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AN ETHNOHISTORY OF THE KOOTENAI INDIANS

By

Cynthia J. Manning

B.A., University of Pittsburgh, 1978

Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

1983

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The purpose of this study was, first, to provide an ethnohistorical overview of the Kootenai Indians of British Columbia, northwestern Montana and northeastern Idaho, and secondly, to discuss the Kootenais' adaptation to the environmental region. The Kootenai River area is regarded by scholars and the Kootenai Indians themselves as the traditional homeland of the Kootenai Indians. The rugged, mountainous terrain and river valley supported a relatively rich cultural life. Euroamericans who first entered the area made observations of Kootenai Indian life-ways in their journals and records. Data was gathered by researching the journals, letters, reports and documents of the early Euroamerican explorers, trappers and traders, missionaries and government officials who travelled through the Kootenai region. Data was also supplied through consultation with Kootenai Indian elders. Secondary sources were used to supplement and corroborate data.

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This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my grandmothers, Louise S. Manning and Hazel G. Mears.

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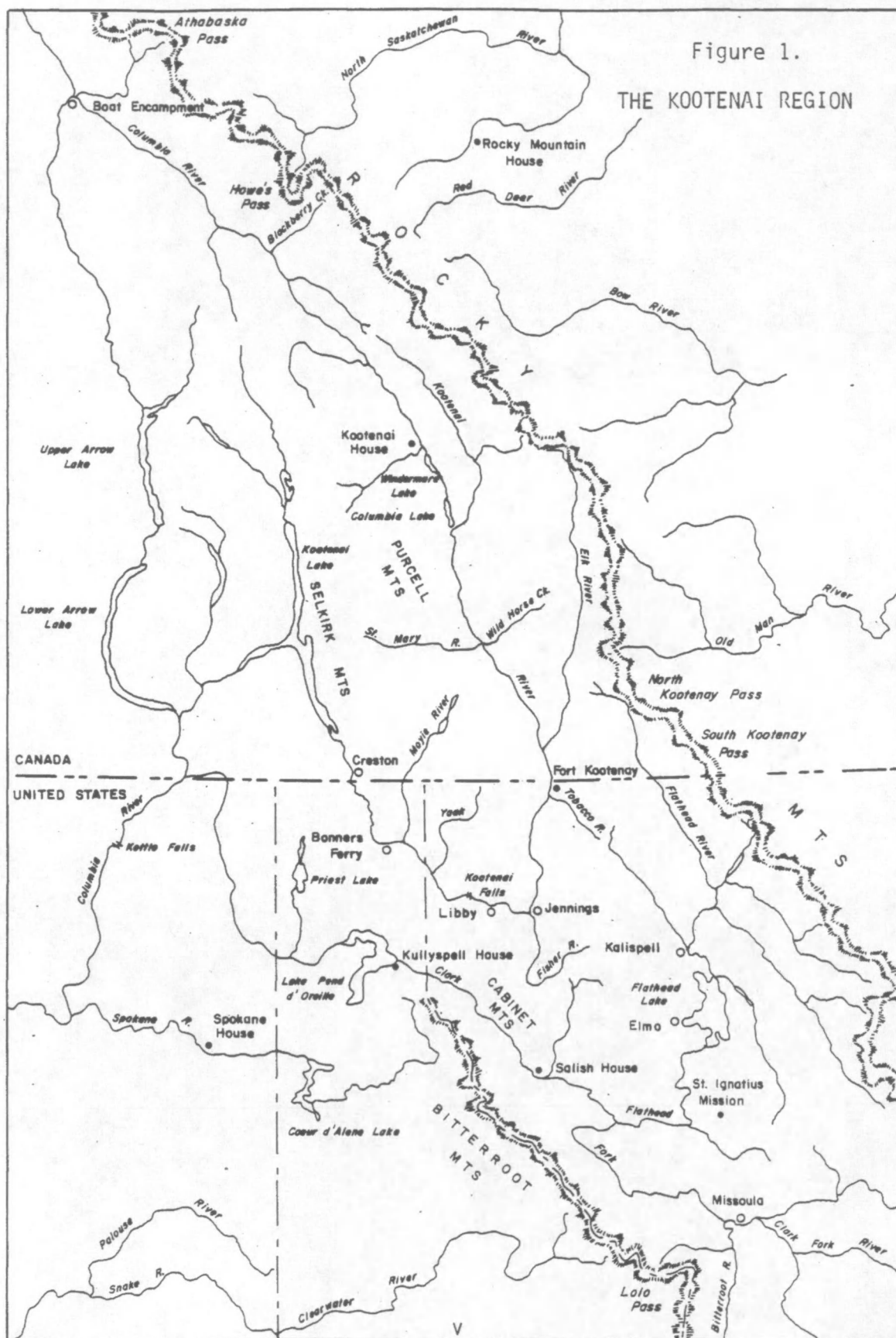


Figure 1.

THE KOOTENAI REGION

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

The Kootenai River valley region of British Columbia, northwestern Montana and southeastern Idaho is recognized by both scholars and tribal traditions as the traditional homeland of the Kootenai Indians. It is an area characterized by precipitous, densely forested mountains, intersected by narrow water courses. The Kootenai River valley serves as a major corridor through the rugged mountains, providing a transportation route linking the northern and eastern regions to lands south and west. The Kootenai River originates at Columbia Lakes, British Columbia, and runs basically southward to the mouth of the Fisher River, where it cuts westward through northwestern Montana and northeastern Idaho. From there it flows northward, emptying into Kootenay Lake in British Columbia (see map, p. v).

According to Kootenai tribal tradition, they were the original inhabitants of the Kootenai River region. It is not known who the Kootenai's ancestors were, nor from where they may have migrated. Some sources conjecture the Kootenai moved into the region from the north and settled along the river, probably in the northern to middle stretch where the river flows south (Schaeffer 1940, Turney-High 1941), possibly in the vicinity of Tobacco Plains. More often sources state the Kootenai moved out of the eastern plains and Rocky Mountain

foothills due to pressure from hostile Blackfeet (Chamberlain 1907; Johnson 1969). At any rate, white explorers, trappers and traders were informed by other Indian groups that the land west of the northern Rockies was Kootenai territory.

Archaeological investigations have revealed human occupation of the Kootenai region dating to Paleo-Indian times, ca. 12,000 to 10,000 B.P. (Reeves 1975; Choquette and Holstine 1980). Reeves (1982:51) figures this occupation can be attributed to the Kootenai at least 2,000 years ago. At this time sufficient data do not exist to determine whether the occupation was Kootenai prior to 2,000 years ago, nor is it known who these earlier people might have been.

My interest in the Kootenai Indians developed during three years of archaeological work conducted primarily for the U.S.D.A. Forest Service, Kootenai National Forest, headquartered at Libby, Montana. As we attempted to determine potential locations for sites, numerous questions arose, and our survey strategies became increasingly problematic. What characteristics could have made one landform, or a certain vegetative type, a more propitious location for a campsite? What resources could have been more abundant in an area, promoting its greater utilization or habitation? Additional questions arose, particularly after we had hiked up and down steep slopes, crawled on all fours through dense underbrush, and balanced precariously on downfall where there was no way to get around. How did the aboriginal people travel through this region? How and why did they live in such an environment?

The intent of this thesis is to compile an ethnohistory of the Kootenai River valley region and the Kootenai Indians. It will attempt to shed light on some of the above questions. My hypothesis is that prehistoric Kootenai Indian life demonstrated a specialized and unique adaptation to a unique environmental setting. Other people have suggested this idea. B.O.K. Reeves, of the University of Calgary and archaeologist studying the Northern Kootenai region, states:

Traditionally the Northern Rocky Mountains have been considered a marginal ethnological and archaeological area between the Plains and Plateau culture areas.... The concept that the Kootenay were people adapted to a unique environmental area--the Rocky Mountains with principal subsistence resources of both the Plains (bison) and Plateau (fish), is generally not evident in the literature on the area and its people. We argue that the Northern Rocky Mountains contained a distinctive set of resources--bison, other ungulates, fish, and lithics.... The archaeological record of the past 2,000 years, the time to which we can confidently ascribe Kootenay occupation, suggests a complex land use pattern.... The Northern Rocky Mountains is in our opinion a distinctive cultural ecological area (1982: 50-51).

Whether the Kootenai belong to the traditional Plains Culture Area or the Plateau Culture Area (as developed by C. Wissler in 1926) has been debated. Culture areas were delineated on a geographic basis, as locations in which similar cultural traits were exhibited. Economic and technological systems of different groups are similar within a culture area in response to similar geographic and environmental conditions. The Kootenai are considered part of the Plateau Culture Area by some sources (Ray 1939; Murdock and O'Leary 1975). More often they are regarded as Plateau peoples who show Plains influence (Turney-High 1941; Teit and Boas 1975), or conversely, Plains with Plateau influence (Chamberlain 1907). Arguing this point does not

significantly contribute to an understanding of the Kootenai, however. It is my contention that the Kootenai do not necessarily belong to either group; instead they represent a specialized adaptation to a geographic area which is not consistent with either the Plains or Plateau. Bonnicksen and Baldwin state: "We discovered that the dominant culture area approach is inadequate for studies which seek to explain diversity" (1978:40). As Reeves points out in his above quote, Kootenai culture possesses traits which may be ascribed to both culture areas. They not only hunted bison communally on the plains, but also fished communally in the Kootenai River region. They had both skin tipis, commonly attributed to the Plains, and lodges made of rush, cedar, and bark, characteristic of the Plateau area.

In David Thompson's Narrative, he discusses differences between Plains groups and the forested mountain groups:

These great plains place them under different circumstances and give them peculiar traits of character from those that hunt in the forests. These latter live a peaceable life, with hand labour to procure provisions and clothing for their families; in summer they make use of canoes, and in winter haul on sleds all they have in their frequent removals from place to place (in White 1950:204).

In 1816 Ross Cox noted the Kootenai to be different from other groups and says "they are a very peculiar tribe" (Cox 1957:264).

Edward Curtis also mentioned their uniqueness: "the influence of the Plains can be readily discerned.... Yet the foundations are distinctive ... the Kootenai possess a culture in many respects peculiar to themselves" (Curtis 1911:120).

To demonstrate the unique aspects of Kootenai culture, this thesis will employ a cultural ecological approach: the Kootenai's

culture developed primarily in response to the environmental setting. For example, the region contains abundant rivers, creeks and lakes, so fish comprised a large part of their diet, and they often travelled via canoes. Steward (1955:40) stated that to study cultural ecology "first the interrelationship of exploitative or productive technology and environment must be analyzed." Bonnicksen and Baldwin present a discussion of the cultural ecological approach:

Rather than beginning with the assumption that culture and environment are locked into a closed homogenous system we are ... interested in exploring the view that cultural-environmental relationships constitute an open-system which permits diversity. In developing this point of view, we have selected for our analytical units the concepts of adaptation, biome and ecosystem. Adaptation is viewed as the way human actors attempt to realize objectives and satisfy needs while coping with social and environmental conditions during their life span. Adaptive strategies are formulated in reference to anticipated future conditions and structured in light of known past conditions. Individuals and human groups, through observation and socialization, incorporate environmental variables into their cognitive structure. These images and categories become building blocks for formulating adaptive strategies in relation to the natural environment. When there is environmental variation, humans have the capability of governing their response to best fit the situation at hand (1978:41).

One significant, unique aspect of Kootenai culture is their language. The Kootenai language is not considered to be related to any other, but is a language stock distinct in itself, unrelated to that of any of the neighboring tribes, allies or enemies. Questions as to its origins remain a scholarly controversy. This linguistic peculiarity probably tended to isolate them from other groups, although they were able to communicate proficiently by sign language, and some Kootenai people spoke other languages. This unique language will be another aspect of Kootenai culture addressed in this thesis.

Methodology

The goal of this thesis is to compile an ethnohistory of the Kootenai Indians. Reconstructing the culture of any Indian group prior to white contact is a difficult task, and the Kootenai are no exception. Ethnographies may be consulted, but as they often make declarative statements without giving their source, some of their information may be questionable. Archaeological work may provide information regarding material culture and technology, but it often falls short of explaining political and social organization, or religious beliefs. Recent archaeological studies have been limited in scope, since they have been primarily mitigative, specific project work. Comprehensive studies pertaining to the Kootenai people are relatively few. Published accounts of observations and descriptions of the Kootenai made by the first whites into the region are few.

The late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries saw an increasing westward movement of Euroamericans. A major impetus behind this expansion was the fur trade. As the market for furs increased and the furbearer population was over-exploited, explorers, trappers and traders pushed west to expand trapping territories. They also established trade relations with the native Americans, inducing them to trap. Contact with the Kootenai Indians was first made in the 1790s. The North West Fur Company, a rival of the Hudson Bay Company, had established Rocky Mountain House, a trading post, on the Saskatchewan River. The Kootenai desired the white goods which neighboring tribes had procured, and attempted to contact the traders. Certainly the Kootenais had no idea of the consequences of such contact. Within 55 to

75 years the Kootenais saw their tribal territory explored, settled, and come under the jurisdiction of whites. Their traditional lifestyle changed rapidly from semi-nomadic hunters and gatherers to reservation-bound and government-restricted dependents.

