

ETHNOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW OF THE NEZ PERCE TRIBE

A. Introduction

Long ago, a huge monster, Its-welx, filled the Kamiah Valley in the Clearwater River region. Its-welx was hungry so he swallowed all the animals and the people, and imprisoned them in his stomach. Coyote, It'se-ye-ye, was building a fish ladder for the salmon by tearing down the waterfall at Celilo. He heard about what happened and traveled to where the monster had eaten the people. He had with him five stone knives. He asked Its-welx to swallow him too, because he had become lonely. It'se-ye-ye jumped down the throat, went to the heart of the monster, and began to cut away. After Its-welx died, It'se-ye-ye carved up the monster, and scattered the pieces in many directions, each time naming a particular tribe and their physical characteristics. It'se-ye-ye left the "heart" in Kamiah, and sprinkled the heart's best blood from his fingers. From this he made the last and noblest of the tribe's, the Nimípu (The Nez Perce). Later, It'se-ye-ye turned the Heart of the Monster to stone. The Heart of the Monster site (10-IH-936) remains in Kamiah, Idaho (Haines 1955:8; Slickpoo 1972:201; Slickpoo and Walker 1973; Walker 1980:106).

The Nez Perce people call themselves Nimípu, which means the "real people" or "we the people." The name "Nez Perce" was given to the people through an interpreter with the 1805 Lewis and Clark expedition. French Canadians interpreted the meaning as "Pierced Nose." However this cultural practice was not common to the Nimípu (Slickpoo and Walker 1973:1). The Shoshone-Bannock and other neighbors to the south referred to the Nimípu as "people under the tule" or the "khouse eaters" (Curtis 1911:3; Slickpoo and Walker 1973:1; Walker 1985:13).

The Nimípu have a respect for the land, and animals who help sustain life. They lived in peaceful groups traveling seasonally within the deep canyons cut by the Snake, Clearwater and Salmon rivers. Families still fish, hunt, and gather traditional foods found in the rivers, on the mountains, and prairies within their home land (Slickpoo and Walker 1973:5; Walker 1982:70, 1998:420).

B. Pre-contact

1. Social and Political Organization

The Nimípu were one of the most influential groups involving intertribal matters in the Plateau region. They travelled across Oregon, Washington, and Idaho. They were close allies with the Cayuse (Ca-yoots-poo), standing by each other during visits from the Shoshone-Bannock (Te-wel-ka) raiding parties. They were also allies with the Flathead (Sa-likh) during the bison hunts in the Montana Plains (Khoo-say-na). However, they were the main Plateau opponent of the western Great Plains Blackfeet (Is-khoy-ke-nikh). Other Nimípu neighboring tribes include, the Columbia River Yakama (La-hkay-you),

the Lower Snake River Palouse (Pa-loots-poo), the Walla Walla (Wa-ye-let-poo), the PIAUTE (Te-wel-ka), the Salish (Sa-likh), the Coeur d'Alene (Es-ke-tsoo-mikh), the Kutenai (Koose-pa-loo), the Kalispel (Kehm-mas-pa-loo), the Blackfeet (Is-khoy-ke-nikh), the Gros Ventre (Heh-loo-teen), the Cheyenne (Tsep-te-te-ma-nihn), the Souix (E-sa-khoolkt), and the Crows (E-sue-hkah) (Slickpoo and Walker 1973:2; Walker 1982:131, 1998:425).

The Nimípu aboriginal territory was approximately 17 million acres; approximately 70 thousand square kilometers (27 thousand square miles) including the Clearwater River Basin, and the South and Middle Forks of the Salmon River Basin (See Figure 13). The people were divided as the Upper Nimípu of the Clearwater River region, and the Lower Nimípu of the Wallowa Valley each with its own territory and group of composite bands. These bands then subdivided into smaller bands of people living in villages along streams and rivers, together making up the politically unified composite band. The different bands were generally identified by using the name of the tributary stream that they lived near (Chalfant 1974:72; Slickpoo and Walker 1973:29; Walker 1982:70, 1985:14, 1998:420).

Each village was led by a headman, and was made up of several related, extended families. The headman was generally one of the elder men of the group, attending to the general welfare of the village members. This was generally an inherited position, although the headman was at times also a shaman who was a religious figure, and healer. The largest village within the composite band had a band leader, including the administrating peace chief, and the war chief. The village council was made up of the band leaders, and important warriors. The council was in charge of making major decisions involving the village. The band leader was elected by the village council even though the position could be semi-hereditary (Walker 1982:128-129, 1985:15-16, 1998:424-425).

