



洪禮興博士、洪文興

Dr. Larry Grant and Howard Grant

作者：金綺文

Writer: Annie Qiwen Jin

尋回母語，尋回自己 洪禮興、洪文興兄弟的語言、 身份與和解之路

溫哥華的街道上，有些地名正在被重新書寫。

它們以英語和hənq̓əminəm語同時標記出來，後者是瑪斯昆國族人給這片土地取的名字，早在歐洲殖民者到來前，它們就已存在了幾千年。讓這些名字重新出現在路牌上的人，是洪禮興（Larry Grant）——一位89歲的瑪斯昆族長老。

他的弟弟洪文興（Howard Grant）則用另一種語言守護了這片土地：政治。2026年3月29日，洪文興離開了這個世界。他走後，哥哥仍在，那些名字仍在，那片土地仍在。

夾縫中的童年

1936年9月1日，Larry降生在卑詩省阿格西。他的中文名洪禮興，瑪斯昆名sʔəyələq。他的父親Hong Tim Hing來自中國廣東，付了人頭稅，用一個借來的名字入境加拿大。而他的母親Agnes Grant是瑪斯昆族人，為數不多的hənq̓əminəm語言流利使用者之一。十年後這個家中最小的孩子Howard誕生，他的中文名洪文興，瑪斯昆名字qiyəplenəxʷ。

他們父母的結合併非偶然。華人農民是當時唯一被允許在原住民保留地租地的群體，瑪斯昆部族擁有土地但以漁獵為主，不事農耕，兩個被歧視性法律推到社會邊緣的群體就這樣找到了彼此，相互扶持。

他們的孩子自出生伊始，便被加拿大法律系統推入一道夾縫。根據《印第安人法》，非原住民不得在保留地居住。所以洪禮興和兄弟姐妹們自出生後一直和母親一起住在保留地，父親則未能和他們住在一起。洪文興出生那年，政府發現Agnes嫁給了一個華人，隨即剝奪了她和孩子們的原住民身份。他們被認定為華人，被迫從保留地遷往溫哥華唐人街。經過長達三十四年的法律抗爭，洪家兄弟姐妹才被認定為瑪斯昆族成員。

失落的母語

洪禮興成年後做了四十四年碼頭工人和機械師，**hənqəminəm** 語言在他心裡沉睡了半個世紀。

“那是我自己做的決定，”洪禮興說，“不是被強迫的。爸爸當年很生氣，我能用**hənqəminəm**和媽媽交流，卻不會用粵語和他說話。”父母為此曾吵架。為了讓父母結束爭吵，洪禮興決定不再說**hənqəminəm**語。

彼時第二次世界大戰的戰火正熾。所有故事裡，正義者都被描繪為白人，日本人則是邪惡的代表。洪禮興常被人誤認為日本人。他在心裡想，如果他只說英語，人們就會把他當成英國人。但他很快發現，他永遠不會被那樣認可。他用了很多年來消化這一認知。

洪文興從來沒像哥哥們一樣學過**hənqəminəm**語，也不會說粵語。

重拾母語

1998年，洪禮興退休。洪文興勸他報名參加卑詩大學的 hən̓q̓əmiṇə́m 語言課程。洪禮興當時的第一反應是：“我都這把年紀了，學語言有什麼用？”但弟弟對他說，上語言課可以順便拿到卑詩大學學號，辦一張圖書館借書證——因為弟弟知道，洪禮興喜歡讀書。

就這樣，一張圖書館借書證，成了洪禮興回歸母語的契機。

62歲的他是年紀最大的學生，卻從不怯於糾正同學甚至教授。幾個月後，老師問他是否願意成為聯合教師。他一口回絕：“不，不。我已經五十多年沒說這門語言了。讓我先把課程讀完。”

不久後，卑詩大學人類學博物館館長Michael Ames來到瑪斯昆部族事務辦公室找洪禮興。他拿出幾張紙，要洪禮興簽字。洪禮興對他說：“你這副樣子，跟加拿大政府一模一樣——叫人簽字卻不告訴人家簽的是什麼。”Ames解釋說，那是教學合同。洪禮興最終簽了，直到二十六年後的今天仍在任教。