Explorers and fur traders such as David Thompson, Alexander Henry the younger, and Ross Cox; missionaries including P.J. de Smet, S.J., and Nicholas Point, S.J.; and government officials such as Major J. Owen, Thomas Meagher, and W.A. Baillie-Grohman kept journals, wrote letters, and filed documents that included their observations and impressions of both the environment and the people. These sources provide the first written accounts of Kootenai Indian life, and are an invaluable body of data. A compilation of this information furnishes an ethnohistorical overview of the Kootenai.

The methodology employed for this ethnohistory involved five basic stages. The first stage involved acquiring the permission and cooperation of the Kootenai people located on the Confederated Salish and Kootenai reservation in northwestern Montana to conduct this work. I had worked with some of these people before in conjunction with Forest Service archaeological work, and was aware of their need for some sort of tribal history. For instance, proposed land alteration projects often frustrated these people, especially when they were asked to present documentation of their tribal traditions, and to delineate certain areas as having special religious significance. Hopefully, this thesis will help in producing such documentation. I was impressed by the concern these people have for their traditional lands, and with their strong sense of tribal integrity. A study of their history would

not be complete without the results of their generous participation. The second phase of this work thus involved about ten hours of consultation with tribal elders.

Concurrently, a bibliography was compiled. This thesis utilizes primary sources; journals, letters and documents of first-hand observations. The major primary sources of data herein were written by David Thompson, Duncan M'Gillivray, Alexander Henry the younger, Alexander Ross, Ross Cox, Prince Maximillian of Wied, George Simpson, John Work, Father Nicholas Point, Father Jean-Pierre de Smet, Capt. John Palliser, Kootenay Brown, Major John Owen, Thomas Meagher, Col. P. Robertson-Ross, Mary Ronan, and W.A. Baillie-Grohman.

Some of these sources, of course, provided more information than others, primarily because of differences in the extent and duration of the authors' interaction with the Kootenai people. Most consist of only short references. Similar information is often repeated in the various sources. It seems that some of these early travellers were more concerned with noting geographic features or their own activities than in describing the ubiquitous natives. While these sources generally present first-hand accounts they also contain occasional misunderstandings and errors. Weist (1973) points out that Plains data from the nineteenth century is usually derived from early travellers who observed Indian cultures but may have misunderstood them, or by Plains ethnographers who understood the cultures but did not observe them.

Secondary sources were also used for two reasons. First, despite frequent mention of Kootenai people in primary sources, detailed descriptions are not abundant. Because the explorers, trappers and

traders, missionaries, and government officials were usually travelling through and not living in the region, involved and consistent interaction was not great. Thus secondary sources were also used to supplement and corroborate the primary source data. Other valuable secondary sources are the interviews with tribal elders conducted by anthropologists in the early to mid-1900s (i.e., Curtis, Schaeffer, Malouf, White, Turney-High).

The fourth phase of work involved reading these sources and noting any mention of the Kootenai. Other types of sources were read to develop a theoretical framework (i.e., Steward, Bonnichsen and Baldwin, Oswalt).

The fifth phase collated the data and resulted in this thesis.

Before proceeding, it should be noted that numerous spellings of "Kootenai" exist. The Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 30 (1907), lists 77 different spellings. Three are most common: "Kutenai," "Kootenay" and "Kootenai." Generally, "Kutenai" refers to the people, "Kootenay" describes the places and river--and occasionally the people--in Canada, and "Kootenai" is the American spelling. I use "Kootenai" to describe the people, river and places, as it is the form used by the Confederated Salish and Kootenai tribal members to describe themselves and their traditional region. Alternative spellings will be given if quoted directly from a source.

Chapter II

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE KOOTENAI REGION

Historic white occupation can be conceptualized in four stages. The first was the fur trade, or the era of the explorers, trappers and traders. This spanned a period of approximately 72 years, beginning with David Thompson in 1800 and concluding in 1871 with the closing of the last Hudson Bay Company posts in the region. The majority of data for this time period date from 1800 to 1830.

The second stage of white occupation began with the arrival of missionaries in 1841. Their initial period of influence was from 1841 through 1845, although many of the missions continue to operate today.

The third stage involved further exploration by government officials and the discovery of gold on Wild Horse Creek in British Columbia. This stage began about 1841 with James Sinclair's travels and drew to a close about 1879 with the virtual end of mining operations at Wild Horse Creek.

The fourth stage was marked by the construction of the Great Northern Railroad in 1890. By then most Kootenai people were settled on reserves (Canada) or reservations (United States), and numerous white settlements had been established. Also, most of the ethno-historical information was written prior to this date. This thesis includes accounts recorded from 1800 to 1890, although it focuses on the pre-reservation years.

The first mention of the Kootenai people was made by trader Peter Fidler. He met several Kootenai, who were with a group of Piegan, at the Oldman River during his 1792-1793 expedition. The North West Company's Duncan M'Gillivray, an associate of David Thompson, reported in 1795 that the Kootenai attempted to bribe the Blackfeet with horses so that they could trade at Fort George. In 1798 two Kootenai men visited Fort Edmundton and tried to entice the fur traders to their country to trade. The North West Company built Rocky Mountain House at the confluence of the North Saskatchewan and Clearwater Rivers in 1799. It was there, in 1800, that explorer and trader David Thompson became the first white to trade with a group of Kootenai trappers. Thompson sent two men, LeBlanc and LaGasse, to winter and trap with the northeastern Kootenai that year. LeBlanc and LaGasse spent several winters with the Kootenai, returning during the summer to Rocky Mountain House, though apparently no accounts of these experiences are published, if in fact any were made or kept.

In 1801 Thompson and James Hughes unsuccessfully attempted to cross the Rocky Mountains into Kootenai country. Jaco Finlay was sent by John McFarland and Thompson to find a passage through the Rockies in 1806; in 1807 Thompson, with three men and an Indian guide, crossed the continental Divide into the Kootenai region. He established Kootenai House on the west side of the Columbia River at Lake Windermere that year; he and his companions remained there through the winter of 1807-08. That spring Thompson travelled down the Kootenai River with a Lower Kootenai chief, then returned overland to Rocky Mountain House.

In 1808 Thompson sent Finan McDonald down the river, where he established Fort Kootenay. The original site of the post is unknown; it is thought to have been either near Kootenai Falls or present day Libby, Montana. A more permanent structure was built at the mouth of the Fisher River several years later.

Thompson travelled down the Kootenai River again in 1809 from present day Bonner's Ferry, Idaho to Lake Pend d'Oreille, via the "Great Road" of the Flatheads, and established Kullyspell House near the mouth of the Clark Fork River. Soon after, he built Saleesh House (Salish, or Flathead House) further up the Clark Fork near Thompson Falls.

The Hudson's Bay Company made an attempt to compete with the North West Company for Kootenai trade in 1810. Joseph Howes entered the region over Howes Pass and built Howes House near Flathead Lake in that year. Because of the North West Company's dominance, however, the Hudson's Bay Company did not actively pursue trade with the Kootenai and their neighbors.

Alexander Henry, a fur trader with the North West Company, travelled through the Kootenai region in 1810-11. Spokane House, on the Spokane River near the present city of Spokane, was established in 1811 by Finan McDonald and Jaco Finlay.

The Kootenai Indians exhibited an immediate willingness to trap for whites. They initiated trade relations with the North West Company, and convinced the traders to frequent their area. Ross Cox stated:

They appear to be perfectly aware that beaver was the only object that induced us to visit their country; and they accordingly exerted themselves to procure it, not, as some of them candidly declared, for our purposes, but for the purpose of obtaining fire-arms, spears &c., to enable them to meet

their old enemies the Black-feet on more equal terms (1957: 263).

Once they acquired white goods, their subsistence strategies changed, especially with the introduction of firearms. Hunting became a little easier. They grew dependent on these goods, and abandoned their traditional weapons such as bows and arrows, and tools and materials, such as bark containers for iron pots.

Horses and guns permitted increased travel, and fostered increased reliance on bison hunting. Kootenai migratory routes changed as they moved about en route to various trading posts.

Very few whites entered the Kootenai region during the 1920s. Ross Cox journeyed to Spokane House for the North West Company after that company purchased Astoria (near the mouth of the Columbia River) from the Pacific Fur Company, and made observations of the Kootenai. Earlier the Pacific Fur Company had established a trading post in the Kootenai region, but its location is uncertain.

Francis B. Pillet was sent into the region to represent the American Fur Company; he and his contemporary North West trader, Nicholas Montour, became bitter rivals (Chance 1981). Alexander Ross also had contact with the Kootenai in 1824-25. Following the orders of Governor George Simpson (a head of the Hudson's Bay Company), he took a Kootenai boy to the Red River settlement for an education in white ways and religion. Fort Simpson was established soon after. Sources differ regarding the exact dates of these events; Schaeffer (1970) states that Ross followed Simpson's orders, and that Fort Colville was established in 1824; Chance (1981) presents a more convincing argument

for this occurring in 1825.

In 1821 the North West Company and Hudson's Bay Company merged, retaining the title of Hudson's Bay Company, and Spokane House became part of Hudson's Bay Company. John Work was in charge of that post in the fall of 1825, after which he travelled to Flathead House. Hudson's Bay Company was considering abandoning Spokane House, which was closer to the major Columbia trading region than Rocky Mountain House, and trading with the Kootenai at Fort Colville. The Kootenai resented having to travel to the Flathead country to trade; Hudson's Bay did not want the Kootenai trade to go to the Americans, so attempted more trade at Kootenay House. In the fall of 1839 (Chance 1981) or 1846 (Schaeffer 1971; Spritzer 1979), Edward Berland moved the post from near the mouth of the Fisher River to the Tobacco Plains. These date discrepancies again illustrate the lack of accurate, detailed records; Chance again documents his dates better. John Linklater operated the post for 12 years after Berland's death.

James Sinclair, a Hudson's Bay clerk in Manitoba, travelled through the northern Kootenai valley with 23 families in 1841, bound for Walla Walla. Simpson had offered them goods in an attempt to attract more British settlers to Oregon Territory, but he could not keep his promises and Sinclair's group either returned to Manitoba or became American citizens.

Another important event took place when Father Jean Pierre de Smet, accompanied by Father Nicholas Point, first contacted the Kootenai during the winter of 1841-42. De Smet baptized a number of Kootenai near Flathead Lake. In 1845 he again travelled to the Kootenai country

in response to Kootenai requests for further Christian education.

De Smet had established St. Mary's Mission in the Bitterroot Valley for the Flathead in 1840. St. Ignatius Mission was established with the help of Father Hoecken in 1854. Father Joseph Menetry of St. Ignatius continued to visit the Kootenai on occasion at Tobacco Plains and the Pend d'Oreille and Sacred Heart Missions during the 1850s. St. Eugene's Mission was founded at the confluence of the St. Mary's and Kootenai Rivers by Father Leon Fouquet in 1873. Father Cuccolo later presided at the mission and was instrumental in helping the Canadian Kootenai settle on reserves.

Missionaries had a great impact on traditional Kootenai life. They permanently altered Kootenai belief systems, and also affected social structures. The roles of shamans changed, as did the structure and content of ceremonies. The missionaries also encouraged assimilation, and commended Indians whenever they followed white ways. Polygamous marriages were outlawed, and the missionaries even encouraged the Kootenai men to "divorce" all but one wife. In a letter dated December 30, 1841 from St. Marie, de Smet noted (in reference to the Flathead): "rarely do we witness the heroic sacrifices which these Indians have made. Many, who had two wives, have retained her whose children were most numerous, and with all possible respect dismissed the other" (de Smet 1966:315). He neglects to say what happened to, or who helped care for, these other women and children.

Thomas Meagher, acting governor for the Territory of Montana from 1865 until his death in 1867, was one of many travellers who discussed the missionaries' effect. He viewed the missionaries and

Sisters of Charity at St. Ignatius to "have done more to reconcile the Indians to our Government and progress than all the Agents, Superintendants, Traders, and Interpreters that ever drew pay from Pennsylvania Avenue...." (Meagher 1867:577).

The United States government recognized that promotion of Christianity could aid acculturation. The practice of traditional religion was outlawed. Mary Ronan, wife of Flathead Indian Agent Peter Ronan, related how they would have great celebrations for Christmas, New Year's and Easter, as:

celebrations of this sort were arranged for the Indians as a substitute for their war and scalp dance, which my husband was under Government orders to prohibit. It was the opinion of the officials in the Department of the Interior that the observation of such tribal rites tended to undo the work of civilizing the Indian.... Whenever the beating of the tomtom resounded my husband went, alone sometimes, into the midst of the dancers and by sheer weight of courage dispersed them (Ronan 1973:137-138).

Governmental exploration of the region increased in the 1840s. In 1846 the Oregon Treaty divided the United States and Canada at the 49th Parallel, but the line remained unsurveyed until 1859, when the International Boundary Commission was formed.

