget. Guuxs dookhl dalla. Gan ji' hoogyax ji hehl Simgigyat jiit skaaskitxwhl 'Axdi *Gitxsanit*. Glok hlibuud 'ant salawildiit.

This is an area of *Gitxsan* Law that deals with many forms of infractions that would result as Glok.

An example would be if you put your *hawal* (contribution in currency) in the feast pot and then you take it out. This would be glok.

Another: Host Chiefs formally close a meeting signaling that all discussion cease. Nevertheless, one rises to speak. In a nut shell, a glok occurs when you do something that is clearly against the grain.

Another: When your *Wil'na* taahl does not concur with their *Gald'm* 'Algyax that is clearly not of *Gitxsan* character.

Any Chief or Chiefs who witness the infraction can immediately call it for immediate remedy.

GUUXS GIL'KAL GYIMKS

Hlis ji ihlagansxwdix 'y 'nithl siwatxw'd. 'Niiyeetxw'nhl apligitnaa. Hooksit tuun hla 'ama japxw'd.

One's Glok effects the whole *P'deek*, not just the *Wil'na* 'taahl. The cost is born by many. A special ceremony or Feast is held called *Guuxs gil'kal gyimks* with the participation of your Father Clan. The offender apologizes and simultaneously makes a promise that the infraction will not happen again. This where the term '*Niiyeetxw*' applies.

LUUGAWISIH^l WILP LI'ILIGET

Helthl Gawisih^l Wilp Li'iliget, Miim wilp, Kaax, Kuuba wilsuux, ga nigwootxw, Ganiye'e, Wilyaasxw. Helt will naadihlo'oot.

The Feast House is a very dynamic place with much interaction. It brings out the overarching sharing character of *Gitxsan* society. When a feast happens, the people know what to do. Typically, the Chief's spouse becomes a major supporter usually behind the scenes. After the P'deek puts in their *hawal* the spouses come forward with their financial help called '*Antim Hanak*'. Your Father Clan helps before the Feast starts, paid back at a later day called *Si'xwdaa*. The in-laws called the *Wilyaasxw* come foreword with their help called *Si' gwila*. During a person's lifetime since the death of your father there could be two or three generations of father figures because the *wa*, the name, lives on, *Gwalax yee'nst*. The surviving children still support their father figure. The *Dark* (grandchildren) do their part as well when they contribute their '*A ye'e*'. When there is a death in your spouse's House the reverse happens. This is only a glimpse of the sophistication of *Gitxsan* interaction.

You have to remember that there are about thirty to forty other Chiefs whom have come to support you. When it comes to their Feast you do the same. This multiplies the Spouse support overall etc.

During Feast interludes, it is common for recipients to remember good deeds they received over the course of the past year. To show appreciation, recipients *x'kyeehl* you; that is, gifts of goods and or cash is given in a very public thank you.

Other features of a feast that typically play out are events like name giving.

The elegant dissertations from the *Simgigyat* are often very diplomatic but the educated *Gitxsan* will read between the lines to garner and understand what the real message was. It will not even feign on a non-fluent *Gitxsan* person that a profound advice or criticism was directed at them.

LUU 'ADJAXHL HASEEX

Miin Wilp ganth kaax 'ant luu adjaxhl haseex. 'nidiithl gald'm 'algyax.

Prior to acquiring the full power of being bestowed a chieftainship, the heir is compelled to fulfill conventional obligations. Otherwise, the heir has allowed his uncles' feet to stick out of his grave. In the Feast House, only those Chieftains, including the Wing Chieftains, who have fulfilled their tribal obligations have a right to speak. For the one time occasion only, anyone else speaking in the Feast House must be accompanied by either a Chieftain or a Wing who have fulfilled their tribal obligation.

GALD'M 'ALGYAX

Needy apligitnaa a 'ant di'akxw dim algyax'd. Dim 'ap 'nidinhl Wil'naa taahl na dim Gal'm 'algaxdit.

Once in a while the Head Chief will bring a *kuu'wilsuux* to stand with him as he speaks. Typically, this would be a one time privilege for that individual.

This term refers to a Gitxsan person as the formal designated speaker for the *wilp*. The *Simogyat* is automatically a *gald'm 'algyax*; any other person would need the approval of the *wil'nata'aahl*. Only persons within the *wilp* qualify to be considered for *gald'm 'algyax*. Persons outside the *wilp* will be considered only in extraordinary circumstances.