1a. Settlement Patterns

The Nimípu lived in groups of extended families, in small villages along streams and rivers. The principal Nimípu house was the tule mat-covered, double lean-to, long house. The length varied, but could be over 100 feet long (See Figure 14). These dwellings were used for ceremonial purposes, and for winter housing by several families. There were several rows of hearths in the center of the structure, used by several families (Spinden 1908:196). At times, semisubterranean dormitories were used in conjunction with the long house to accommodate single men and women. House pits or excavated dwellings were also used by families simultaneously with the mat-covered long house structures (See Figure 14). These structures became less popular after the more prominent use of the conical structure (tipi) by the 1800's. The tipi was used on the trail, or for use during the spring and summer seasons for hunting, fishing, and root digging. They were made using twelve wood poles (See Figure 15) (Spinden 1908:197) with tule mat covers which were eventually replaced by bison skins during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. After the introduction of trade, canvas covers replaced the bison skin and tule mats. Historically, a few semisubterranean plank and log homes were found among the

Nimípu. A circular semisubterranean Plateau sweat house was always part of the permanent Nimípu settlements, as were the women's menstrual huts, and the submerged hot bath (Chalfant 1974:31; Curtis 1911:42; Spinden 1908:195-196; Walker 1982:79, 1998:427).

1b. Language

Nimiiputimt (Nimípu language) is related to other Sahaptian languages of the western United States such as Umatilla, and Yakama. Anthropological linguists classify languages into groupings from the largest to the smallest starting with stocks, followed by families, and finally the language spoken. The Nimiiputimt stock is Penutian, the family Sahaptian, and the language . During the earliest explorations of Euro-Americans many Indians were taught some French which is still found in the languages of the Kutenai, Kalispel, Coeur d'Alene, and the Nimípu. Today English has become the common language among the Nimípu and other North America tribes (Walker 1982:22; 1985:1; 1998:420).

1c. Traditional Nimípu Clothing

The Nimípu men wore long, fringed buckskin shirts, leggings, belts, a breech cloth, and several types of moccasins. Gloves were also occasionally worn by the men. The feathered bonnet was also a trait common to the Plains culture. This was popular by the time the Euro-Americans had arrived. In the cold weather, Nimípu men wore bison skin robes. Women wore long, belted buckskin dresses, corn husk basketry hats, and knee length moccasins. The dresses were decorated with elk teeth, beads made of shell, bone, and later glass, porcupine quills, and vegetable and mineral dyes. Both sexes painted their faces for certain ceremonies or occasions (Slickpoo and Walker 1973:32; Spinden 1908:216; Walker 1982:79. 1998:429).

1d. Nimípu Horsemanship

The Nimípu became renowned horsemen after the adoption of the horse in approximately A.D. 1700. The horse brought wealth, and was a major distinguishing factor between upper class and lower class. Village leaders and their families had large herds of several hundred horses which were tended to by young boys (Chalfant 1974:110). The horses were painted, and were tacked with elaborately decorated regalia, made of rawhide, horse hair, bone, and antler with colorful beads, porcupine quills, and dyes. These methods of decoration were used during certain occasions or ceremonies. The horse regalia differed for men, women, and for packing. A travois was occasionally used to haul heavy equipment (Slickpoo and Walker 1973:31; Walker 1982:71, 1998:427).

The Nimípu soon practiced horse breeding for strength, speed, and endurance, not for particular colors. The colorful horses, known now as the Appaloosa breed, were most likely a result from a few of the colorful horses originally acquired by the people. Horses were exchanged as gifts, sold, traded, and acquired during raids (Slickpoo and Walker 1973:31; Walker 1982:71, 1998:427). The name Appaloosa is conceived from the name

of the Palouse River in eastern Washington. Years ago this was a center for the spotted-horse (Haines 1955:24). The Lower Snake and Palouse river Nimípu, known as the Pa-loots-poo, originated here. The settlers called these people the Palouse. The Pa-loots-poo may have been the originators of the selective horse breeding (Slickpoo and Walker 1973:2). The adoption of the horse was an asset during bison hunts in the Great Plains, and with the movement of the seasonal round (Slickpoo and Walker 1973:35; Walker 1982:72, 1998:420).