Other explorations occurred in the 1850s. Isaac Stevens, governor and Indian Commissioner of the newly established Washington Territory, began efforts to hold a council with the Territory's Indian tribes. A preliminary meeting was held in the Bitterroot Valley in 1855, informing the Flathead, Pend d'Oreille and Kootenai of their impending moves to reservations. James Doty, secretary to the Indian Treaties, accompanied Stevens at this meeting. These two men also participated in surveys for possible mountain railroad routes recently

ordered by the American Congress. Lieutenant John Mullan surveyed the southern region for the U.S. Army in 1854.

James Sinclair led a second expedition to the Spokane area in 1854, following Simpson's 1808 route down the Kootenai River valley.

During the years 1857-60, Captain John Palliser explored the area west of the Rocky Mountains to scout for possible railroad routes. He attempted to locate the 49th Parallel, and to determine the potential for settlement in western Canada. His party included Dr. James Hector, a geologist and second in command, and Thomas Blakiston, a meteorologist who "discovered" the North Kootenay Pass.

Palliser's group mapped the major passes through the Northern Rockies. Palliser himself followed the Kootenai River from near its source to Kootenay Lake. From there he continued on to Fort Colville. Hector explored the northern Kootenai region, crossing the divide at Howes Pass, visiting with Linklater at Fort Kootenai, then travelling on to meet Palliser at Fort Colville.

In 1863, major gold deposits were discovered on Wild Horse Creek in British Columbia. By 1864 about 1,000 miners, mostly Americans, were working claims in the area. Kootenay Brown reported that the mining operations slowed by 1865 (Rodney 1969). Hudson's Bay Company moved the Fort Kootenay post into the Wild Horse region to take advantage of the area's trade possibilities. By 1866-67 only 100 whites and 300 Chinese remained (Spritzer 1979:48). Some of the miners moved into the southeastern Kootenai region and mined in the Cabinet Mountains. Canadian mining resumed in the 1880s and continues today. Mining activities promoted settlement in both the Canadian and United States

sections of the Kootenai region.

The 291 mile Dewdney Trail was cleared in 1865 by the Canadian government to promote Canadian settlement in the Kootenai region. The trail, however, proved to be unsuitably located and was abandoned soon after.

In 1882 William A. Baillie-Grohman began work on the Kootenai Canal. He had noticed that the Kootenai River flowed within one mile of Columbia Lake, so proposed the construction of a canal between the two at "McGillivray's Portage," diverting the Kootenai into the lake. This would lower the river's level, preventing flooding, so the rich land near Kootenay Lake could be farmed. He received a ten-year lease from the British Columbia government and dug the canal. The government, however, bowed to railroad pressures and demanded that the canal not affect the level of either lake or river, thus the canal failed in its original purpose.

Construction of the Canadian Pacific Railroad, financed by James J. Hill, began in the 1880s, while construction of the Great Northern Railroad (also backed by Hill) began in 1889. Both railroads promoted further white settlement and mining in the Kootenai region. Flathead Agent Peter Ronan reported Indian opposition to the building of the Northern Pacific. In his 1881-82 report he wrote: "a fierce spirit of opposition prevails among many Indians" regarding the railroad, viewing it as "fatal to their interests and the sure precursor to the abandonment of their homes and lands to the whites" (Ronan 1973:166). Mary Ronan, wife of Agent Ronan, saw the railroad construction as "put[ting] an end to the old idyllic days" (ibid:123).

The Kootenai region's numerous waterways also helped to open the area. Steamboat use to transport mined ore began in 1884 on the Kootenai River and Kootenay Lake when Baillie-Grohman operated a small steamer in conjunction with his canal work. Use of steamboats increased in the early 1890s and continued until 1957, though their use was not extensive in the early years due to competition from the railroads.

The British Columbia government began establishing Indian reserves in the 1880s. Canadian policies differed from those in the United States; American reservations tended to be larger in area, and were separated from white settlers and overseen by an agent. Reserves in British Columbia were quite small, assigned to families or groups of families, and often located adjacent to white settlements. The Indians were not given title to the land, and therefore received no payments or education grants. The American Treaty of 1855 (ratified in 1859), which established the Flathead Reservation, at least attempted to assist the Indians during transition, promising farm tools, schools and teachers, and the construction of a mill. These conditions were not met until Peter Ronan became agent for the reservation in 1877; he remained in that position until his death in 1893. St. Ignatius Mission became a full-time boarding and industrial school for boys and girls.

Although Chief Michelle (or Michel) of the Kootenai participated in the 1855 council and in general agreed to its terms, Kootenai settlement on the reservation remained controversial for some time. Michelle's never actualized "ambition [was] to have one great Kootenai reserve for all the bands, wherein the whole people could live and practice their old life as nearly as possible" (Turney-High 1941:17).

Instead the American government informed the Kootenai that they either had to stay on the reservation and cease their normal travels across the 49th Parallel, or go without government "help" (Ronan 1979). The Kootenai at Bonner's Ferry would not move to the reservation, and remained non-treaty Indians until 1895, when the U.S. Government gave them a small land allotment.

Michelle was angered by the government's demands and moved permanently to British Columbia, settling near Lake Windermere. The Kootenai who had lived at the northern end of Flathead Lake prior to de Smet's visit, and some of the Libby-Jennings area Kootenai, eventually settled in the area of present day Elmo and Dayton, Montana, where they remain today. The Kootenai's forced placement onto reservations and reserves was the ultimate act which ended their traditional lifestyles.

Chapter III

THE KOOTENAI PEOPLE

The Kootenai River valley region is considered the traditional homeland of the Kootenai Indians. Like most semi-nomadic hunting and gathering groups, they were not restricted to one particular place but instead travelled throughout their extensive territory. They frequently crossed the Continental Divide, venturing into the Rocky Mountain foothills and high plains, or travelled west into the Columbia Basin.

In 1811 Alexander Henry observed that as far north as:

along the Clearwater, and near the foot of the mountains, are still to be seen the remains of some of the dwellings of the Kootenay.... The same are observed along Riviere de la jolie Prairie and Ram river ... and even as far down as our present establishment Rocky Mountain House, on the North Saskatchewan River (Henry 1897:703).

The Kootenai roamed as far west as Fort Astoria, as noted in the journals of Alexander Ross and David Thompson, and are known to have lived as far south as the Sun River area of central Montana.

The term "Kootenai" is of unknown origin. Some sources cite the term as a derivative of the name used by the Blackfeet--Ktonái or Ktunáin (Turney-High 1941:11-12). The Kootenai term for themselves is Sanka, perhaps meaning "standing up straight" like an arrow (Johnson 1969), or Ksanka, referring to a bow (Schaeffer n.d.). Adeline Mathias stated Sanka meant "Standing Arrow" and that the Kootenai were all Sanka (Interview 1982).

Numerous derivations of "Kootenai" were noted in early accounts. Thompson used "Kootenae" (1906). Ross Cox (1957) and Alexander Ross (1966) used "Cootenais," although at another time Ross used "Kouttannois" (1956). Prince Maximillian of Wied (1966) referred to them as "Kutana" or "Kutneha." Traders often referred to the Kootenai living in the southwestern region as the "Flatbows" or "Arc-Plattes." Father Nicholas Point (1967) called them "Coutanes." Father de Smet (1845) used the terms "Kootenays," "Flat-bows" and "Skalzi." Chance (1981:8) says "Skalzi" may be a derivation of the Salish word souilk, meaning "water." He also notes that John Work, in letters written in 1829 and 1830, referred to the Kootenai in the eastern region as "Callesouilk" and those in the western region as "Silaquilaque." Work (1914) also referred to them as "Kootany" and "Au Plattes," another Kootenai band. The spelling of "Kootenai" still varies today.

The Kootenai have traditionally been viewed as one tribe having two major divisions, the Upper and Lower Kootenai. The Upper Kootenai were based along the eastern, upper stretch of the Kootenai River, and relied more on a Plainslike economy. The Lower Kootenai lived primarily on the western stretch of the Kootenai River, from Kootenai Falls to Kootenay Lake. These people tended to be more sedentary, and exhibited traits similar to the Plateau and Plains groups. In addition to the geographic and cultural differences, the two groups spoke different dialects of the language. Powell (1891) termed the Kootenai linguistic stock "Kitunahan" with the divisions Upper Kootenai, Lower Kootenai, plus what they term Flathead Kootenai and Tobacco Plains Kootenai. Early whites referred to two different Kootenai groups, but did not

mention a linguistic difference. However, they did not give any reasons for differentiation between the two groups; it seems reasonable that they observed geographic, cultural and linguistic differences.

David Thompson referred to two different Kootenai groups. He used the term "Kootenai" for the Upper Kootenai, and the apparently interchangeable "Lake" and "Flatbows" for the Lower Kootenai (1915:388; C. White 1950:26). Thompson's contemporary, Alexander Henry, supported this division, stating:

The Flat Bow, or, as some call them, Lake Indians, dwell on the borders of the large lake [Kootenay], into which McGillivray's river [the Kootenai] empties in its course to the Columbia. They frequently come up the former river as far as the falls but seldom attempt to proceed higher. These people are little known to us (Henry 1897:709-10).

Henry mentioned the Lower Kootenai specifically, while discussing the name of the river. Thompson named the river "McGillivray's, "after his associate Duncan M'Gillivray, but it was "formerly termed by the natives FlatBow river, from a tribe of Indians, who then inhabited the lower part of it" (Henry 1896:705-6).

In a letter dated August 17, 1845, de Smet referred to the Flat Bows and the Kootenay, the Flat Bows living on the lower stretch of river, and the Kootenay living more in British Columbia. Later, in a letter from the Fort Steele area dated September 2, 1845, he clarified this, stating that "The Flat-bows and Kootenays now form one tribe, divided into two tribes" (de Smet 1906:192 and 200, respectively).

In Bulletin 30 of the Bureau of American Ethnology Hodge reports that "from the time of their earliest contact with the whites they have been called Flatbows, for what reasons is not known, but they

are generally called Lower Kootenay" (1907:776). Schaeffer (n.d.) also mentions this division, and that it was recognized by tribal members:

"The Lower Kutenai were known to themselves and to the Upper Kutenai as Akuktaho, 'marsh people'" but apparently no such name existed for the Upper Kutenai. His informant, Bull Robe, confirmed the Lower Kootenai name, and added that those people who lived east and north of Troy, Montana, regarded themselves as Upper Kootenai or Tunaxa.

The Kootenai were further subdivided into bands. These bands were autonomous units and were the basis of overall political and social organization. Mention of overall tribal chiefs in the ethnohistorical record does not occur until after government officials had arrived, probably because these officials wanted one overall tribal spokesman. The Kootenai, however, recognized several spokesmen, selected not only because of their heredity and oratory finesse, but also their valor and magnanimity. Each band had its own chief. Johnson states: "present-day Lower Kutenais have told Paul Flinn that there never was an all-tribe chief. They say that when a chief visited the grounds of another chief the visiting chief was just another Indian with no special privileges" (1969:153).

The bands made their own decisions, and travelled according to their own desired schedule. This is not to say that interband communication was uncommon, as intratribal movement was unrestricted. Bands would group together for economic pursuits, such as hunting and gathering, or for protection against enemies. There were no marital restrictions between bands; people could marry within or outside of their own band.

Bands were determined primarily by geographic location. Not surprisingly, different sources cite different numbers of bands, and sometimes slightly different locations. Curtis believed there were five bands:

Akiyinnik (akinnik, thigh) lived on Kootenai river at the present Jennings, Montana. Akanuhunik (aknuhunuknāna, creek) occupied the valley of Tobacco river in northern Montana. The name probably had reference to the river. Akamnik (akam, pine) lived on Kootenay river in the country about Fort Steele, British Columbia, a region known to the Kutenai as Akum. Akisknuknik (akúknuk, lake; as, two; akhismáknik, people) were north of the last-named band, around the Columbia lakes at the source of the Columbia river. Akukhlāhlu (akakhlahahlu, swamp) controlled the territory between the Kootenai river at Bonner's Ferry, Idaho, and the northern end of Pend d'Oreille lake, the name referring to the swamp character of the borders of the lake (1970:118).

Claude Schaeffer probably worked with the Kootenai more than any other anthropologist. He delineated seven Kootenai bands according to locality: 1) Columbia Lakes; 2) St. Mary's; 3) Tobacco Plains; 4) Jennings; 5) Lower Kutenai, subdivided into Bonner's Ferry and Creston; 6) Michel Prairie; and 7) Plains Kutenai or Tunaxa (1940:). These are essentially the same bands listed by Curtis, except the controversial and nebulous "Tunaxa," who will be discussed presently. In his later notes, Schaeffer (n.d.) expresses his belief that the Michel Prairie band, or Kakawakamitukinik, meaning "people of a small stream flowing in and out again" (as Michel Creek flows in and out of the Elk River) are the same as the Tunaxa. Otherwise, Schaeffer follows the same Kootenai language terminology as Curtis.

Spritzer separates the bands into "settlements:" Tobacco Plains, Fernie, Libby and Jennings, Bonner's Ferry, Fort Steele, and Windermere. He also notes that the river served as "the main thread

which tied all the bands together, both geographically and emotionally.... As the Kutenai bands dispersed, contrasting dialects and habits developed, but the tribe maintained a sense of unity" (1979:7).

