

Call number: 78-86

Name: Anfesia Shapsnikoff and Bill Tcheripanoff

Summary created by: Varpu Lotvonen

Date of summary's creation: 01/27/2014

Series: Tanana-Yukon Historical Society Recordings

Notes: Original on 7-inch tape, master copy on CD

Anfesia Shapsnikoff starts by telling a story that was told by blind man Cedar Sigrah [sp?] in early 1900s, when Dr. Newhall [Unclear] was still in Unalaska. Old Man Cedar was blind and he visited an Aleut house. It was sea otter hunting time when the story occurred, and the man stayed overnight in an Aleut village. He was proud and trying to be a good guest, so he only ate a little bit, but when everybody was asleep he went to the kitchen and scraped the bottoms of the pans and ate the leftovers. When he drank water out of a seal belly, it gargled and one of the people in the house woke up. Lying on his bed, he asked "Who is there?" but received no reply. Soon he shouted he would get out of bed to find out if he had to and Takhal [as Old Man Cedar was called, sp?] knew he had to do something so he said he was about to make a fire and make tea for the person who asked. The person said tea time is in the morning and not that time of the night when people are just getting good sleep. Then he asked "What are you doing in the fireplace?" and Takhal answered [in Aleut], "Nothing, oh nothing." Then one of the guys was going to punish him for waking people up, but Takhal said he was only drinking water because he was thirsty.

The people said to him that they offered him food and drink, but he ate like a bird and didn't want to eat with them, and that now they know he got up to eat the rest of the food that was left out there in the fireplace. That's how he got his name that means "he wants to eat but didn't."

07:17 The interviewer asks Anfesia to tell the story about the boy who went into the fog, and to tell it in English. Anfesia asks the interviewer if she could find the

spot in the recording [where she told it in Aleutian?], but then presumes that she couldn't. The interviewer says that Bill never referred to uncle [unclear, in Aleut].

Long time ago, when a woman had a daughter, she wasn't valued as much as they valued boys and so when there was a boy, an uncle went to see his nephew. The boy had to become a man and to survive in weather and to tough things out. That was what the uncle would do even when the boy was small. The speaker herself taught him cooking and taking care of himself so he could do that when his uncle was gone.

10:20 Anfesia starts telling the story about an uncle and nephew. As the story goes, the boy was taught how to build a baidarka over the winter by his uncle who showed him how to do it. In springtime, the boy was eager to try the baidarka out. A long ago, Aleut families lived in bays and points "but each group had to be better than the next one." The uncle knew a group of Aleuts that lived around the point.

First time when the nephew asked to go out with his baidarka, uncle asked him to wait a while because he was afraid there would be some blow and he wanted the boy to go out on good weather. The boy asked again and now uncle said ok, but only if the boy doesn't go out of his sight and if he doesn't go around the point to the next village. The boy promised this and got the privilege to go out and try his baidarka. He rode around in the bay and remembered to not go over the point although he wondered why his uncle said that.

As he was riding around in the bay, a big fog came down and the boy went to drifting since he had been told to stop rowing when a fog comes. When the fog lifted, he was over the point where his uncle hadn't wanted him to go. He didn't know this and he didn't know where he was so he started paddling towards land. Another baidarka was coming towards him. He wanted to get advice about his whereabouts and when the baidarka came up to him, he greeted the man and asked where he was.

The man asked the boy if he didn't know which way he was going, and if he didn't, why didn't he stay in his village instead of rowing around. The boy explained that

his uncle had forbade him from going around the point and that he didn't know where he was, and asked the man to take him to their village and let him stay until the fog lifts. The boy also asked if the man had daughters he could marry. The man said he has 2 daughters and that if the boy will find the shore, he'll let the boy marry one of his daughters. The boy agreed to do that if the man tells him which way to go. He pointed out land, and said he'll follow the boy. The boy rowed towards the shore, thinking that he'd marry one of the daughters, but the man waited for a while and then killed the boy with his spear, leaving his baidarka adrift.