重拾母語的那段日子裡，洪禮興開始夢見離世的長輩用 hən̓q̓əmiṇə́m 語和他說話。在瑪斯昆文化里，夢見亡者，意味着他們在召喚你。“我很害怕，”他說，“但我和妻子探討了好幾個星期，她說，不，不，他們只是在鼓勵你，告訴你不要再停下來。”重拾母語，對洪禮興而言，也是在重新建立和先祖的連接。

尋根之旅

2013年，洪禮興、洪文興與其他家人一同踏上前往中國的旅程。因為他們得知，父親出生的泗門村因修建高鐵將被拆除，如果不去，以後就永遠沒有機會了。

洪文興最初有些猶豫。直到最後一刻，才決定與兄姊們一同前往。然而，一踏進村口的大門，一切疑慮都消散了。

“走進泗門村的那一刻，”洪禮興說，“一種情感湧上來，我的心對我說：我回家了。我屬於這裡，因為我爸爸來自這裡，我爺爺來自這裡。”

洪文興也說很高興自己去了。這段旅程被拍成紀錄片《祖根父脈》，它讓洪家兄弟們在自己的雙重血脈與身份間找到了平衡。

和解與原諒

在被問到hə́ŋqəmiñə́m語言裡，是否有一個與reconciliation（和解）對應的詞時，洪禮興想了想，回答說：“在我們的語言裡，最接近reconciliation這個詞的是‘q’wáitəl’，它的意思是放下你們之間的分歧，重新成為朋友。”

這個有數千年歷史的語言，早已將“和解”最深刻的本質編織進了詞語本身：它不是談判桌上的條款亦或政府報告裡的承諾，而是人與人之間，放下隔閡，重新走近。

然而時至今日，原住民權利仍未得到充分保障，寄宿學校

的創傷記憶猶新，土地問題懸而未決——正義尚未完全實現，要如何去原諒？如何實現和解？

洪禮興說：“我認為原諒對於自我成長是必要的。如果你不原諒那些曾經傷害你的事情，你就會被困在那種心境裡。你的心會停在那裡。但如果你原諒，你就能從那裡向前走。”

“我們之所以原諒，”他接着說，“是為了打開自己的心，讓自己能夠向前走。但所有的不公義，永遠不可能被徹底糾正——因為社會不公本身，已經被建構進我們所生活的系統之中。無論我們這一代人多麼努力，它可能在下一代捲土重來。歷史在一個大圓圈裡轉動。也許不那麼嚴酷，也許更加嚴酷，但它永遠不會消失。如果我們不保持警覺，它就會回來摧毀人們的心靈。”

這是一位經歷了一個世紀風浪的長者，對人類處境最清醒的描述。

洪文興的和解之路

那對於弟弟洪文興而言，他實現和解了嗎？

聽到這個問題，洪禮興沉默片刻，緩緩說道：“他從不是一個會把自己的想法和感受完全展示出來的人。但從我所能看見的，他為身為加拿大人而自豪，為身為瑪斯昆人而自豪，也為自己的華裔身份而自豪。那是他以尊嚴承擔着的一部分生命。我不認為他完全和解了。他只是學會了繞過去一些東西。”

“我自己，還有我們其他的兄弟姐妹也是一樣。我們學會了繞過那些我們曾經面對的社會不公，並且儘可能有尊嚴地活下來。”

和哥哥洪禮興不一樣，弟弟洪文興的一生，是另一種形式的和解路徑。他擔任不列顛哥倫比亞省原住民高峰會執行主任逾二十六年，參與推動了R. v. Guerin和R. v. Sparrow等具有里程碑意義的原住民權利案件，促成卑詩省政府2014年就逾百項歧視性法規向華裔社區的正式道歉，赴中國多次推動原住民商業群體融入更廣泛的國際對話。因為他的傑出貢獻，2024年，他獲頒不列顛哥倫比亞勳章；2025年，獲頒英王查爾斯三世加冕勳章。

他從沒有過機會學習hən̓q̓əmin̓əm̓語，也從來沒說出過q̓wáɫəɫ̓這個詞，但他用政治倡導，用他的整個職業生涯，實踐了它的含義——放下隔閡，重新靠近，哪怕那條路漫長而崎嶇。