Definitive data regarding the Tunaxa band do not exist; information is limited to conjecture and hypothesis. The Tunaxa were apparently a group of Kootenai who preferred the Plains lifestyle of following the bison and so split from the main tribe and lived year-round on the plains east of the mountains. They ranged from the Sun River country to present day Browning, and north onto the Canadian plains, and may have been subdivided into smaller bands (Turney-High 1941). It is not known when they may have split from the main tribe. Lewis and Clark used the term "Tushepaw" for the Indians who lived on the North Fork Clark River (Clark Fork River) in the spring and summer, and on the Missouri River in the winter--these may well have been some Tunaxa. Tushípa is a Shoshone word for tribe(s) living north of them, including the Nez Perce and Kootenai (Schaeffer n.d.). Mention of the Tunaxa group proper is not made in the primary sources, although this is probably a reflection of the fact that the early whites remained more northwest, and secondly, that the Tunaxa, as a social group, were virtually almost all killed by smallpox. However, in the northern region, on the east side of the mountains, Alexander Henry in 1811 observed an old Kootenai camp above the "two streams which make the Saskatchewan" (Henry 1896:686). He also observed, as previously noted, old Kootenai camps along the Clearwater, the Riviere de la jolie Prairie and Ram river (ibid:703). These may well have been Tunaxa camps.

Teit and Boas (1973), writing in 1927, confusingly distinguished between Salish Tunaxa and Kootenai Tunaxa, who lived north of the Salish group, admitting "it seems strange that the Flathead should call a Salish tribe by the same name as the Kutenai give to a Kutenai tribe, and there may be some confusion among Flathead informants respecting the tribal name" (1973:306). No other known sources have made such a distinction.

The meaning of "Tunaxa" is also controversial. Present day Kootenais Madeline Couture and Adeline Mathias, however, both said it was a difficult word to translate into English, but meant "plain" or "simple," such as bread without butter, or meat without salt (Interviews 1982).

Teit and Boas do not provide sufficient information to substantiate their claim, basing it apparently on vocabulary. I see no reason why a group of Flathead could not have lived temporarily or permanently with the Kootenai Tunaxa. Teit reported that the Tunaxa intermarried with the Flathead, and became intermediaries in Flathead-Kootenai trade.

Teit and Boas also mentioned the Kootenais' ability to speak the Salishan language. Perhaps the Kootenai borrowed words from the Salish. Teit and Boas' information actually substantiates this view:

According to the Flathead, the last person known to have spoken "Tunáxe" died in 1870. This was a man of Salish Tunáxe descent, who lived among the Kutenai in the Flathead Agency. Mr. Meyers, who carries on linguistic work with Mr. E.S. Curtis, told me in 1910 that when in Montana he collected about 10 words (all remembered of the "Tunáxe" language) from an old Kutenai woman, and that these words shows distinct relationship to the Salish languages. Also see list of "Tunáxe" (Kutenai-"Tunáxe") words collected by me at Tobacco Plains, British Columbia. All these appear to be related to Kutenai (1973:303).

The Tunaxa, like the rest of the Kootenai tribe, experienced severe population decimations, due to diseases. The first smallpox epidemic occurred in 1781, and had drastic effects, particularly on the Tunaxa. The Tunaxa apparently contracted the disease from the Blackfeet, who had contracted it from the Shoshone (Schaeffer n.d.) and then gave it to the Akiyinnik band (Curtis 1970:119). The next smallpox epidemic hit in 1800, further reducing the population (ibid). De Smet stated that approximately two-thirds of the population were killed in a smallpox epidemic in 1830. Adeline Mathias reported another epidemic, occurring later, that was characterized by "a growth in the throat," called "quincy," probably diphtheria. Sources do not mention this disease, although diphtheria is known to have occurred.

After these diseases struck, the Tunaxa apparently rejoined the main Kootenai tribe, most likely at the Jennings and Tobacco Plains locations. Although the Tunaxa as a social group became extinct, Tunaxa lineage was remembered. Adeline Mathias stated that the Kootenai "are all Sankas and Tunaxa regardless of where they're from," and Madeline Couture said the Tunaxa and Kootenai were one people (Interviews 1982).

Some sources conjecture that the Tunaxa did not split from the main tribe and move onto the Plains, but actually remained behind when the Kootenai moved west across the mountains. According to Paul David, Chief of Tobacco Plains, one of Turney-High's consultants, the Tunaxa "were the descendants of the original, parental Kootenai who remained on the Great Plains. It is claimed that this term is not and never was appropriate for the people as a whole but just to this band. They were

always 'Prairie Indians,' never were 'Timber Indians....' (Turney-High 1941:18). Another of Turney-High's consultants serves to further illustrate the Tunaxa controversy:

Chief Paul chooses to disagree violently with the theory preferred in this work, based largely on Elmo and Bonner's Ferry information, that all the Kutenai once came from the Plains. He vigorously maintains that the Kutenai "woke up" at Tobacco Plains, and the tunaxa were offshoots of the Tobacco Plains people. He has a real reason for thinking this, if it is true, since he maintains that the tradition is that the tunaxa always came west to plant tobacco at Michel's Prairie, B.C. If this were not their old home, says he, why did they attach such emotional importance to it? This is reasonable ... and must be given respect (ibid:18-19).

The above quote introduces another topic of concern: the significance of the Tobacco Plains band. All sources generally agree that Tobacco Plains was the original location of the Kootenai prior to the band dispersion, regardless of theories proposing their having migrated west across the mountains, having moved south from northern environs, or having always been in the Kootenai region. Turney-High states:

judging by the preeminent respect given the Chief of Tobacco Plains, the Tobacco Plains legends, and the reluctant admission by some of the Lower Kutenai at Creston and Bonner's Ferry, one is also led to think that the Tobacco Plains band was the parent of the lot. Tobacco Plains is where the Kutenai "woke up." Formerly there was only one great village there. To this day modern Kutenai will refer to Tobacco Plains as the Big Village (1941:15).

Johnson states: "there is a fairly general, though debatable, belief that all the modern Kutenai bands sprang from the Big Village on lower Tobacco Plains, where lived the Akanekunik, or the People ... of the Flying Head" (1969:50-51). Primary sources do not address this issue, although during the majority of early white travels, Kootenai

camps were observed at Tobacco Plains.

Why and when the Kootenai dispersed into their various bands is not definitely known. Population estimates range rather widely over the years, and usually it is not mentioned how or where these counts were made. Also, many of the estimates were made by more northern oriented people who may have failed to count the Lower Kootenai. James Mooney estimated the Kootenai to number 1,200 in 1780, just prior to the first smallpox epidemic. His estimate was based on second-hand information. In 1800, Peter Fidler directly counted 17 lodges of Upper Kootenai, with 45 to 50 warriors. Alexander Henry in 1811 counted 50 lodges, with 150 warriors and 400 people, although he does not delineate where he saw these people. Alexander Ross observed 36 lodges, probably of Upper Kootenai, of 114 "men and lads," 50 women and 48 children in 1824. John Work counted 349 Upper Kootenai, and 281 Lower Kootenai in 1830. De Smet estimated 300 Upper Kootenai and 90 Lower Kootenai families. The British Territory Kootenai numbered 553 in 1904; 80 at lower Columbia Lake, 172 Lower Kootenai, 216 at St. Mary's (Fort Steele), 61 at Tobacco Plains, and 24 at Arrow Lake (West Kootenai); "these returns indicate a decrease of about 150 in 13 years. The United States census of 1890 gave the number of Kutenai in Idaho and Montana as 400 to 500; in 1905 those under the Flathead Agency, Mont., were reported to number 554" (Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 30:742). Curtis estimated them to have been "seven hundred lodges, or about two thousand people" at the beginning of the historic period (Curtis 1970: 120). In 1941 Turney-High reported the Kootenai to number about 1,000, and cited "their former strength" to be 4,000 (Turney-High 1941:122).

Table I
Population Estimates and Counts of the Kootenai

<u>Year and Source</u>	<u>Upper Kootenai</u>	<u>Lower Kootenai</u>	<u>All</u>
1780; Mooney			1,200
1800; Fiddler	17 lodges		
c. 1810; Thompson			140 men with families
1811; Henry	50 lodges; 150 warriors and 400 people		
1824; Ross	36 lodges; 212 people (at Flathead Rendezvous)		
1830; Work	349	281	630
c. 1842; de Smet	300	90 families	
1854; Stevens			400
1861; de Smet			1,000
1890; U.S. Census		400-500 (Idaho and Montana)	
1904; British Government	381 (in British Territory)	172 (in British Territory)	
1941; Turney-High			1,000

These estimates may not be very accurate, but they do evidence a decline in population since the time of earliest white contact.

At some time, however, the population must have increased sufficiently that the carrying capacity at Tobacco Plains was surpassed; resources became so depleted that it became necessary for people to move away in smaller groups. This probably occurred long enough ago to allow sufficient time for the groups to assert their autonomy. Also, at some time linguistic variation developed between the Upper and Lower Kootenai. Turney-High (1941), Johnson (1969), and Spritzer (1979) attribute the split to population pressures (see Table I, p. 31).

Where this first group to split off moved to is not known. Turney-High regarded Fernie, British Columbia, northeast of Tobacco Plains to be the first location of the first offshoot band of Kootenai. He stated that "the bulk of Lower Kutenai evidence indicates that the Bonner's Ferry people were the original Lower Kutenai, and that all other bands, including those at Creston, were the colonists" (Turney-High 1941:15). Johnson (1969) also stated that the Bonner's Ferry band was the first Lower Kootenai offshoot. Over time, other bands formed at their various locations, and eventually became autonomous units: politically and--to a degree--economically independent, as each group "exploited the particular resources of their own locality within the limits imposed by a hunting and gathering economy" (Schaeffer 1940:66). Bands did visit other bands for economic pursuits, gathering together in berry-rich areas or on camas grounds, or to harvest tobacco at Tobacco Plains. They would group together, especially the Upper Kootenai, to journey onto the Plains to hunt bison,

or perhaps to make horse raids on the neighboring Blackfeet. The Lower Kootenai participated in occasional bison hunts, and also conducted communal fishing and fowl hunting. Various bands would join together to acquire resources such as pipestone, or to gather vegetal sources, travelling for bitterroot, camas, berries and plant dyes.

Discussion of the bands' composition does not exist in either the primary or secondary sources. It seems that the bands would have consisted of nuclear families, extended families, and allied family groups. Mention of the number of lodges or families is often made by early travellers, but band interaction observations are rare. The Kootenai did not have hierarchical social and political control; these controls were found more in the family unit. Johnson stated:

From the time they could understand anything at all, Kutenai children were instructed and lectured day and night by their parents, elder relatives and the village leaders, very often through story and legend, on how to act for their own good and the good of the group. This instruction, and the very real force of public opinion, particularly the merciless ridicule of offenders which recalls the Blackfeet, commonly kept citizens in line.... Family trouble was left largely to the family to manage, and this was even more true of violence and murder than of lesser offenses (1969:155-156).

Subsistence and economic pursuits were often conducted communally, as mentioned previously, however a large portion of the Kootenais' diet was very likely supplied by individuals or small groups, who hunted and gathered. Bison figured importantly, especially for the Upper Kootenai; certainly, however, game native to the Upper Kootenai region was hunted actively, usually by an individual or a few people. Early travellers more frequently reported seeing small hunting groups rather than larger, collective groups. Johnson succinctly stated: "In their hunting as in

their dancing, these folks often attacked the problem as individuals or family groups" (1969:66).

Ross Cox noted that they were "devotedly attached to each other and their country" (Cox 1957:264). Family life was of central importance to them. "People loved children and wanted them" (Turney-High 1941:128). Marriages were relatively easy to arrange: the couple would inform their families of their intentions. Adeline Mathias, born in 1911, related that when she was growing up, and before, marriages were arranged by putting the young people in a room, with boys on one side and girls on the other. A boy would point to a girl and say "I want you." The girl would usually say "no" but nonetheless they would be married. If the girl objected strongly, this was respected, unless the boy was a good hunter or something similar (Interview 1982).

Kinship was reckoned bilaterally. Families were matrilineal, though were "weakly patrilineal inasmuch as a person was primarily a member of his father's line ... which carried the emotional contact" (Turney-High 1941:134). Mother-in-law avoidance by the husband was apparently practiced (ibid:144).

Prior to the advent of missionaries divorces were also easy to obtain, but were apparently not very common. Also polygamy apparently existed, but was not the norm. Men seemed to care economically and emotionally for their wives. N. Montour, trader at Kootenai House, related to Ross Cox that he had not witnessed a polygamous marriage, and that he "never known an instance wherein any of their women admitted overtures of an improper nature. They appear to be jealous of white men and studiously conceal their females whenever any of the traders

approach their lodges" (Cox 1957:264).

Religion was integral to Kootenai life. This discussion will only touch on the more obvious aspects of their religion, out of respect to the Kootenai people who have repeatedly told me that talking about their religion is akin to giving it away and lessening its strength.