1e. Seasonal Round

Within the deep canyons of the traditional Nimípu land, the people relied on the rivers, mountains and prairies for sustenance. They practiced a seasonal subsistence cycle, living with the seasons, not by the month (See Table 4 and Figure 16). The people lived in permanent winter villages along streams and rivers. By early spring the storage pits had been emptied of the foods they had kept for the winter months. At this time women traveled to the lower valleys to dig root crops. The men traveled to the Snake and Columbia rivers to intercept the early salmon runs. After the arrival of the horse, travel to these places was much easier. Earlier travel was by foot, canoe, and with the use of pack dogs. The men still hunted, but much less during the salmon runs. By mid-summer all the people of the village moved to higher mountainous areas setting up temporary camps to gather later root crops, fish the streams, and do more hunting of the big game. In the late summer some men would travel to the Montana Plains to hunt bison. Some of the hunting parties stayed for several years. By November the people settled back into their traditional villages along the Snake, Clearwater, and Salmon rivers. The salmon and other fish, game, dried roots and berries provided winter foods for storage (Chalfant 1974:104; Slickpoo and Walker 1973:30; Walker 1982:71, 1998:420). However, winter hunting of deer and elk was necessary to augment the winter food supply. Hunting parties would travel to the hills and river bottoms where the deer and elk wintered (Chalfant 1974:84). The Ahsahka Band (Ahts-kah-ai-wa-way-ma) took hunting parties up the North Fork of the Clearwater River to hunt deer and elk in the winter months, and to fish the waters (Osmundson and Hulse 1962:13).

C. Subsistence

1. Fishing Techniques

Anadromous fish were a main dietary source for the Nimípu. The presence or absence of salmon or steelhead played a large part in cultural development (Roll and Hackenberger 1998:120). The Nimípu men were the principal fishermen of the tribe. As the warm spring weather arrived, bands and families would move to their favorite fishing stations along the rivers. Winter villages were the base camps for fishing, depending on the location (Schwede 1966:12; Chalfant 1974:106). A variety of fish were caught, including chinook (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*), coho (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*), and sockeye (*Oncorhynchus nerka*) varieties of salmon; dolly varden (*Salvelinus malma*), cutthroat (*Salmo clarki*), lake (*Salvelinus namaycush*), and steelhead (*Salmo gairdneri*) varieties of

trout; several kinds of suckers (*Catostomus* sp.); whitefish (*Prosopium* sp.); sturgeon (*Acipenser transmontanus*), lamprey eels (*Entosphenus tridentatus*); and squawfish (*Ptychocheilus oregonensis*) (Spinden 1908:205). The main fish caught for the winter storage were the salmon and the steelhead. Salmon formed one-third to one-half of the winter food supply (Anastasio 1972:122). The fishing began during late spring, into early summer, and continued into early fall. The Ahsahka band (Ahts-kah-ai-wa-way-ma) moved to Bruces Eddy on the North Fork of the Clearwater River in June. Historically, the Bruces Eddy site (10-CW-1) was the major fishery on the North Fork of the Clearwater River (Osmundson and Hulse 1962:13). Other possible fishing camps have been discovered along the North Fork of the Clearwater River during the 1989 and 1995-1998 surveys conducted within the drawdown zone of Dworshak Reservoir.

1a. Tools Used

Tools used for fishing include hooks and lines, spears, harpoons, dip nets, traps, weirs, and seines (See Figure 17). Night fishing in the summer months along the main rivers was done from a canoe, or from the shore using pitch torches and spears (Chalfant 1974:81; Slickpoo and Walker 1973:32; Walker 1982:73, 1998:420). Fishing weirs, which are low rock dams that extend partly across the river, supporting a pole fence, and conical traps were constructed communally by the village (Osmundson and Hulse 1962:14). Salmon were generally dipped from a dugout canoe, or from a dipping platform that was constructed on the major rivers and tributaries. The platforms were either natural rock overhangs and outcroppings, or were built of wood, extending over eddies. Dip nets were used to catch the salmon as they swam upstream (Slickpoo and Walker 1973:32; Walker 1982:73, 1998:420).

1b. Food Preparation Methods

The Nimípu women played a big part in preparing the fish for winter storage. The fish were split, sun-dried, and smoked in order to last the long winter months in the storage pits (we-kas). When the fish was smoked, pitch-free woods such as willow, alder, bear willow, and thornbush were used. It generally took three nights and three days to dry the meat for storage purposes. The more succulent parts of the salmon, steelhead, and other fish caught were consumed immediately, or were sometimes cooked into a soup or stew (Slickpoo and Walker 1973:32; Walker 1982:73, 1998:420).