'AYOOKHL GITXSAN

Wilp Li'iligethl wilp 'ayookhl *Gitxsan*, Wilp hlo'omxw.

The overarching purpose of *Gitxsan* traditional governance include Gitxsan sustainability and the preservation of the Lax yip. A sophisticated Gitxsan Society have supporting laws to ensure sustainability and preservation. When Columbus showed up he saw a land of plenty, and called it the "new land". Our elders say it's "not new", just well looked after.

'AYOOKHL 'AMXSIWA

Wila baxhl 'amxsiwa kabihlda bakxwdiit.

'*Ayookhl 'Amxsiwa* refers to the Crown's apparatus and processes of governance that include law-making, legal system, and enforcement, including their statutes like the Indian Act of Canada.

HLIBA'ALIXS

D'jabihl 'amxsiwahl wila wildiit dim gan hlisxw'm

This term refers to extinguishment, opposite of sustainability and preservation.

LUUGWANTXW DIM DIP HOOXHL GWILA'

Hes 'Wii 'Eelast hla dip lu'wahl hagetxw.

This phrase was coined Simogyat 'Wii 'Eelast at the height of conflict in *Gitxsan* Country. It literally means "It's time to wear our blankets of power" inferring that it is time exercise the power bestowed on the *Simgigyat*.

YUUHLIMOX

T'siits, nibib gan hlaga'tuuhl dis'tisit ant gi'namhl yuuhlimox.

This term refers to ancient Gitxsan teachings that shape and define the behavior and posture of the Gitxsan especially expected of the *Simogyat*. Typically, maternal uncles are charged with teaching, shaping, and defining heirs to a chieftainship. Conventionally, the *T'siits* and other senior *Wilp* members are expected to also take an active role in teaching, shaping, and defining members of the wilp constantly measuring them for chieftainship.

HANIX HLIT' 'TKAAT

Hedix tuun 'ky 'min yuukhl gyat, ha'wend'y 'wiitishl wilyit.

This term literally means 'thin skin' implying that the person being referred is still immature and, clearly, not a candidate to be an heir.

X'TSA'YHL HLIT' 'TKAAT

Hlat' luu hlisinhl hahla'alst, helthl galixsiyuu't

This term refers to a person who has been through the fire and has done the job; therefore, referred to as having "thick skin"; the experienced tend to protect the 'thin skinned.'

XWSIISXW

This term refers to compensation, can be in the form of land, between nations or internal entities.

As happened in ancient times, one or more members of a family were killed. The act of aggression may lead to a war between the entities. To make peace, *Gawa Gyani* may be invoked. To appease the injured party, the aggressors may have to *Xwsiiisxw* in the form of large tracts of land, the most costly to them. An *adawak* commemorates this *Xwsiiisxw*; sometimes songs are composed in its commemoration.

If a killing happened internally, pre-meditated or not, land may be offered as compensation. If the killing was accidental, then quite often a fishing site would be offered for a period of time until the injured party's heart is satisfied.

LA ‘O’Y

N’akxw hlida skyathl algyax tuun. Si’limixediit ‘wiiitis’m aguu’.

This language comes from a 10,000+ year history. Significant events past were typically recorded through song. This term refers indicates time immemorial and pre-dates 1846.

LIMX ‘O’Y

‘O’y indicates the antiquity of the song. There are few words in such a song. Key words are used to capture a significant event. It is sometimes referred to as *Xwsuu’naahlxw*. The route word indicates breath, therefore a breath song. This song is about breath, from the first to the last.

This song is used at the death of a chieftain. The *’nii dil* mourn the departed chieftain. After the singing, “*Hagily yeen Sim’ogyat. Dahld’m dim ha’any yeen*” is pronounced denoting that the send off is with a sacred song impelling him to walk on upon leaving this world.

Another use of this song is also sung when a hosting chieftain *t’ets* another chieftain to attend the host chieftain’s feast. Invoking the *limx ‘o’y* signifies the importance and significance of the feast.

At the *Wilp Li’iliget*, the new chieftain is about to *Lag’ya*, to be called in by the father clan by the chieftain’s child name. The *limx ‘o’y* is again used, knowing that the same song initiated countless predecessors to the chieftainship. Within all *Wil’naa’taahl* certain members have *nox nok* names. A guest chieftain may respond with their *limx ‘o’y*.

The *limx ‘o’y* may be invoked at significant meetings.

P’saan, totem poles, connotes that the *limx ‘o’y* and the *adawak* are inseparable. This is a method of recording.