The people were guided by spirits, and Nupika was their primary, overall spirit. Chamberlain stated they had "belief in the ensoulment of all things and in reincarnation" (1907:741). Alex Lefthand related that the Kootenai knew that when a person died, his or her life did not just end; it moved on to the next world. He also stated that ceremonies would be conducted for all aspects of spiritual life, from dancing and singing at funerals, to first wild food ceremonies (such as the strawberry celebration). The annual cycle beginning in the spring was marked by the people gathering and praying to spirits for all the food to grow and produce good crops (Interview 1982).

Turney-High found that:

The true shape of the spirits, that is, is animal. They normally appear to a person first in human form in order to gain his attention. This done they disappear and reappear in their true shapes so that the visitant may identify them. These animal and bird supernaturals are not generally totemic. The Kutenai do not fear their spirituals. Even today there is a deep and abiding affection for the spirits, a feeling of loving dependence on them, implicit faith in their wisdom and benevolence, and a will to do all one can to make the spirits happy, too (1941:170).

Boas also noted the prevalence of animals spirits: "one of the most characteristic traits of Kutenai folk tales is the systematic development of animal society" (1918:281), meaning that certain animal spirits became personified as certain people. He also mentioned the

similarity of Kootenai tales to those of the Plateau as well as the Plains.

People made quests for spiritual guidance. Boys and girls could participate, generally from the age of about seven years to pre-puberty, although anyone at any time was privileged to obtain power (Ray 1939:70). The spirit usually appeared in either a vision, or semi-dream state, and a song was usually presented. The song may have conveyed:

the nature of the power and the identity of the spirit. The spirit, or the song, is conceived as actually entering the visionary's body at a particular spot, causing a sort of hypnotism. Thenceforward the spot is sacred. When the individual wishes help he taps the spot and thus calls his guardian (ibid:71).

The Kootenai are also regarded as having sun worship. Chamberlain stated that "religion was a sort of sun worship" (1907:741), and Boas noted that one whole group of tales centered around the creation of the sun (1918:281). The Kootenai, unlike their neighbors, performed the Sun Dance ceremony, characteristic of the Plains peoples. It is not known how long this had been practiced. Turney-High stated:

The Sun Dance was of great social importance to the Kutenai as the cult held the Upper and Lower Kutenai together as one people. It was a centralizing agency, as only one Sun Dance was held for all the Kutenai, bringing the bands together at the time and place dictated by the Sun Dance spirit (1941:178).

Ray provides a description of the Kootenai Sun Dance, but admits that it is "incomplete, but incorporates the details most pertinent to this problem" (1939:125). His entire description follows, despite its length:

The dance ... is held once each year in the spring and lasts for six days. The leader is one experiencing, during the preceding

year, an auditory vision or dream of the Sun Dance song. When the time for the dance draws near the leader requests his wife to prepare the Sun Dance doll, a six inch male figure made of buckskin stuffed with grass or deer hair. Two eagle feathers, symbolic of the dance, are placed in the hair at the back of the head. During the preparation of the image, the leader each day smokes himself by standing over a smudge of juniper. When finished the doll is placed at the head of the leader's bed where it remains until the fourth day of the ceremony. The leader now selects an assistant who becomes the master of ceremonies.

This selection inaugurates the three day preparatory period preceding the dance proper. Men are now chosen by the leader to bring in the center pole. The actual tree is selected by the assistant, who follows the dictates of the leader as revealed to the latter by his guardian spirit. Those chosen fell the marked tree, taking care to use the direction and number of strokes requested by the leader, again as determined in his dream. While returning to camp, the tree is not permitted to touch the ground. Upon arrival the limbs are removed, the bark peeled, and this refuse burned. The pole is painted and then placed on supports to keep it above the ground until time of erection. At the same time, others prepare the four foundation poles for the dance lodge, together with the supplementary poles. The preparatory period ends with the digging of the hole for the center pole.

The morning of the fourth day is occupied by sweating; the afternoon with the actual erection of the lodge. This is a tipi of usual type, but exceptionally large, requiring three ordinary covers to enclose it.... First the center pole is raised to position. The assistant, clad only in a blanket, steps onto the fork of the poles. The frame is raised a few feet from the ground, then lowered; a second time it is raised higher but once more brought down; on the third attempt it is elevated to full height. The assistant, who has stood in the fork with arms outstretched during this procedure, now ties the center pole to the frame and descends on one of the poles. In the meantime the leader has called upon the Crazy Dog Society to obtain the lodge covering. The members arbitrarily select three tipis in the camp circle and strip them of their covers. These are delivered to the site of the lodge where others attach them to the frame. Throughout these activities spectators are present and engage in singing.

Inside the lodge a bed is prepared for the leader. As viewed from the doorway this is located behind and just to the left of the center pole. To the right of the foot of the bed, or near end, is constructed a tiny model of a sweat lodge, only a few inches high. Between this and the center pole a miniature

smudge of juniper twigs is prepared but not lighted....

Just at dusk the assistant enters the leader's tipi and secures the doll. Carrying it, he circumambulates the tipi and then the camp circle. Upon returning to the door of the tipi he proceeds directly to the dance lodge where he places the doll in an upright position at the right of the smudge. The leader now enters and walks around the edge of the lodge to his bed where he sits down. Next the musicians enter and take their positions at the back of the lodge. These include several drummers and three whistlers.... With the beating of the drums, the dancers and audience appear. They walk in file to the smudge which has now been lighted. Some throw small fragments of juniper on the smudge. Those who are well return by the same route to positions near the door, while the ailing continue to the opposite side of the lodge. All the circuits are made in clockwise order. During this procession a song to the smudge is sung, called the "song of the dance." Great care is taken that the smudge be kept burning uniformly from the first time lighted until the end of the ceremony. The woman selected for this task remains constantly beside the fire.

When the whole group has assembled, the shamans dance toward the center pole. Each carries an object such as a feather, symbolic of his guardian spirit, with which he strokes the pole, now full of sickness because the doll has effected the transfer to it of the ailments of the individuals. The shamans make downward motions on the pole while dancing around it and singing. After a time they attempt to remove the sickness from the bottom where it has been concentrated. As this is gradually achieved the shamans one by one fall helpless to the ground. Members of the audience pick them up and hold them over the smudge to revivify them and destroy the sickness.

If the attempted removal proves futile the dancers have visions of guns or bows, symbolic of failure. The sickness then remains with the afflicted and another attempt must be made on a later day.

Activity at the pole is sometimes directed at other aspects of tribal welfare. For example, the dancers may attempt to draw game to the pole so that hunting during the succeeding year may be especially productive.

During these performances the dancers are engaged in singing and do not interpret their actions. The leader, however, acts as spokesman for the idol and informs the audience of the success of the shamans. All the while the drummers and whistlers are active. Their lot is a strenuous one, for not only must they perform constantly during the all-night

ceremonies but they are not permitted to sleep and must abstain almost completely from food and water. The leader is subjected to unqualified abstinence but he is quite inactive, remaining on his bed throughout. Stationed beside the leader and also each whistler is a lad whose duty it is to walk behind his charge whenever the lodge is left and sweep off his tracks with a broom of branches.

The fifth morning is spent in sweating, the afternoon in preparations for the dance at night. The dance program is identical with that of the fourth night. But at dawn, as the leader starts a new song, the assistant takes the doll and leaves the dance lodge, following, in reverse order, the procedure of bringing it in. After the circuit of the leader's house he "lets the image go," to use the native phrasing. The actual disposal is never revealed. The assistant returns to the dance house and joins the others in a secular dance which serves to terminate the ceremony. Animal hearts and tongues, saved for a long time previously, have been prepared and a great feast is now held. Afterwards the lodge is dismantled and the groups disband.

A Kutenai Sun Dance leader must officiate for three consecutive years or invite death. Votary leadership is apparently unknown, though a warrior may call upon the sun for help in an emergency. Sun gazing and self-torture have no place in the ceremony (1939:125-128).

Johnson's (1969) account is basically the same as Ray's with a few minor differences, such as her saying it was women who cut the center pole, and that the Sun Dance chief himself erected the frame tripod. Curtis (1970:132-140) reported a ceremony called Kankohohl, a health ceremony, which parallels that of the Sun Dance; he may have confusingly distinguished between the two, due to some of its differences from Plains dances.

Other ceremonies and dances were important to the Kootenai religion, including a Midwinter Festival, the Grizzly Bear Dance, the Prophet Dance, and, in later times, the Bluejay Dance, which was apparently learned from the Flatheads.

Christianity, especially Catholicism, became very important to the Kootenai. They were observed practicing this religion prior to missionary de Smet's first visit. This may have been due to influential contact with other tribes, including the Iroquois, though Simpson's experimental education of Indian boys at the Red River settlement probably had some influence. In 1825 George Simpson decided that chiefs, shamans, and tribal members would likely attribute the material wealth of the whites to some powerful spirituality, so he suggested that Indian boys of different tribes be trained in Christianity and white ways. Simpson enjoined Alexander Ross to choose two boys and return with them to Red River. Ross took one Kootenai boy, "Cootenais Pelly," and one Spokane boy, "Spokane Garry." The boys lived at the settlement for four years, then returned to their native areas for one year during which they were to teach Christianity. At the end of the year the two boys, plus five from other tribes, returned to Red River. Soon after, however, Cootenais Pelly suffered an accident and died from the consequent illness. Concerned for the potential misunderstanding by the tribal leaders regarding the possibility of white involvement in the Kootenai boy's death, the experiment was abandoned, and the remaining boys returned home (see Schaeffer 1970:327). Most likely because of his white education, Spokane Garry became an often mentioned person in the early travellers' records.

When Catholic Edward Berland of the Hudson's Bay Company took charge of Kootenay Post, he observed the Kootenai counting days, and on the seventh coming together for prayer and dance, in addition to daily prayer. Berland informed them more of Christianity, and then advised

them to dance only during New Year's week, one of his concerns being that the seventh day they were observing was not Sunday. This dance became known as the Black Tail Deer Dance, and has similarities to the Plateau deer dance complex (Schaeffer 1970:342).

De Smet, the first missionary to contact the Kootenai, attributed their knowledge of Christianity to an Iroquois who allegedly lived thirty years with the Upper Kootenai (1966:358). The Kootenai apparently immediately embraced his word of Christianity. He first visited them in April 1842 and described his welcome:

they unanimously declared themselves in favour of my religion, and adopted the beautiful custom of their neighbors, the Flat Heads, to meet night and morning for prayers in common ... I ... gave them a long instruction on the principal dogmas of our faith (ibid).

To show their appreciation, the Kootenai gave de Smet a "farewell feast" at a camp at Flathead Lake; "a real banquet of all the good things their country produced" (ibid:359).

De Smet's next contact with the Kootenai was "41 months and some days" later according to their notched stick calendar, at Tobacco Plains, where he found the Kootenai continuing Christian ways. He stayed with them a short time, further instructing them and baptizing many. Kootenai people were frequently seen at various missions located throughout the northwest area. As mentioned before, Christianity was a significant factor in the acculturation process.

The Kootenai people consistently received high remarks and praise regarding their virtue, honesty, bravery, and general peacefulness from the early travellers, particularly the Europeans. These characteristics were apparently practiced in the relations with

neighboring tribes as, for the most part, the Kootenai were allied with their neighbors. The Kootenai had repeated contact with the Pend d'Oreilles and Flatheads, and were also allied with the Coeur d'Alene, Kalispell, Spokane, Sanpoil, Shoshone and Nez Perce. Henry described the Kootenai, Pend d'Oreille, Flathead, Coeur d'Alene, Spokane, Sanpoil and Nez Perce to "live in peace and amity with one another...." (Henry 1896:712). Recognition of the Kootenai, Flathead and Pend d'Oreille alliance by whites, in addition to their proximity, must have contributed to their placement on a common reservation.

At various times, however, these peaceful relations were temporarily disturbed by disagreement and hostility, but were soon mended. These groups might join together for economic pursuits such as bison hunting or bitterroot digging, or defensive purposes, particularly against the Blackfeet, as relations with the Blackfeet (or Piegan) tended to be hostile. The Blackfeet continually raided the Kootenai and the result was often battle. Peaceful relations with the Piegan, when they did exist, were usually strained. Alexander Henry, in 1811, noted Kootenai and Flathead alliances, and the strained relations with the Blackfeet, stating that the Kootenai:

are always at peace with their neighbors to the S. and W. The Flat Heads and other frequently mix with them, and join their excursions southward in search of buffalo.... They are generally in amity with the Piegans, who are their nearest neighbors on the E. They have fought many desperate battles, but the Piegans now consider it their own interest to be at peace with them, to be better enabled to encounter the Flat Heads, from whom they plunder the vast number of horses they possess.... (1897:707-708).