2. Hunting Techniques

By the mid-summer the Nimípu move to the mountains to hunt, fish the streams, dig root crops, and gather fruits. Large game animals that were hunted include deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*), elk (*Cervus elaphus*), moose (*Alces alces*), bear (*Ursus* sp.) (black, brown, and grizzly), mountain sheep (*Ovis canadensis*) and goats (*Oreamnos americanus*). After the introduction of the horse, the Nimípu men traveled to the Montana Plains to hunt bison and antelope with the Flathead (Sa-likh) people. Small game was hunted when needed, and include rabbit (*Lepus* sp.), squirrel (*Spermophilus* sp.), badgers (*Taxidea*

taxus), and marmot (*Marmota* sp.). Birds such as ducks (*Anas* sp.), geese (*Branta canadensis*), ruffed grouse (*Bonasa umbellus*), and sage hens (*Centrocercus urophasianus*) were also hunted. Deer and elk were generally taken by encirclement. The men would ambush the herds trapping the animals in areas where they could be easily dispatched. Deer and elk meat were important foods for the winter storage. Short trips to Montana over the Lolo trail for bison augmented the winter meat supplies. Hunting continued into the winter months once the people had settled into the winter villages to augment the winter storage (Chalfant 1974: 81; Slickpoo and Walker 1973:32; Walker 1982:72, 1998:421).

2a. Tools Used

Tools used for big game hunting included atlatls, spears, traps, and eventually the bow and arrow (See Figure 18). Spear tips and arrowheads were made by chipping and shaping stone. They were hafted onto the spear and arrow shafts using moistened sinew. Bows were made of syringa, backed with yew, and secured with sinew. The bows were sometimes also made of the horns of mountain sheep. The sheep horn bows were not as popular by the late 1700's and early 1800's due to manufacture difficulties. The branches of yew wood, syringa, wild cherry, and thornbush were far more easy to use and shape than the horn (Slickpoo and Walker 1973:42; Walker 1982:73, 1998:421).

2b. Food Preparation Methods

After a hunting trip, game animals were brought back to the village or camp site to be processed. The meat was stripped from the bone, boiled, broiled, sun-dried, or smoked for winter storage. The sun-dried or smoked meats were prepared using the same technique as used for the fish. The bones were cooked for broth, and some were used for making tools or weapons. The hides were used to make clothes, robes, blankets, saddles, and tipi covers. Deer brain was used to soften hides. Some of the meat was boiled in baskets using boiling stones. Pemmican was made of dried meats that were ground with fat and berries. This was easy to carry on long hunting trips (Slickpoo and Walker 1973:42; Walker 1982:73, 1998:421).

3. Gathering Techniques

By early spring the Nimípu villages had moved to the lower elevations to dig for roots in areas such as Lewiston, Idaho. The women were the primary root diggers, and fruit gatherers, assisted by the children. The roots in the higher elevations near Weippe (Oo-yipe), Idaho did not ripen until mid-August. The basic roots gathered for winter storage include camas bulb (kehr-mes) (*Camassia quamash*), Bitterroot (thlee-tahn) (*Lewisa rediviva*), khouse (qawas) (*Lomatium kaus*), wild carrot (tsa-weetkh) (*Daucus pusillus*), wild potato (keh-keet) (*Lomatium canbyi*), and other root crops. The root crops made up one-third to one-half of the winter food supplies (Anastasio 1972:119). Fruit collected include serviceberries (*Amelanchier* sp.), gooseberries (*Orycanthoides saxosum*), hawthorn berries (*Crataegus douglasii*), thornberries (*Crataegus columbiana*),

huckleberries (*Vaccinium membranaceum*), currants (*Ribes aureum*), (elderberries) (*Sambucus malanocarpa*), chokecherries (*Prunus demissa*), blackberries (*Rubus macropetalus*), raspberries (*Rubus idaeus*), and wild strawberries (*Fragaria vesca*). Other food gathered includes pine nuts (*Pinus* sp.), sunflower seeds (*Helianthus* sp.), and black moss (*Alectoria jubata*). By November travel for food supplies had ceased, and the people moved back to the winter villages until the next spring (Curtis 1911:41; Slickpoo and Walker 1973:42; Spinden 1908:204; Walker 1982:73, 1998:421).

3a. Tools used

The Nimípu women used crutch-handled digging sticks (tukes) made of wood and antler, to harvest the root crops (See Figure 19). Some of the roots and fruits gathered were collected in containers made of coiled basketry, however, some containers were made of wood. Once the food was processed for winter storage it was placed in the baskets, or parfleche, in bark and grass-lined cache pits, generally located on well drained hillsides. Other tools used to process the food included stone mortars and pestles. A basket was secured to the stone mortar base to hold the foods being ground in preparation for winter storage. Wooden mortars were also occasionally used (See Figure 21) (Curtis 1911:45; Slickpoo and Walker 1973:42; Walker 1982:73, 1998:421).