地圖上重現的語言

如今，卑詩大學校園內的多棟建築和街道，掛上了用hən̓q̓əmin̓əm̓語書寫的路牌——那些名字是洪禮興提供的。

“把我們的語言以我們想要的方式呈現在那裡，”洪禮興說，“它讓人們意識到，我們有一些真正有價值的東西，可以造福於年輕人。它告訴人們，瑪斯昆族人仍在這裡，仍然能夠做事，仍然擁有我們的語言。”

他停頓了一下，然後說道：“這其實是一種巨大的和解—

一當每個個體重新學習語言時，語言能夠幫我們找回自我價值感、自我認同，以及文化意義。而這些，正是寄宿學校的同化政策試圖徹底摧毀的東西。”

語言，是曾經被摧毀的對象，也是走出那場摧毀的路徑。

畢生使命

洪禮興相信，hə́hə́mínə́m 語言終將被重新找回，但他也清醒地知道，那需要幾代人的努力。他說：“這是一個非常緩慢的過程。但我真的、真心地相信，瑪斯昆族人將會成功找回我們的語言，以及與語言相連的文化活動和文化符號的價值。”

在加拿大歷史上，對原住民和華人的系統性歧視與迫害是最黑暗的篇章之一。對親歷者而言，“和解”決不是一個能夠輕鬆說出的詞，而是需要用一生去治癒傷痛和修復廢墟、用智慧去展望未來的沉重使命。

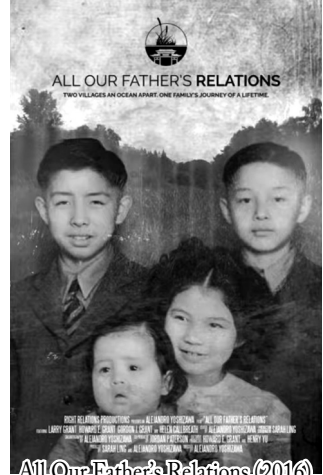
洪禮興和洪文興兄弟一個用語言，一個用政治倡導；一個走進課堂，一個走進議事廳；一個讓瑪斯昆的名字重新出現在路牌上，一個讓原住民的權利重新出現在談判桌上。他們都是 q̓wáítəl' 的踐行者——放下分歧，重新成為朋友。

洪文興已經離去。洪禮興仍在。

而那個詞，還在等待更多人學會說出它。



Awarded Honorary Doctor of Laws Degree
by Simon Fraser University 2023



All Our Father's Relations (2016)

– Documentary film chronicling
the Grant family's journey to their
ancestral village in China



The Grant family in Vancouver
after relocation from the Musqueam
reserve



Hong Tim Hing, father of Larry
and Howard Grant



Larry and Howard Grant (right) meet their uncle during the
filming of All Our Father's Relations



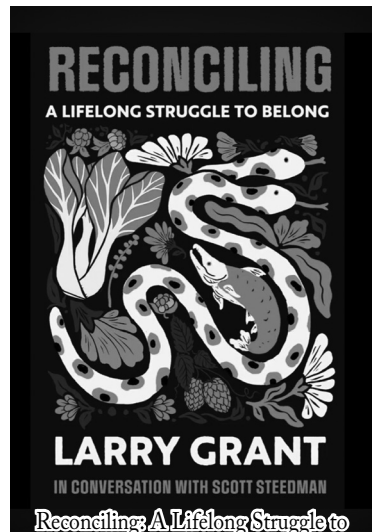
UBC President's Medal of Excellence Award
2019



Larry Grant speaking on language revitalization
and reconciliation



Dr. Larry Grant receiving an honorary degree at
Simon Fraser University 2023



Reconciling: A Lifelong Struggle to
Belong (2024) by Larry Grant, in
conversation with Scott Steedman

Reclaiming a Language, Reclaiming Oneself The Story of the Grant Brothers: Language, Identity, and the Path to Reconciliation

On the streets of Vancouver, some names are being rewritten.

They appear in two languages side by side — English, and *hə́łqəmiṇə́m*. These are the names the Musqueam Nation gave to this land, names that existed for thousands of years before European colonizers ever arrived. The man who brought these names back to the road signs is Larry Grant—an elder of the Musqueam Nation, now 89 years old.

His younger brother Howard Grant guarded the same land through a different language: the language of politics. On March 29, 2026, Howard left this world. After him, his brother remains. The names remain. And the land remains.