When David Thompson arrived at Spokane House in the same year, he observed the Kootenai, allied with the Spokane and Salish, preparing

for possible battle against the Blackfeet; apparently no altercation occurred. Later that fall, he returned to Spokane House, where he enticed Cartier, chief of the Flathead, to go bison hunting with other peoples, probably for the hides and meat: "I strongly requested him to collect his tribe with their allies, the Kootenaes, Spokanes, and Skeetshoo Indians who were not far off" (1915:533). Cartier forewarned Thompson of potential battle with the Blackfeet, and requested ammunition so that they would be well-armed. Thompson agreed and, impressed by the gravity of the situation, gave the Indians a note to give to Finan McDonald at Kullyspell House if they needed more ammunition. Thompson reported the battle which occurred in November of 1811 at Salish House, when a group of Blackfeet "had sent a War Party to intercept us;" no traders were present, but a lodge of Kootenai were, and were all murdered. Even after the establishment of reservations and settlement of whites, these tense relations continued. Kootenai Brown who managed a trading post and store near Wild Horse Creek in the 1860s, noted the continued tense relations between the Blackfeet and Kootenai:

The Kootenai Indians were friendly with the Blackfeet but beyond good-humored joking when they chanced to meet in our store there was not much intermingling. If one got a chance to steal the others horses there was no hesitation on either Kootenai or Blackfeet. No other tribe of Indians that I know of really liked the Blackfeet (Rodney 1969:126).

Occasional skirmishes occurred with other tribes. In 1858 John Palliser was travelling through Kootenai country en route towards Colville Indian territory. He could not get any Kootenai to guide for him, and eventually found that this was because some Kootenai had stolen Colville horses and feared retribution. The Kootenai were also

known to have infrequently raided the Lake Indians, and occasionally took a slave (Ray 1939).

Turney-High stated that:

in motive, war was primarily undertaken to protect the range against aggression. Kutenai war was thus at its best tactically when on the defensive. Most unusual among western Indians, they obeyed the Principle of Security by posting sentries. They were also intelligent in choosing defensible sites for their camps.... The motive for offensive war was horse thieving and ego expansion. They therefore indulged in true or economic war only half-heartedly.... The Lower Kutenai eschewed offensive war. With but little doubt the primary object of Upper Kutenai war was ego expansion and tension release through the Plains coup technique (1941:162).

Turney-High also stated that "scalping is absolutely reported for the Kutenai" (ibid:163). The scalps did not possess power, but played an important role in victory dances. Turney-High described the scalp dance:

Scalp dancing was done by specific women, notable for their wildness and wit. The "craziest" woman of the band was the leader who carried the pole bearing the enemy scalps. Since every effort was made to insult and humiliate the scalps, the most vituperative woman in camp was generally recognized as official Scalp Dance leader. The dance had its own rhythms and music (ibid).

Scalp-taking and its ceremonies were not mentioned in my extant primary source data, nor were extensive warfare or battles. Travellers instead usually witnessed preparations for defense or horse raids. Despite Alexander Henry's observing that "the Kootenays have the reputation of a brave and warlike nation" (1897:707), they seemed to have had more peaceful relations than hostile ones.

Chapter IV

SUBSISTENCE, ECONOMY, MATERIAL CULTURE

Kootenai subsistence, economy and material culture was frequently discussed by the explorers, trappers and traders, as these aspects of life were naturally of concern for them. They needed to know ways to survive and travel through the Kootenai country, and also the potential for fur trading and whether their trading relations with the native people would be amiable. Early travellers relied on the Indians as guides; this was particularly important in the densely forested mountains, where thick vegetation and downfall hampered mobility and visibility. The Indians also provided food for the whites; letters and journals often mention that when the whites ran out of supplies and could not kill game, they fortunately met Kootenais who either hunted for them or gave them dried fish, meat, bitterroot, camas or other foods.

Kootenai subsistence and economy was adapted to hunting and gathering resources native to the region. The Kootenai also travelled beyond their territory to utilize resources available in different environments, such as bison to the east and salmon in the Columbia River drainage.

Why the Kootenai had such a diversified subsistence and economic base is problematic. Data are insufficient to more than hypothesize why they relied on resources not native to their territory.

Two primary reasons would be economics and religious ties to the territory itself.

Certain economic factors enticed the Kootenai to travel for food to supplement their diets. First, hunting or fishing for animals that live in large groups is more economical than hunting or fishing for animals that live in small groups or individually. More food can be acquired through communal bison hunting than through hunting the more solitary deer, elk, mountain goat or bear. Communal fishing for migrating salmon, which are easily harvested as they gather below rapids or falls, is more efficient than fishing for individual trout.

The sheer size of bison and salmon is also important; there is several times the meat on a bison or salmon as on a deer or trout. Also, at certain times of year, such as midwinter or early spring, the native resource base may have been depleted, requiring the Kootenai to travel elsewhere for other resources.

Regardless of how far they travelled, or how much they appreciated other resources, the Kootenai returned to their traditional lands. This may have been due to their commitment to the spirits which inhabited their territory. Individual spiritual power certainly travelled with them, but other spirits and powers were embodied in or inhabited physical features or places. This was mentioned in the religion discussion of this paper as presented by Ray. Births and deaths of family, religious leaders, and chiefs within their territory must also have contributed to its spirituality and the Kootenais' attachment to the region.

Other factors must have strengthened the Kootenais' relationship

with their environment. Perhaps neighboring tribes restricted extensive movement outside Kootenai territory. Perhaps the Kootenai were indeed deeply attached to their home. Bison and salmon may not have been dietary necessities; the Kootenai may have liked the change from their daily subsistence.

Hopefully future archaeological investigations will clarify the proportion of native foods to non-native ones. Archaeological data might contribute to a better understanding of whether the Kootenai exhibit characteristics belonging more to the Plains Culture Area (with Plateau influence) or to the Plateau Culture Area (with Plains influence). Wissler (1926) delineated culture areas by sets of trait complexes. He stated "in each case the basic resources chosen as the chief sustenance determined the extent of the culture type" (1926:221). This statement cannot be applied to the Kootenai, as they had a much more diversified resource base. They relied on the chief sustenance of the Plains, bison, as well as that of the Plateau, fish, in addition to the varied ungulates and vegetation in their intermountain region.

Kootenai hunting and gathering followed an annual, or seasonal, cycle. All three kootenai consultants described their subsistence in terms of the annual plant cycle, as do secondary sources. Malouf attests to their following the natural plant life:

the natural life zones at various elevations made it possible for the intermountain natives Kootenai to follow the maturation of their favorite plants up the hillsides, and permitted a greater variety of plant foods to be sought over an extended season (1956:46).

Vegetal food gathering was done by women, with occasional assistance from men. Gathering was usually done individually or in small groups, but sometimes members from various bands would join together, particularly for extensive travelling for resources such as bitterroot and camas. Schaeffer stated that "during the summer months women from Columbia Lakes frequently travelled south for root gathering, stopping at Tobacco Plains for bitterroot, continuing to the Libby section for camas" (1940:40).

The first plant to be gathered in the spring was the sunflower. The roots and seeds were utilized. Next, about May, bitterroot was gathered, dried in the sun, and put away for winter. Point witnessed the Flathead Indians digging for bitterroot around Fort Missoula. They used a stick with a claw on the end to dig it (Point 1967:166). Camas was gathered in June and July. Madeline Couture stated that they distinguished between the male and female plants and that the larger males were preferred (Interview 1982). Camas was prepared for storage by baking in pits. The pits were first lined with embers and hot rocks, then vegetation such as alder twigs, snowgrass and moss; the camas was mixed with wild onions and placed on the rocks. A layer of dirt was put down, then another layer of camas. This was topped with a layer of dirt and tree bark. Baking took an average of three days. The woman in charge held great responsibility, for if the camas was not baked thoroughly it would not preserve well. Father Nicholas Point noted that "to succeed, a great deal of care, skill and experience is required. Hence success at this undertaking is a mark of distinction in women" (1967:166).

David Thompson related that he ate some camas that had been sotred for 36 years which tasted fine (1915:413). Point discussed camas and bitterroot:

On this plain, called Peter's Cave, there was an abundance of camass. The flower of this plant is a beautiful blue in color and makes the plain in which it abounds look like a lake. The folower of the bitterroot, has shades of rose. The roots differ greatly in shape. The bitterroot's is long and odd-looking. That of the camass is like that of an onion, which it also resembles in the disposition of its layers inside. The bitterroot is indeed so bitter to the taste that a civilized mouth can scarcely bear it. The root of the camass takes something like a prune or chestnut. It is eaten with pleasure, but its digestion is accompanied by very disagreeable effects for those who do not like strong odors or the sound that accompanies them (1967:166).

In the Kootenai region bitterroot and camas grew in the drier, open park areas, which were interspersed throughout the mountains. These became centers of human activity.

Wild onions, carrots, turnips and rhubarb were also gathered. Various berries were also an essential food resources for the Kootenai. Serviceberries and chokecherries were the two principal fruits. In addition, huckleberries, elderberries and Oregon grape berries were harvested. The berries were often dried, or added to meat to make pemmican. Another food source was a hair-like tree moss, which was washed, beaten, formed into cakes, and then baked like bread. Moss bread was eaten primarily during times of depleted food supplies. While portaging Kootenai Falls in the spring, David Thompson and his men ran out of food. They came upon ten Kootenai and Lake Indian lodges; the Indians could only give them moss bread and dried fish. Schaeffer ranked tree moss as an important resource, particularly for the Lower Kootenai, and said that it was collected in the spring,

notably in the Columbia Lakes region, and then roasted in pits (1940: 38).

Congeaed sap was also eaten. The outer bark was peeled off and the sap scraped from the trees, preferably ponderosa pine. In 1842 Point observed Indians eating the layer which he termed "pellicle," between the bark and wood (1967:166). The sap was eaten as a treat, though also eaten in times of depleted food supplies (T. White 1954). Distinctive scars resulted from peeling the bark, and many of these trees can still be observed in the Kootenai region.

Another uncommon aspect of Kootenai culture was their cultivation of tobacco. The Tobacco River and Tobacco Plains were named after the plant grown there. Tobacco was acquired prior to white contact (Johnson 1969:16). It is not certain exactly what plant was raised or if the tobacco was a species of Nicotiana. It was probably not, since Thompson noted the Kootenais' desire for tobacco when trading. Thompson said that "Tobacco Meadows" was so called because it was "the place where the Indians speak so much of growing their tobacco" (C. White 1950:15). Spritzer states the Kootenai "raised only a small quantity of tobacco" which was "Kinnikinnick leaves" (1979:12). Most sources (see Schaeffer 1940; Graham 1945; Johnson 1969) state kinnickinnick and red willow bark scrapings were mixed with the tobacco prior to smoking.

Hunting also followed an annual cycle. Like vegetal collecting, certain animals were hunted at certain times, but were not restricted just to those times. The Kootenai hunted game native to their region, and also travelled to other areas for game. Animals most commonly

referred to in journals included deer, elk, moose, bighorn sheep, mountain goat and bear. Also hunted were waterfowl, and upland birds including grouse and ptarmigan.

Alex Lefthand stated that elk were the first animal to be hunted in the annual cycle, followed by bighorn sheep, and then mountain goats. Meat from these animals was dried and put away, and then deer were hunted. Winter had begun to arrive by then, so the people would move into the heavily forested areas. Big camps were located at Jennings, MacDonald Lake, up the West Fisher River toward Libby, and McGinnis Meadows (Interview 1982).

Thompson recorded that game was plentiful during the end of autumn, and scarce during summer. Game availability, as mentioned in journals, varied according to location and to the yearly conditions. In the spring, two years after Thompson said game was scarce in summer, he and his men had to resort to eating a rotted deer which "the Eagles had more than half devoured--it smelt strongly, but as we were without Food, we were glad to take what remained" (White 1950:26). Henry found mountain goats to be most numerous during the summer (1807: 691). Today game in the region tends to be most visible in late fall, their numbers diminish through winter, increase slightly in spring, but almost disappear in summer.

The Kootenai would use what at first might seem the disadvantages of the environment to their advantage. In winter they would drive animals into the narrow, steep-walled canyons with the help of their dogs. The dogs would either run the game down, or bring it to bay so the Indians could make the kill. The Kootenai also used

snowshoes and sleds to travel through the deep snows. Schaeffer stated:

the winter hunt is made possible only by the possession of snowshoes. The absence of this trait would have immobilized the Kutanai and reduced the scope of their winter food-procuring activities to extremely narrow limits within limited sections along the main river [Kootenai River] (1940:62).

Alex Lefthand said that when people tired of dried foods in the winter, they would put on their snowshoes and go out with their dogs to get fresh meat. They would kill only enough meat for the camp, and let any other sighted animals go (Interview 1982).

The meat from these animals was eaten fresh, and when possible dried for storage. Joe Antiste stated it was often smoked (Interview 1982). It was usually made into pemmican, combined with berries, pounded into balls, spread out and dried (Lefthand Interview 1982). Joe Antiste related that the dried or smoked meat of four-and-a-half deer, pounded well, could be stored in a three feet by two feet parfleche (Interview 1982).

Most hunting of native game was done in small groups or individually. Early travellers observed groups ranging in size from three or four, up to a group of twenty-six men and seven women (Thompson 1915:1xxx). De Smet witnessed them dividing "into small bands to go in search of provisions among the defiles of the mountains" (1906:204). The Lower Kootenai were known to have organized communal deer, moose or elk hunts. Simon Francis, one of Baker's informants, related that these hunts were called:

drive-hunting. Everyone went on the hunt. A place was found where the animals could be driven into a narrow place such as

between hills or mountains. Sometimes it was necessary to erect a barricade. The men who were more active would go out a distance and start the animals toward the barricade. The children, older men, and women would be stationed in such a way as to herd the animals into the proper enclosure. Men had been appointed to do the killing when the animals got to the barricade.