3b. Food Preparation Methods

Camas (kehr-mes) (*Camassia esculenta*), and some other roots were generally roasted in a large pit lined with dry wood. A layer of river cobbles was placed on the wood. The wood was set on fire, allowing the rocks to get very hot. Once the fire had burned down, the rocks were leveled, and a layer of coarse grass was spread over them. Twenty or thirty bushels of camas bulbs were thrown into the pits. The bulbs were then covered with another layer of grass, pouring water over the top to cause steam. The heap was then covered with dry earth, and a fire was built on top. The bulbs steamed for 24 hours to three days (Spinden 1908:201). Roots were sometimes boiled with meats in baskets using boiling stones. The roots were also baked in stone ovens. Once the roots were boiled or dried, they were then crushed using the mortar and pestle, and were formed into loaves and biscuits for winter storage. They were later used in soups, and stews. The baked loaves of khouse are called up-pa. Fruits were dried, and also crushed with the meats and fats and made into a pemmican, very much like a sweet jerky (Chalfant 1974:99; Slickpoo and Walker 1973:42; Walker 1982:73, 1998:421).

D. Post-contact

1. Lewis and Clark

Between 1804 to 1806, Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, and the "Corps of Discovery" were commissioned by President Thomas Jefferson to lead a major expedition from St. Louis, Missouri to the Pacific Ocean. The expedition party consisted of 45

people, including the interpreters, Troussant Charbonneau, and his Shoshone wife Sacajawea. The party traveled up the Missouri River, over the Bitterroot Mountains of Montana and Idaho in search of the navigable waters of the Columbia River (Joseph 1971:3). The first contact the Nimípu had with the explorers was September 20, 1805 when William Clark met three young boys playing in a field near Weippe (Oo-yipe), Idaho (McBeth 1993:18; Haines 1955:28). The Nimípu village they were taken to consisted of mostly women and children with most of the men down south at a battle. The Nimípu welcomed Lewis and Clark. Chief Twisted Hair, and Chief Tetoh (Sky) gave them food. They drew maps of the "big" river where they thought other settlers may live. Meriwether Lewis described the Nimípu as well dressed, and kind. After resting in what is now Orofino, Idaho, it was decided to travel the rest of the route by dugout canoes. By the end of November 1805, the "Corps of Discovery" made it to the Pacific Coast Seaside, Oregon where they built Fort Clatsop between Seaside, and Astoria, Oregon. On March 23, 1806 they began the return trip home. They arrived in St. Louis, Missouri on September 23, 1806. The Corps of Discovery had helped pave the way to the Pacific Northwest (Slickpoo and Walker 1973:42; Walker 1998:432).

2. Fur Traders

Not long after meeting with the Lewis and Clark expedition, the Nimípu territory was inundated by fur trappers, and traders between 1811 until the 1840's. Donald McKenzie had a trading post in Lewiston, Idaho, but it was disbanded by 1813 due to lack of interest. However, the Nimípu were trading with the North West Company post on the Upper Columbia. The Nimípu traded in The Dalles, Celilo Falls, Yakama Valley, and Walla Walla areas at an annual trade fair. This brought together trading partnerships with the many tribes of the Plateau, leading to the beginning of substantial cultural changes (Joseph 1971:67). The beaver (*Castor canadensis*), river otter (*Lutra canadensis*), and other animals trapped for fur were rapidly exhausted. By 1846 there were very few beaver left anywhere in the Columbia Basin. During this period the Nimípu became prosperous in trading fur, horses, and other goods with the fur traders until all the fur animals had been depleted, and the fur trade diminished (Haines 1955:5; Slickpoo and Walker 1973:70; Walker 1998:429).

3. Missionaries

Twenty-five years after Lewis and Clark had passed through the Nimípu territory, a four-man delegation of Nimípu and Flathead traveled to St. Louis, Missouri asking for books and teachers. This act of interest alerted the Christians who would eventually send missionaries to the Northwest with the "Book of Heaven." The four men who went were Ka-ow-poo (Of the Dawn), Ta-weis-se-sim-nihn (No Horns), Heh-yookts Toe-nihn (Rabbit Skin Leggings), and Wep-tes-tse-mookh Tse-mookh (Black Eagle). These men may have been influenced to go to St. Louis in return for many gifts for the people. Many think the missionaries were sent to pacify the Nimípu, and other neighboring tribes who opposed the settlers (Slickpoo and Walker 1973:71; Walker 1985:39, 1998:429).