A Childhood in the Margins

On September 1, 1936, Larry Grant was born in Agassiz, British Columbia. His Chinese name is Hong Lai Hing and his Musqueam name is *sʔəyələq*. His father, Hong Tim Hing, had come from southern China's Guangdong province, paid the Chinese head tax, and entered Canada under a borrowed name. His mother, Agnes Grant, was one of the last fluent speakers of *hə́łqəmiṇə́m*. Ten years later, the youngest child of the family was born: Howard Grant, whose Musqueam name is *qiyəplenəx^w*, and whose Chinese name is Hong Mun Hing.

Their parents' marriage was no accident. Chinese farmers were the

only group permitted to lease land on Indigenous reserves, whereas Musqueam people held land but whose traditions were rooted in fishing and hunting rather than agriculture — thus the people from two communities pushed to the edges of society by discriminatory laws found each other and supported each other.

But from the moment their children came into this world, they were pushed into a crack in the law. Under the Indian Act, non-Indigenous people were forbidden from residing on reserves. Larry and his siblings had lived with their mother on the reserve since birth, while their father was barred from joining them. The year Howard was born, the government discovered that Agnes had married a Chinese immigrant and immediately stripped her and her children of their Indigenous status. Reclassified as Chinese, the family was forced to leave the reserve and move to Vancouver's Chinatown. It was not until after thirty-four years of legal struggle that the Grant siblings were finally legally recognized as members of the Musqueam Nation.

A Lost Language

Larry spent forty-four years working as a longshoreman and mechanic. For half a century, hən̓qəmin̓əm̓ lay dormant within him.

“It was my own decision,” he says. “I wasn’t forced. My father was upset — I could speak freely with my mother in hən̓qəmin̓əm̓, but I couldn’t speak with him in Cantonese.” His parents argued about this. To end their conflict, Larry stopped speaking hən̓qəmin̓əm̓.

The Second World War was raging at the time. Every story cast white people as heroes and the Japanese as villains. Larry was often

mistaken for Japanese. He thought if he spoke only English, people would recognize him as English. But he quickly found out he would never be recognized that way. It took him many years to truly absorb that truth.

Howard never had the chance to learn hən̓q̓əmiṇ̓əm the way his brothers did. He did not speak Cantonese either.

Reclaiming the Mother Tongue

In 1998, Larry retired. It was Howard who encouraged him to enroll in the hən̓q̓əmiṇ̓əm language program being developed at the University of British Columbia. Larry's first reaction, he recalls, was: "What good is learning a language at my age?" But Howard told him: why not take the language class — and while he was at it, get a UBC student number, which would come with a library card. Howard knew his brother loved to read.

And so a library card became the doorway back to Larry's mother tongue.

Aged 62, Larry was the oldest student in the class, yet he never hesitated to correct a classmate or even the professor. A few months in, the instructor asked whether he would consider becoming a co-teacher. He refused: "No, no. I haven't spoken this language for over fifty years. Let me finish the course first."

Soon after, Dr. Michael Ames, director of the UBC Museum of Anthropology, arrived at the Musqueam Band Office with papers for Larry to sign. "You're acting just like the Canadian government," he told Ames, "asking someone to sign without telling them what's

in the document.” Ames explained that it was a teaching contract. Larry eventually signed, and is still teaching to this day, twenty-six years later.

During those early days of relearning, Larry began to dream of deceased elders speaking to him in hənqəmínəm. In Musqueam culture, to dream of the dead is to be called by them. “It scared me,” he says, “but my wife and I talked about it for several weeks, and she said: no, no — they’re just encouraging you, telling you not to stop.” To reclaim the language was, for Larry, to rebuild his connection to his ancestors.

Journey to the Ancestral Village

In 2013, Larry, Howard, and other family members traveled to China. They had learned that Sei Mun Village — the village their father came from — was about to be demolished to make way for the high-speed rail line. If they did not go now, they might never have the chance.

Howard hesitated at first. It was not until the very last moment that he decided to board the same flight with his brothers.

But once he stepped through the village gate, all hesitation dissolved.

“The moment I walked into Sei Mun Village,” Larry says, “an emotion came over me, and my mind said: I’m home. I belong here, because my father comes from here, and my grandfather comes from here.”

On the journey back to Canada, Howard said he was glad he had gone. This journey, which was later made into the documentary film *All Our Father's Relations*, allowed the Grant brothers to find a sense of balance within their dual heritage and intertwined identities.