The women and children, with the use of sharp rocks, skinned the animals, prepared the flesh and hides for use. A religious ceremony of chanting, dancing, and singing was held to prepare the way for a successful hunt. A feast was held until each family was satisfied. Then the meat that was left was dried or smoked so that it could be kept for future use. When each one had all he wanted the camp broke up and the return journey started (Baker 1955:33).

Schaeffer mentioned that the Kootenai sometimes conducted winter moose hunts. They used hide canoes to transport the meat along the Spillmacheen southward to Tobacco Plains (1940:46).

In addition to using bows and arrows for the hunt, the Kootenai used traps, snares, and jumps, as will be described further in this paper. They acquired powder guns over time, perhaps first traded to them by the Blackfeet in exchange for horses.

The Kootenai, particularly the Upper Kootenai, placed great importance on bison. They travelled across the Continental Divide at least three times per year, usually in the late summer, autumn and winter, to hunt bison in the Rocky Mountain foothills. The Lower Kootenai often accompanied the Upper Kootenai; both were often joined by neighboring Flatheads and Pend d'Oreilles.

Early travellers frequently commented on the importance of bison. Point, who accompanied the Flathead on at least four bison hunts, two in winter, one in summer and one in autumn, stated:

The buffalo, ... is a veritable treasure for the Indian. Hence it is toward the procuring of just this that the Indians direct

all their marchings, their occupations, their industry, almost all their desires. For this there is no fatigue they would not endure, no kind of death they will not defy. This innate proclivity attaches them so solidly to the nomadic life that only after long and arduous work could one succeed in making them enjoy the fruits of civilization (1967:154).

Ross Cox also noted the Kootenai's desire for bison, and their attempts to assure safety in hunting by allying with the Flathead:

As with the Flat-heads, buffalo is the cause of all their misfortunes; for although, as I have before mentioned, their lands abound in plenty of other animals, their hereditary attachment to the buffalo is so unconquerable, that it drives them every year to the Plains, where they come in contact with the Black-feet. In these contests they are generally victors, but they always return with diminished numbers. They have latterly entered into a kind of alliance, offensive and defensive, with the Flat-Heads, by which they have agreed that neither party shall make peace with the Black-feet until the latter shall permit them to hunt without molestation on the buffalo plains (Cox 1957:264).

David Thompson and Alexander Henry observed bison impoundments in the northern Kootenai area, which must have been constructed in a distinctive fashion so that Henry was able to attribute them to the Kootenai. Henry camped at "Kootenay Parc," which Thompson had called "Kootanae Pound," and described the impoundment and a bison kill area:

Kootenay Parc, on the N. side of the river branch or tributary of the Kaskatchewan, is nothing more than a narrow slope of soil, covered with some small woodland grass, running obliquely up the acivity of the mountain for about one-fourth of a mile, where it ends at a precipice. Over this the Kootenays used to drive animals, after enticing them upon this narrow strip of soil. The place appears perfectly well adapted for this purpose; for no animal could avoid being killed by the fall, or at least so maimed as to escape (1897:690-1).

Henry noted how the Kootenai would travel to this vicinity for the rich resources:

formerly that nation frequented this place to make dried provisions, for which purpose it must have been convenient,

as buffalo and sheep are always more numerous than in any other place. Moose and red deer elk are also plenty; jumping deer mule deer , grizzly bears, and other animals perculiar to the country are also found here (1897:689).

Female bison were preferred over males. Point stated that "for the Indian life the female buffalo is virtually the best food on this earth" (1967:154) and that "males are not as good as females for the table" (1967:166). Point also noted that bighorn sheep meat was preferred just behind bison in taste, and that elk was comparable to bison, especially the snout. In mentioning "elk" he may have been using the European term for "moose" as moose nose is considered, even today, somewhat of a delicacy, and elk nose is rarely if ever eaten.

Point accompanied a group of Kootenai, Flathead, Coeur d'Alene and Spokanes on a winter bison hunt that lasted from December to April. He gives no reasons for such a lengthy hunt. Schaeffer's informants estimated their bison hunts were only around ten days in duration (n.d.). During this hunt, Point observed a division of labor. While travelling, the women were responsible for the baggage and helped to keep the animals (horses and dogs) together. They also cared for the children. At the campsites the women erected the lodges, which were set in circles for defensive reasons, cut firewood, and prepared food. Point apparently respected the responsibility, roles and duties of women, determining that "after the women only the grand chief had the most responsibility on his shoulders (1967:166).

All bison parts were utilized. Meat was eaten fresh and was also dried or made into pemmican. Bison skins were trade items, although some were made into lodge coverings, blankets, clothing or

other items. The dried bison meat and other parts were packed back to the people's home areas. Spritzer states that on the snowshoe winter hunts, the bison products were packed out "in relays, each man carrying a load for about two miles" (1979:9). Schaeffer stated that Kootenai "Indians of the older generation still recall assisting ..." in using the hide canoe for "ferrying stores of bison meat down the Flathead river after the winter hunt" (1940:46). Mounted hunts were made in the summer and autumn; the meat was packed in parfleches on the horses.

While bison was of great importance to the subsistence and economy of the Upper Kootenai, it was less significant to the Lower Kootenai. Instead they relied more heavily on fish. Various types of fish were caught. Henry noted that for the Lower Kootenai, "salmon and other fish seem to be their principal food" (1897:710). Trout and sturgeon were also caught.

Fishing, like hunting and gathering, followed an annual cycle. According to Schaeffer (n.d.) the majority of fishing was done in the spring. People would gather, among other places, near Bonner's Ferry, where fish traps were set in the creeks emptying into the Kootenai. The fact that the Lower Kootenai conducted an annual fish festival in the spring, is evidence of the importance of fish in their diet. De Smet witnessed and described the festival in 1845.

I arrived among the Arcs-a-Plats in time to witness the grand fish festival, which is yearly celebrated; the men only have the privilege of assisting there at. Around a fire fifty feet long, partially overlaid with stones the size of turkey's egg, eighty men range themselves; each man is provided with an osier vessel, cemented with gum and filled with water and fish. The hall where this extraordinary feast is celebrated is constructed of rush mats, and has three apertures, one at either extremity for the entrance of guests;

the middle one serves for transporting the fish. All preparations being complete, and each man to his post, the chief, after a short harangue of encouragement to his people, finishes by a prayer of supplication to the Great Spirit, of whom he demands an abundant draught. He gives the signal to commence, and each one, armed with two sticks flattened at the extremity, makes use of them instead of tongs, to draw the stones from the embers, and put them in his kettle. This process is twice renewed, and in the space of five minutes the fish are cooked. Finally, they squat around the fire in the most profound silence to enjoy the repast, each trembling lest a bone be disjoined or broken--an indispensable condition of a plentiful fishery. A single bone broken would be regarded as ominous, and the unlucky culprit banished from the society of his comrades, lest his presence should entail on them some dread evil (de Smet 1906:198).

In addition to hooks and lines, Kootenai fishing technology included nets, weirs and traps. These were constructed primarily of split roots (Hodge 1907:741). Weirs were

built across the outlets of sloughs and ponds left by the river's receded spring floodwater. A fishing chief supervised the building of the traps or weirs. These devices were very difficult to set and required skilled divers to secure them to the bottom of a stream. After a short period, fishermen unloaded the entrapped fish into canoes with special baskets. The fishing chief then directed the distribution of the fish among the tribal members (Spritzer 1979:10).

Both the Upper and Lower Kootenai engaged in salmon fishing, although the Lower Kootenai depended more on this fish. The Upper Kootenai ate salmon, but Johnson found that "in remembered times they considered bison meat their staple menu item" (1969:61).

The principal salmon fishing area was along the Columbia River. Spawning salmon migrated in the fall to the headwaters of the Columbia, located in the northeastern Kootenai region. Salmon apparently could not migrate up the Kootenai River due to a "high rock barrier below Nelson, B.C." (Schaeffer 1940:27). Henry may have erroneously termed

another type of fish "salmon," but more likely he mistakenly called the river where he observed "salmon" the Kootenai, where he stated:

in summer and fall Kootenay river contains shoals of salmon, some of which are very large; but most of them are wretchedly lean, and such poor eating that the worst meat is far preferable. The vast distance whence these fish come to this river reduces them to mere skeletons before they reach the Kootenay house (1897:708).

Kootenai House is actually located near the headwaters of the Columbia River, some miles west or north of the Kootenai River.

From Kootenai House David Thompson discussed autumn salmon fishing. He and his men had built a weir across the Columbia River below Windermere Lake, a weir quite possibly modeled on those built by the Kootenai Indians. He stated:

At length the Salmon made their appearance, and for about three weeks we lived on them. At first they were in tolerable condition, although they had come upwards of twelve hundred miles from the sea, and several weighed twenty five pounds. But as the spawning went on upon a gravel bank a short distance above us, they became poor and not eatable. We preferred Horse meat (Thompson 1915:377).

He did not specify Indian groups when he described Indians spearing salmon and then preparing them for storage:

At some of the falls of the Columbia, as the Salmon go up, they are speared; and all beyond the wants of the day, are split, and dried in the smoke, for which they have rude sheds, and in their Houses, and often they dry enough to trade with other tribes (1915:377).

De Smet observed salmon in Columbia and Windermere Lakes, which, however, were in a "state of exhaustion" (1966:206). He also noted that the two lakes were covered by aquatic birds.

The Kootenai, generally Lower Kootenai accompanied by Upper Kootenai, were known to have travelled down the Columbia towards the

Pacific Coast. They informed Thompson soon after their first meeting that the ocean was a moon's travel away. Thompson observed two Kootenai Indians on the lower Columbia on July 26, 1811. Interestingly, one of these two Kootenai was a female berdache, a woman who decided to become, in effect, a man. She was also observed at Fort Astoria during that summer by Alexander Ross and others. David Douglas observed some Kootenai fishing at Kettle Falls in August, 1826 (Graham 1945:8).

The Kootenais' diverse resource base accordingly necessitated an appropriate material culture. They made extensive use of both horses and canoes for travelling, unlike most other Indian groups. The Kootenais made two types of distinctive canoes. One type is regarded by most sources (i.e. Turney-High) to be unique to the Kootenai; however, other sources (i.e. Curtis) observed other groups using this type. The bow and stern of this canoe angle down from the gunwales; this is similar to those canoes utilized in the Amur Basin of Siberia (Hodge 1907:741). Another style used by neighboring tribes was constructed with the bow and stern curving up and inward. The canoes were constructed of bark, over a frame usually made of cedar. Henry observed them made of pine bark. Thompson observed Lower Kootenai canoes in the spring of 1807:

The several small camps we came of Lake Indians all make use of canoes in the open season, made of the bark of the White Pine, of the Larch, they serve for two seasons but are heavy to carry. The inner side of the bark (that next to the Tree), is the outside of the canoe, they are all made of one piece, are generally eighteen to twenty feet in length to thirty inches on the middle bar, sharp at both ends (1914:389-90).

Thompson often traded with the Kootenais for their canoes. He additionally saw birch and cedar used. Canoes were treated with tree

pitch to make them waterproof. Dugouts were also utilized.

Canoe travel was apparently better adapted to the Lower Kootenai environment than horse travel. White travellers often switched to canoes once they entered the Lower Kootenai area. Henry noted that "their country will not admit the use of horses further north than the headwaters of Kootenay river" (1896:708). He also said that the northwestern region was not good horse country due to the "country being covered with wood, and the mountains steep, and intersected with lakes and rivers" (1896:710). The Lower Kootenai kept horse herds, but they tended not to be as large as the Upper Kootenai herds. Horses became quite important to the Upper Kootenai, especially because of their mounted bison hunts in the foothills. They became known as "horse Indians," while the Lower Kootenai were sometimes referred to as "aquatic" or "canoe Indians" (Baillie-Grohman 1916:49-50). At a Kootenai camp near Columbia Lake in 1858, Palliser observed eleven tents and 500 horses, some of which were very good ones, and wrote that although in many ways the Kootenai appeared poor, they were very rich in horses. He did not observe any saddles or bridles; instead the Kootenai used a long hide fastened around a horse's lower jaw (1858:138). In 1811, however, David Thompson observed Kootenai saddles, lines and saddle cloth made of bison hide (1915:459). Blakiston, who originally was in Palliser's party, observed a camp of six tents with about 150 horses at Fort Kootenay in 1858. He was impressed by the Kootenais' horsemanship and their adeptness in throwing the lasso (in Spry 1963: 172).

White travellers often obtained horses from the Kootenai through purchase and trade. It is not definitely known from whom the Kootenai first obtained horses. Turney-High cites his informant Chief Paul as saying they acquired their first horses from "their friends the Cree at the time when the first white muskets came to the Plains" (1940: 70). Other sources suggest they were obtained from the Shoshone near the Beaverhead River (Curtis 1970; Schaeffer n.d.; Johnson 1969). Schaeffer states: "before the close of the eighteenth century they had acquired so many horses that they were able to barter a few to the Piegan" (n.d.). Teit and Boas believe the Flathead were the first to have horses, about 1600, whereupon the horses dispersed throughout the northwest (1973:304).