By 1836, Reverend and Mrs. Henry Harmon Spalding had arrived, setting up their Presbyterian church near the mouth of Lapwai Creek. This area is now known as Spalding, Idaho. Other missionaries such as Marcus and Narcissa Whitman, and Reverend Asa Bowen Smith set up missions in surrounding areas with the Cayuse neighbors, and in Kamiah, Idaho (Curtis 1911:6; Walker 1985:9). The Nimípu and neighboring tribes had already been introduced to the Roman Catholic faith when the eastern Iroquois, and trappers passed through, stopping for supplies at Fort Lapwai. This was the beginning of the interest in the Christian faith (Josephy 1971:73). The missionaries built a grist mill, sawmill, and a school for the Nimípu. Rev. Spalding decided he would learn to speak the language of the Nimípu. He had a printing press imported from Hawaii, and printed the first Nimiiputimt book in 1839, a second in 1840, and a third and last in 1843. Some Nimípu welcomed the missionaries, converting to the Christian ways. However, some people did not like the cultural changes the missionaries were teaching. The people who converted were taught theology, Christian marriage, worship of holy holidays, horticulture, sedentary living, literacy, and Bible reading. The people were demoralized and taught to forget native ways, religions, and traditional beliefs (Josephy 1971:220; Slickpoo and Walker 1973:71; Walker 1985:41, 1998:433). In 1840, new laws were introduced in Lapwai by Dr. Elijah White, an Indian Agent (Haines 1955:87; McBeth 1993:50). The laws were written by Spalding, and involved punishments such as hanging and flogging (Josephy 1971:220; Slickpoo and Walker 1973:71; Walker 1985:41, 1998:433).

The Protestant Mission at Pahs-hkah, and the Wa-ye-tat-poo Mission near Walla Walla, Washington ended in 1847 with the massacre of Marcus and Narcissa Whitman on November 29 (Haines 1955:102; Josephy 1971:243; McBeth 1993:72). Spalding left the area, and the Presbyterian work among the Nimípu did not resume until 1871 when Spalding returned (McBeth 1993:75). After the invasion of the missionaries, the Nimípu were torn by their religious beliefs (Slickpoo and Walker 1973:75; Walker 1985:44, 1998:433).

On April 24, 1871 John B. Monteith was the first Indian Agent nominated by the Presbyterian Board. The Nimípu Reservation was basically given to the Presbyterian church. Spalding was not happy with Monteith. They constantly argued over how the people were being converted. Later Monteith and Spalding came to an agreement. The missionaries continued to convert tribal members, taking away traditional life (Slickpoo and Walker 1973:156).

4. Nimípu Treaties

4a. 1855 Treaty

After the inundation of the missionaries, and the continual migration of the white settlers to the traditional lands, friction between the Indians and the whites was mounting. Governor Isaac Stevens, and most other settlers had agreed that the Nimípu and other

neighboring tribes should be put on reservations. A treaty council was held May 22 until June 11, 1855 in Walla Walla, Washington involving the United States government, the Nimíipu, Cayuse, Walla Walla, Umatilla, and Yakama people. Aleija Lawyer was appointed by the government as the head chief of the Nimíipu (Slickpoo and Walker 1973:77; Walker 1985:45, 1998:434).

Chief Looking Glass was not happy with the appointment of Lawyer as head chief of the people. He spoke on Saturday June 9, 1855..."Why do you want to separate my children and scatter them all over the country? I do not go into your country and scatter your children in every direction" (Slickpoo and Walker 1973:130). On Monday June 11, 1855, the treaty papers were signed (Josephy 1971:323). At closing, Governor Stevens told the Nimíipu and neighboring tribes that he would be their "great chief." The tribes were guaranteed the hunting, fishing, gathering, and travel rights off the reservation on the traditional lands. More than 155 thousand square kilometers (60 thousand square miles) of tribal lands were signed away to the United States government. The government created reservations including an area of approximately 130 thousand square kilometers (50 thousand square miles) in Idaho, Oregon, and a strip of Washington for the Nimíipu (See Figure 13). The other reservation lands belonged to the Walla Walla, Cayuse, Yakama, Umatilla, Klikitats, and twelve other bands of people. In turn, the government had promised to maintain the schools, mills, blacksmith shops, and carpenter shops on the reservations. Annuities of blankets, clothing, and other useful materials were also guaranteed to be paid for twenty years. These guarantees were rarely kept (Curtis 1911:7; Slickpoo and Walker 1973:143; Walker 1998:434).

4b. 1863 Treaty

With the discovery of gold near Fort Colville, and present day Pierce, Idaho in the 1860's, thousands of gold miners poured into the Northwest looking for their fortune. By 1861, there were at least 10,000 gold miners looking for gold on traditional land (Slickpoo and Walker 1973:144; Walker 1985:46, 1998:434).