Reconciliation and Forgiveness

When asked whether there is a word in *hən̓q̓əmiñəw̓* that corresponds to “reconciliation,” Larry paused before answering: “The closest word in our language to reconciliation is *q̓ʷaltəl̓*. It means putting aside your differences and becoming friends again.”

A language thousands of years old had already woven the deepest meaning of reconciliation into a single word — not a clause in a treaty, not a promise in a government report, but something between people: setting aside what divides them and drawing close once more.

Yet the question presses: Indigenous rights remain inadequately recognized, the trauma of residential schools remains raw, and land claims remain unresolved. When justice has not yet been fully done, is forgiveness possible? Is reconciliation?

“I think forgiveness is necessary for self-growth,” Larry says. “If you do not forgive the things that have been done to you, you get locked in that mindset. Your mind stays there. But if you forgive, you can move forward from that.”

“We forgive,” he continues, “to open up our minds so that we can move forward. But all of the injustices will never be successfully

rectified — because social injustice is built into the system that we live in. Regardless of how hard we work in this generation, it may return in the next. History moves in a great circle. It may not be as severe, or it may be more severe, in the generations that follow. But it is never going to disappear. And if we are not vigilant, it comes back and destroys people's minds.”

This is the most clear-eyed account of the human condition one could hear from a man who has lived nearly a century of it.

Howard's Path

Had Howard, then, reconciled?

At the question, Larry was quiet for a moment. “He [Howard] was never one to expose all his thoughts and feelings fully,” he said at last. “But from what I could see, he was proud to be a Canadian, proud to be Musqueam, and proud of his Chinese heritage. That part of his life he carried with dignity. I don't think he fully reconciled. It's just something that he was able to work around.”

“And that's the same as myself and our other siblings. We have been able to work around all of the social injustices we were faced with, and survive — hopefully with dignity. That's all I can say about that.”

Where Larry chose language, Howard chose Indigenous political advocacy. For more than twenty-six years, he served as Executive Director of the First Nations Summit of British Columbia, helping advance landmark cases including *R. v. Guerin* and *R. v. Sparrow*. He played a key role in the BC government's 2014 formal apology to the Chinese community for more than a hundred discriminatory

laws and policies. He traveled to China on multiple occasions, working to bring Indigenous businesses and leaders into broader international conversations. For these contributions, he was awarded the Order of British Columbia in 2024 and the King Charles III Coronation Medal in 2025.

He never had the chance to learn hən̓q̓əmin̓əm̓. He never spoke the word q̓w̓alt̓əl̓. But through political advocacy, through an entire career, he lived its meaning — setting aside what divides, drawing close again, however long and difficult that road.

A Language Written Back onto the Map

Today, buildings and pathways across the UBC campus bear signs written in hən̓q̓əmin̓əm̓ — names that Larry provided.

“Having our language out there in the way that we wanted,” he says, “brings about an awareness that we have something truly valuable to the wellness of our young people. It tells people that Musqueam people still exist here, are still able to do things, and we still have our language.”

He paused, then added: “This is actually a huge reconciliation — when individuals relearn the language, the language brings self-worth, self-identity, and cultural meaning. And those are precisely the things the residential school system’s assimilation policies tried to destroy entirely.”

Language was what they tried to take. Language is also the way back.

A Lifelong Mission

Larry believes hən̓q̓əmiñəm will be reclaimed — but he knows clearly that it will take generations. “It is a very slow proposition,” he says. “But I truly, deeply believe that Musqueam will be successful in reclaiming our language, and the value of the cultural activities and symbols that are tied to it.”

In the history of Canada, the systematic discrimination and persecution of Indigenous peoples and Chinese Canadians is among its darkest chapters. For those who lived through it, “reconciliation” is not a word that can be spoken lightly. It is a lifelong mission — to heal what was broken, to rebuild what was destroyed, and to find, with hard-won wisdom, a way toward the future.

One brother used language, one used Indigenous political advocacy. One walked into classrooms, one walked into council chambers. One returned Musqueam names to the map, the other returned indigenous rights to the negotiating tables. Both were practitioners of q̓ʷaltəl — setting aside differences, becoming friends again.

Howard is gone. Larry remains.

And that word is still waiting for more people to learn how to say it.