The father [or the uncle?] came looking for the boy and the man [who had killed the boy] said he hadn't seen anybody around. The uncle searched the village but didn't find the boy, and he killed everybody in sight. The man who killed his nephew was with him all the time. Then the uncle killed the man, having killed the whole village that was there. Then he got into his baidarka and went home. He told to the mother of the boy that he was nowhere to be found and that he was sure the boy had been killed. Without his nephew, he couldn't carry on, especially since he had let him go with the baidarka and so he killed himself.

19:28 [Singing in Aleut.] That was sung by an old, blind woman from Attu. She was Jenny Kukoff's mother. Jenny was her only child and when Jenny got married, her mother was lonesome and would go to games [?] and sing this chant. One time when she was asked to sing a song, she sang this one and said that it was for her daughter who is away.

[Another song in Aleut.] This song says "I don't want you to be crying. I didn't give you to be married so you would be abused and cry, but being alone I have to think of that. Maybe you're crying, maybe you are happy." [Singing again.]

[Unclear question. Recording on the other side of the tape is bleeding through badly. Singing another song. Break in the recording]

At 25:06 another recording starts with Bill Tcheripanoff's voice singing. The interviewer asks what that song was about and the man says it was "about that

lady again.” The interviewer asks him to tell about it again on this tape. He says he never knew that lady but would like to see her. He doesn’t know who it is. The interviewer asks if he’s been dreaming about her, but he says he hasn’t. She’s just in his mind all the time. After that, he got her and slept with her in the bed [? Quite unclear].

[Singing another song.]

29:13 The interviewer asks what the song was about and he says it was about a young lady whose boyfriend was out hunting sea otters [unclear talking]. She looked out of the window every day until one day she saw him coming home. [Unclear due to opera music bleeding through from the other side of the tape.] There was a celebration. [Unclear talking. Talking in Aleut.]

35:53 The interviewer asks what that was about, and the man tells that it was about a man who was [unclear] whole spring. [Unclear talking.] Father didn’t want to let him go out until one day father let him go. He warned the boy to not go over a point, but while the boy was out, he got lost. Pretty soon he saw a boat coming towards him and this man asked him where he comes from. The boy said he [unclear]. He said he got lost out there. The man had lost a daughter and can’t see home so he’s nervous. [Unclear.] The man said that the boy should go right in front of him if he wants to go to his village. He let the boy go about 50 yards and killed him with a spear.

Later, the father of the boy went looking for him. He heard the man talking about what he had done to the boy and [unclear]. [Unclear talking.] Something like a drum or something to make noise with. He went to the man first [unclear]. He killed two boys right in that bed and went away. While he was going home, he got a halibut. [Unclear talking.]

40:04 Another song. Talking in Aleut.

At 46:43 the interviewer asks what that story was about and the man explains it’s a story about the man. The man [unclear] and he went back to that other lady and finally the lady found out and he killed the lady right there and killed the husband too. He did that because the man was fooling [with] his wife.

47:38. The interviewee sings a song. The interviewer asks what that song was about and the man tells it's a game song that they sing about the sea lion.

The interviewer asks if something happened to the man who in the previous story killed the man and the woman. The interviewee said that a man didn't kill anything but a woman did. She killed the other woman and her own husband. She was jealous about her husband. [Unclear talking.] The interviewer says they used to gamble away everything, and the interviewee says they bet lots of stuff. They bet baidarkas, but had never heard about gambling away wives. He says that one man bet on his baidarka against another baidarka and the other guy won. [Unclear talking.]

52:13 Talking in Aleut. [Singing.] Talking in Aleut.

56:36 The interviewer asks what story was about and the man says it was about a boy. There was a lady who sent a black crow to a Native village to bum some blubber from the village. She sent them out long time. A mother went after her son and the son sang that to her [? Unclear due to opera music bleeding through.] He gave him seal blubber. The boy ate the chief's son's baidarka and the boss killed the boy. [Unclear due to music bleeding through.] [Singing.]

[End of the recording.]