To avoid further conflicts, an agreement was made indicating a portion of the reservation lying north of the Snake and Clearwater rivers, near the "Weippe rootground," and across the Bitterroot Mountains as open areas to settlers (See Figure 3). By October 1861, the town of Lewiston, Idaho had a population of approximately 1,200 people. A portion of the reservation that contained gold was also to be purchased. The government declared this portion of the reservation rugged mountainous land, unfit for civilization, and of no value to the Nimíipu (Slickpoo and Walker 1973:144; Walker 1998:434).

Without there ever really being a treaty council, the 1863 Treaty was signed only by the Upper Nimíipu of the Lapwai Valley in Washington Territory June 9th. The Lower Nimíipu were never invited to the treaty council. The Lower Nimíipu of the Wallowa Valley never saw, or approved the 1863 Treaty. President Andrew Johnson signed the 1863 Treaty, stating that the Nimíipu had sold their land in the Wallowa Valley, and that after survey, it would be opened for settlement (Josephy 1971:440). This angered the

Wallowa Band, and eventually led to the 1877 conflict (Slickpoo and Walker 1973:144; Walker 1998:434).

5. The Nimípu War of 1877

By 1875, with the opening of the Wallowa Valley, settlers, and miners were continually moving into the area. There was a constant friction between these and the Nimípu. A Nimípu was killed in July 1876, which led to councils, consultations, visits by Monteith, and military authorities. A series of councils beginning May 3, 1877 resulted in the removal of all the Nimípu, horses, and cattle from the Wallowa Valley to the reservation in Lapwai. The chiefs were to select lands on the reservation they wished to move to. They had 30 days to move. The chiefs agreed, including Chief Joseph (Hinmatowyaláhtáq_it), his brother Ollokot, and his people (Josephy 1964:5). The limited amount of time to leave the homeland brought on hostility. Despite the years of frustration, mistreatment, and broken promises, the War of 1877, known as Chief Toohoolhoolzote's War to the Nimípu, was caused by the opening of the Wallowa Valley to settlers (Josephy 1964:1-4; Slickpoo and Walker 1973:183; Walker 1998:434).

Conflicts intensified when two elderly Nimípu were killed after accidentally wandering onto a settlers property. By mid-June, three young warriors of Chief White Bird's band were out to seek vengeance. They road off toward settlements on the Salmon River. Several people were killed. Sixteen other young warriors joined them. The settlers were scared and the military moved in. The Nimípu War of 1877 had begun (Josephy 1964:5; Slickpoo and Walker 1973:184; Walker 1998:434). The Lapwai people tried to tell General Howard that the young warriors were seeking revenge for the murder of the elderly couple by the settler, and that they were not declaring war. However, Howard did not believe them. He chose to believe an informant who told him about an uprising. The military did not seek to capture the murderers, instead they chose to attack the villages. The White Bird Band moved away to avoid being blamed for the murders (Haines 1955:221; Slickpoo and Walker 1973:189).

General Howard had already moved in on the White Bird village. He sent a force of 99 soldiers with Captain Perry. The Nimípu were ready for him. General Howard lost the White Bird battle and 34 of his soldiers, horses, and guns (Curtis 1911:18). The three month pursuit, including many battles, had begun. After the battle at White Bird came the Cottonwood, and Clearwater battles. The largest group of Nimípu met with General Howard near Stites, Idaho, now called Battle Ridge. The battle went on for 30 hours until finally the Nimípu forces retreated to plan their next move. A patrol of U.S. Calvary staged an early raid on the Clear Creek (Kehm-na-ka) village on the Middle Fork of the Clearwater River near what is now Kooskia, Idaho (See Figure 3). This was Chief Looking Glass' village, and was the permanent home of his people. Looking Glass did not want to be involved in the war (Josephy 1971:522). The soldiers attacked, and killed men, women, children, and the elderly while they were still asleep. Some people escaped. After the massacre of his village, Looking Glass was now ready to fight, and join the others (Josephy 1964:6, 1971:524; Slickpoo and Walker 1973:190; Walker 1998:434).