Raids were often made by other groups for Kootenai horses, just as the Kootenai raided other groups. Thompson often commented on Blackfeet raiding the Kootenai. During Thompson's first visit to the Kootenai, the Kootenai complained that many of their horses had been stolen by the Blackfeet. A group of Blackfeet accompanying Thompson on this visit stole a number of horses from the Kootenai at night. One Blackfeet tried to steal a Kootenai horse right in front of the group. He was admonished by a chief, who said "that when he wanted Horses, he went & took them from their enemies bravely" (Thompson 1915:6). Five Kootenai horses, and one of Thompson's, were stolen that night. The Kootenais complained to Thompson and planned for a time to retaliate. Henry observed the Blackfeet also raiding the Flathead (1896:700).

Wild horses were mentioned by early travellers in the Kootenai region. Thompson and Henry, among others, observed the Kootenais

capturing some of these horses. Henry described this:

Wild horses are also common, and frequently seen in large gangs. They are caught in winter, when the snow is deep, by running them down with relays of fresh horses, or driving them up the mountains in the deepest snow, or into some narrow mountain pass. A noose is thrown about their neck; they are taken exhausted, instantly mounted, and broken immediately to the saddle.... Some of them are exceedingly swift, well-proportioned, and handsome beast, but seldom attain the docility of our horses (1897:708).

It may be questioned whether these horses were all wild or if some were Kootenai horses let loose for pasturing and gathered when needed.

Travel by foot was very common. An extensive network of trails existed throughout the Kootenai region. One was termed by Thompson as the "Indian Road." It followed the river south along the east bank until Fort Steele, or near the mouth of the Fisher River, where it crossed to the west or north side. Thompson also often refers to the "Flathead Road," which crosses over the Clark Fork River through the Fisher River and then the Thompson River.

In addition to the tools, implements and technologies discussed previously, the Kootenais used guns. They acquired firearms over time; some acquired guns prior to white contact, perhaps first traded to them by the Blackfeet. During Thompson's first visit to the Kootenai, the Blackfeet tried to dissuade him from the establishment of trade relations so that the Kootenai could not get white goods, including more guns and ammunition. One of the Blackfeet (Piegan) chiefs "complained of our having armed them, by which means the Flat Heads would also acquire arms to the Piegans great hurt. To this I replied that they themselves, the Piegans, had first and principally armed the Kootenays,

in exchange for horses" (Thompson 1965).

M'Gillivray also regarded the Blackfeet's opposition to white trade with the Kootenai as an effort "to exclude them from any share of our commodities, which they are well aware would put their enemies in a condition to defend themselves" (1929:56). In the summer of 1809 Thompson established Kullyspell House and met 54 Salish, 23 Skeetshoo and four Kootenai. The Kootenai were the only ones with guns and ammunition; in addition they had iron-headed arrows.

Three standard styles of bows were observed by Henry; horn, red cedar, and "plain wooden." Horn bows had a slip of ram's horn and were about three feet long. Red cedar bows were about four feet long. Plain wooden bows were made of cedar, willow or ash. Henry noted that these bows were a desired trade item by other tribes. Kootenai arrows were longer than those of the Indians seen by Henry east of the mountains (1897:713).

Other tools and implements were made from "horn, bone, or antler, rather than stone ..." (Schaeffer 1940:62). Schaeffer states that these resembled Plateau items and stated that this "serves to link the Northern Plateau with the northern forest area" of the Kootenai (ibid).

Basketry was of great importance to the Kootenai. They used cedar and pine bark to make many different items. Uses for baskets included water carrying, food cooking, and berry picking. Palliser observed no eating utensils (although mountain goat horn spoons exist in contemporary Kootenai material culture collections), but he did see plates and dishes of basket work made from pine roots (1968:138).

Their basketry was exceptional enough that Curtis stated: "the creative instinct of the Kutenai women found expression chiefly in cedar-root basketry" (1970:126). The Kootenai also made rather rough, molded pottery. They acquired clay from local creek bottoms. Schaeffer stated: "the Lower Kutenai seldom made pottery and then only during visits to their upriver kinsmen" (1952:2). The Lower Kootenai relied more on basketry than did the Upper Kootenai.

Kootenai clothing is infrequently mentioned in the primary sources. It is generally described as being similar to typical Plains clothing. Maximilian described typical Blackfoot clothing and regarded the "finest shirts" to be made from Bighorn sheep skin, decorated with dyed porcupine quills and sky-blue glass beads. He also noted leggings and buffalo robes. He described women's dresses to look like a long shirt, decorated with fringe and dyed porcupine quills (1966:101-103). Maximilian and Henry both mentioned that yellow dyes were attained from a yellow moss which grows in fir trees, and Maximilian noted that red dye was made from a "certain root" (1966:104).

Hector, a member of Palliser's party, observed a campsite at Vermillion Plain, where fire was used to convert oxide into red ochre. This was then used as a trade item to the Blackfeet and others (Palliser 1968:301). Maximilian observed another trade item, a root which he said smelled like "Foenum Graecum" and was traded to many Indian groups, including the Cree and Ojibways (1966:100).

The most common Kootenai tobacco pipes were the tubular, platform, elbow, kuhn-kunszakh, and blade styles. Stems averaged one foot in length. Pipestone was quarried in the Kootenai region or

acquired through trade (T. White 1951:6-10).

The Kootenai were also known to have maintained calendars. They counted days and marked special occasions by tying knots in small ropes. Special occasions were marked by tying a bow on a know (Malouf and White 1953). Keeping count of days and events enabled the Kootenai to tell de Smet exactly how long it had been since they last saw him.

Kootenai lodging reflected adaptive responses to their environment. The Upper and Lower Kootenai possessed different types of lodges, each better adapted to the resources within their respective areas, and to their degree of mobility. The Upper Kootenai had pole, bough or bark-covered structures which they would leave and then refurbish as necessary upon their return. After the introduction of the horse, they also used skin-covered lodges (Schaeffer 1940:62) which complemented and aided their mobility. Ross Cox observed bison and moose skin covers at a Flathead village; it is possible that the Kootenai utilized the same covers. Henry observed an Upper Kootenai campsite at Kootenai Plains

where the wood of the tents was still standing. Some of these were constructed with poles like those of our Plains Indians, and I presume had been covered with leather in the same manner; but the greater part were built to be covered with pine branches and grass, and some were made of split wood thatched with grass. Opposite this plain, on the S. side of the river, are the remains of several more camps, where all the huts or tents were formed of split wood, thatched with grass and branches (1897:687).

Palliser came upon a Kootenai campsite south of Henry's site.

He saw

a few recently deserted tents of the Kooteanie Indians; these, unlike the buffalo skin lodges of Indians on the eastern side of the Rocky Mountains, are formed of flat boughs of the cypress [probably cedar] and prush [hemlock], and are covered with

birch bark (1968:276).

The Lower Kootenai were less mobile than the Upper Kootenai. This is reflected in their more permanent, mat-covered lodges. They also lived in tipis similar to the Upper Kootenai, except they were usually hemp mat covered, primarily due to a lesser availability of animals which produce large skins, such as bison. They were known to have constructed long houses in the winter, which several families built and inhabited. "These houses consisted of simple bipod frames covered with the same matting used in the summer tents. A single lodge held up to eight families. In the early summer, each family took away its portion of the long house cover and built an individual tipi" (Spritzer 1979:14-15).

The Kootenais' material culture was well adapted to the region's environmental conditions.

Chapter V

SUMMARY

Ethnohistorical data are presented in this thesis to substantiate the hypothesis that the Kootenai Indians demonstrated a specialized and unique adaptation to a unique environmental setting. Their culture represented adaptive strategies responsive to an isolated, forested mountain environment, which possessed a diverse yet distinctive set of resources. Reeves made a similar statement, particularly based on archaeological data:

The concept that the Kootenay were people adapted to a unique environmental area, the Rocky Mountains, with principal subsistence resources of both the Plains (bison) and the Plateau (fish), is generally not evident in the literature on the area and its people. We argue that the Northern Rocky Mountains contained a distinctive set of resources--bison, other ungulates, fish, and lithics. These were altitudinally and latitudinally seasonally stratified, between the Kootenay River valley on the west and the eastern Foothills. The archaeological record ... suggests a complex land use pattern....

The Northern Rocky Mountains is in our opinion a distinctive cultural ecological area (1982:50-51).

It was the intent of this paper to test my hypothesis by using data in the ethnohistoric record, just as Reeves formulated his statement based on the archaeological record.

The first Euroamericans to enter the Kootenai region frequently commented on the uniqueness of the Kootenai people. Their peculiarity of language and their exceptional honesty and integrity of character set

them apart, and were reasons often cited. More significant were the frequent discussions of the Kootenais' utilization of a range of resources and their adaptability and proficiency in obtaining them. Whites were impressed by the Kootenais' exploitation of game and plants native to the river valley region, but also by their reliance on animals, fish and plants which were outside the region. Also noted was the Kootenais' adaptability in acquiring these resources: individuals, families and bands could group together for hunting and gathering purposes. They could disband when resources were less plentiful. They were accomplished horse people, and horses were a good mode of travel to bison grounds. They were also very adept at travelling via canoes, which greatly aided their fishing. The Kootenai people had a sufficiently intimate knowledge of their territory, and its potential bounty and paucity, that they were able to thrive. The whites, however, experienced considerable difficulty and relied on the Kootenai for help in hunting, fishing and gathering foods which they could not always obtain themselves.

Resources present in the Kootenai region ranged from deer, elk, mountain goat, and mountain sheep, to various types of fish, to vegetal resources including camas, bitterroot and numerous types of berries. Bordering the river valley region were resources including bison and salmon, which the Kootenai extensively exploited.

Early travellers also frequently discussed the environmental setting of the Kootenai region. Steep, densely forested mountains, intersected by the Kootenai River plus numerous other waterways and lakes characterize the region. The Continental Divide borders the

territory to the east and north, the Selkirk Mountains to the west, and the Cabinet Mountains to the south.

Mention of the environment is most commonly referenced in respect to the whites' difficulties in hunting and travelling through the region. Whites relied heavily on the Kootenais to guide them through the region, show them the best passes and trails, and navigate the Kootenai River. De Smet well summarized the difficulties of travelling through this country. He noted the hazards of moving in the rugged, mountainous terrain, forested so thickly that they often had to cut timber to get through. Describing an area north of Tobacco Plains, he wrote that "some of the forests are so dense, that, at the distance of twelve feet, I could not distinguish my guide" (1906:200).

The Kootenai were able to use the environmental setting to their advantage. They used the drier, open areas to cultivate tobacco, and gather vegetal foods. They made utilitarian items such as baskets and containers, and most of their lodges from different products of the many trees. They were versatile in their modes of travel; in an area so abundant in bodies of water, they made extensive use of canoes. They followed a seasonal hunting, gathering, fishing, and settlement pattern, moving within the eastern and western mountain slopes, dependent on the time of year and extant resources. They also crossed the mountain slopes for other resources. Their religious cycle was associated with the seasonal cycle, exemplified by the number of spring ceremonies, promoting the gathering of people, or solitary utilization of certain areas at different times of the year. Generally, Kootenai culture developed primarily in response to the environmental setting.

The majority of ethnohistoric data presented in this thesis date from the period of 1800 and David Thompson's first contact with the Kootenai until about 1890, when the region was considerably settled by whites and the Kootenai were resigned to reservation and reserve life. This thesis intended to explore these data in an attempt to explore the hypothesis that the Kootenai people demonstrated a specialized and unique adaptation to a unique environmental setting. Unfortunately the ethnohistoric data are not descriptive and plentiful enough to fully substantiate and document this view. It is my contention that this hypothesis remains valid and supported; however, a confirmed definitive statement cannot fully be supported based solely on the ethnohistoric data.

The data gathered contained various weak points. First, the majority of whites did not remain in the region for a sufficient length of time needed to gain a better insight into their observations. Second, their concerns were more for their own welfare and promotion of their reasons for being there, than for recording native life. Thus what they did record of their travels was not usually information which contributed to an understanding of human and environmental interrelationships. Also notably lacking was information regarding social and political organization, and religious beliefs.

The purpose of this thesis was first to compile an ethno-historical overview of the Kootenai Indians and the Kootenai River valley region. This paper at least represents a beginning towards that goal. Further research is recommended, most importantly of journals, letters, and documents existing in Hudson's Bay Company records.

Cross-cultural, comparative studies of Pend d'Oreille and Flathead ethnohistorical data would also supplement the Kootenai data. Research and work conducted in other related fields, such as archaeology and linguistics, pertaining to the Kootenai were only minimally reported. Integration of archaeological data should help to document the uniqueness of the Kootenai, potentially contributing information regarding the origin of the Kootenai, and their length of occupation in this region, based on analysis including possible unique tool typologies and unique lithic materials. An understanding of the Kootenai would also be aided by better, more definitive linguistic data.

These types of studies fortunately continue to be conducted and published, and are contributing to a better understanding of the Kootenai people and the Kootenai River valley region. Hopefully this thesis will also contribute to this goal.

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