

Tiyam - Fall

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Tiyamiki - Fall time

SHAHAPTIN INDIAN LANGUAGE I & II  
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SP96

THE SCHXUUP-TASH: THE PAINTED ROCKS"  
OF NACHES.

by Chief Slusk i n, 1917 interview at Awatam

No one knows how old the *Schxuup-tash* are, nor what they mean. *Schxuup* is an unexplained experience of sensing or seeing the movement of an intangible figure which is impossible to explain, and for the listener to perceive. This place is where you can sense an unexplained presence, but you can't see it nor can you explain this feeling.

*uyst* → the first of year or the first of month

The *Milma-ma* (Old People) tell us, " *Uuyt* (the first time), *niipt i pap* (two hands) were painted during the night, These hands were seen *maaysx maytski* (the next morning). After the hands, there were *ts'///ts'///* (circles) resembling heads; just like they are today. *tk'i* → to ~~the~~ look specifically at

There was a *nchii ya-waynat* (big flood) here, and after that when Man came, it was then that *Schxuup-tash* was painted. It was *tk'ini* (looked upon) as *tamanwit* (law) for the Yakimas. They came *sts'atpa* (in the night) and painted the hands. Then the other paintings were made. There were times when they were repainted in bright colors. After the *Shuyapus* (White men) came, the paintings were stopped.

The people who made the *schxuup-tash* were adult little people. No one actually knew where they lived. Someone would get a glimpse of one standing way up on top of the cliff, like a *lawiishk'ishish* (shadow) seen after *anashtipa the* (sun went down), or before sunup in the morning. Anyone, who saw them, would soon die. No one wanted to see them. It brought death (*-t'yawit*).

Just west of the cliff, where the pictures are, before you reach the bridge, on the Naxchiish River, up against the bluff there was a big *t'at'aa pshwa* (flat rock). On it were five *k'usi-in-mi watiksh* (horses hoof prints). One large, two not large, two, small, not so large. The large hoof print was the *talaayi* (stallion), the medium one was *ayatuks* (mare); the smallest prints were *k'ayik* (colt). In these five hoof prints was the prediction (*tiixwat*) that the Indians would raise horses all over this part of the land. That rock with hoof tracks may still be there unless someone took it away or blasted it to pieces. It should still be there.

*maaysx maytski* - the next day (a general term)

Nuwaytut was a child when she accompanied her parents to hunt, fish and dig roots in the mountains in the *Taytin* and upper *Naxchiish* area, when she saw the P'uk't'uk-nim (Rock Pictographs). She said, "small children were often left among rocks at the cliff, at night, in hopes that they might see one of those *watit'aas*." When the *Watit'aas* communicated with the child, he or she was given this power by the "little people, and they had strong *tamanwas* (medicine power). It was good for a child of about five or six years to see the *watit'aas*, but it was death for a grown person.

"Before the white people settled around here, no one could destroy the P'uk't'uk-nim. If the paint was rubbed off, or smeared with mud, the next morning it would be all fresh and bright as ever. The Little *Watit'aas* watched over the painted rocks and the markings, and they never let them grow dim. It is too bad that the white people are destroying the P'uk't'uk-nim. The *tamanwit* (law) of my people was painted on those rocks by the *Watit'aas*, the Ancient People."

There are many signs left by these Little People all over, in our canyons, along the Nch'i Wana (Columbia River) rock cliffs, and other places where they left their picture-writing on the rocks. No one can interpret their meaning but it is believed they were left there for a reason.

Slusk In

Pamta  
Pamta

Wina-t-Chii  
to go now to drink  
the place of the  
moving water

t → changes to a  
noun  
k - to a command

Waxka Ka - the city of Toppenish

The place of  
the umbrella

kunki-cook like shade  
kunki-ka headcook  
ikunki - today

Tamanwi → to create  
Tamanwika → the creator  
Tamanwi-t → the law  
Tamanwas → <sup>medicine</sup>power