On July 16, Chief Looking Glass was named the head chief for the trek to Montana over the Bitterroot Mountains due to his experience in Buffalo Country (Josephy 1964:12). The people moved into Kamiah, Idaho, and from there traveled up the Lolo Trail into Montana. Howard left for Missoula taking another route. The Nimíípu asked the Souix to join forces, but they were not interested. The people then moved on to the Big Hole in Montana, and were surprised by Colonel Gibbon and his troops. They killed all the men, women, children, and elderly in one section of the camp (Haines 1955:255). Another section of the camp retaliated on Colonel Gibbon's forces (Josephy 1964:14). Joseph and the rest of the non-treaty bands escaped, moving north, out of Howard's reach. They stopped to camp, rest, and get supplies at Bear Paw Mountains. General Miles and his soldiers attacked Joseph and the non-treaty bands for one last time at Bear Paw using a twelve-pound Napoleon cannon. After a long battle Joseph had decided the days of hunger and freezing cold needed to end. The people were now free to do what they wanted, to surrender or flee. Chief Looking Glass, Chief White Bird, and Chief Yellow Wolf refused to surrender, planning to steal away with others at the first opportunity. Chief Looking Glass did not make it. He was shot when he stood to see who the messenger on horseback was. He was the last casualty of the battle. Chief White Bird and Chief Yellow Wolf escaped and made it to Canada. Chief Yellow Wolf eventually went back to the Lapwai Reservation in Idaho, and was later exiled to the Colville Reservation in Washington. With the end of this long battle, and the deaths of Chief Toohoolhoolzote, Chief Looking Glass, and Ollokot, Joseph finally faced General Miles, handed him his rifle and surrendered October 5, 1877. (Haines 1955:278; Josephy 1964:19, 1971:609; Slickpoo and Walker 1973:193; Walker 1998:435).

Four hundred and eighteen Nimíípu were taken as prisoners to the Oklahoma Reservation (Josephy 1964). The people were expected to be farmers, and to forget about their home. Many people died in exile from malaria, and other diseases. Eventually Archie Lawyer and James Reuben who had been educated as ministers, came to Oklahoma establishing a school. They successfully convinced the government to let one group of Nimíípu finally return home to Idaho in 1883. Congress promised to pay for travel expenses, but they were never provided. The people had to sell goods to raise enough money for themselves. In 1884, an act was passed giving the Secretary of the Interior the power to decide where Joseph's band would go. Some of the people were sent to the Lapwai Reservation with Hoo-soos-khute, and the others went to the Colville Reservation with Joseph (Slickpoo and Walker 1973:195; Walker 1998:435). In August 1899, Chief Joseph returned to visit his homeland in the Wallowa Valley for the first time since his banishment. Unable to purchase any property in the Wallowa Valley, he returned to Nespelem, Washington. Chief Joseph died on September 21, 1904 sitting in front of his tipi fire (Curtis 1911:39; Josephy 1971:625).

6. Religious Conflict

In 1878, Reverend George Deffenbough came to Lapwai. Once again the religious conflict of cultures arose on the reservation. Before Spalding died he had ordained three

Nimípu men, Archie Lawyer, Solomon Whitman, and Jonathan Williams, also known as Billy Williams, to continue his duties as a missionary. In 1879, Sue McBeth and her sister Kate arrived in the Lapwai Valley as missionaries. Sue McBeth also took up Spalding's work preparing young men who had potential of being good ministers (Slickpoo and Walker 1973:202).

Within the late nineteenth century, the government began to turn the military forts into schools. The reservation children were encouraged to attend by the missionaries. The schools were strict, forbidding native language and traditions. A boarding school was established at Fort Lapwai for the local reservation children. Many Nimípu children were also sent away to boarding schools such as the Chemawa Indian School in Salem, Oregon, and the Carlisle Indian School in Pennsylvania. In the late 1940's sectarian schools soon began to emerge in the local areas. Eventually public schools opened to all the children (Slickpoo and Walker 1973:227).

7. The Dawes Act

By 1880, the settlers were growing more hostile towards the reservation Nimípu. On April 7, 1887, Congress passed the Dawes Act. This act gave the president the power to divide up the reservation property, and to give each member of the tribe a certain amount of acreage depending on status and age. The allotments were held in trust with the United States government for 25 years. Unallotted land would be sold to the government. This act broke up the reservation and allowed more settlers to acquire traditional Nimípu land (Slickpoo and Walker 1973:219; Walker 1985:77, 1998:435).

In 1891, the Dawes Act was amended stating that if there was enough land left on the reservation, each person would receive an additional 80 acres. This was followed by the Burke Act in 1906 which again amended the Dawes Act. This act stated that anyone owning an allotment would not become a citizen, or fall under the civil and criminal laws of the state or territory until the trust patent had been exchanged for the fee patent (Slickpoo and Walker 1973:220; Walker 1998:435).

In 1889, T.J. Morgan, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, set up an eight-point plan of operation based on the provisions of the Dawes Act. This plan indicated the intent of the act as being designed to force the people to give up what was left of their traditional life. Also in 1889, Miss Alice Fletcher, an anthropologist from Harvard University, began the task of allotting the reservation lands. She eventually realized she needed assistance involving the surveying of the properties. She suggested a link be formed between the tribal and government officials working on the reservation. The Tribal Council chose nine committee members. This committee was the foundation of the current political structure on the Nimípu Reservation today (Slickpoo and Walker 1973:224).

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