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*Ralph Rinzler Folklife Archives and Collections*

## **Cultural Conservation Narrative Stage: Balladry continued: Conserving American Indian Culture**

Extracted on Feb-06-2023 05:12:21

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WEBVTT

00:04:16.000 --> 00:04:38.000

<i>Speaker 1</i>: This is rough. Saul help me out. Ah, Valanna. Yesterday when we were talking, you said, now that so few people learn -- why -  
- know the Luiseño language, why is that? What's happened, why do they not speak that language anymore?

00:04:38.000 --> 00:04:52.000

<i>Valanna</i>: Well, that I know of, when we went to school, Indian School in Rincon, we were little Indians, and we spoke our language.

00:04:52.000 --> 00:05:01.000

<i>Valanna</i>: And the teachers didn't like it. So, they told us that we shouldn't speak Indian. We had to learn to talk English.

00:05:01.000 --> 00:05:07.000

<i>Valanna</i>: But we didn't know how, you see, so we kept on talking Indian and they'd punish us.

00:05:07.000 --> 00:05:26.000

<i>Valanna</i>: That's why, all the kids were afraid. And that way, we had to learn just a little of what we know now because they didn't allow  
us; they didn't want us to talk Indian, when we went to school.

00:05:26.000 --> 00:05:29.000

<i>Speaker 1</i>: It's important to point out, too.. [[Cross Talk]]

<i>Valanna</i>: That's why.

00:05:29.000 --> 00:05:36.000

<i>Speaker 1</i>: In the Mission systems,our traditions were discouraged and we were punished for it underneath the Spanish.

00:05:36.000 --> 00:05:51.000

<i>Speaker 1</i>: And in two or three generations, we lost a great deal. We lost almost throughout California, native languages and traditions,  
and then after that, after secularization, we were under the Mexican regime and we went to work on ranchos.

00:05:51.000 --> 00:05:57.000

<i>Speaker 1</i>: And then after that was abolished, and the Americans came in, you see, we've dealt with three regimes. We had to please  
everybody.

00:05:57.000 --> 00:06:05.000

<i>Speaker 1</i>: And then when the the Americans came in, their federal schools, reservation schools, were detribalizing; that was the purpose  
of them.

00:06:05.000 --> 00:06:16.000

<i>Speaker 1</i>: They would take us and bus us off the reservation and out of the areas we were in. And it's true we were punished if we  
practiced any traditional arts or languages, and that's what we've been up against.

00:06:16.000 --> 00:06:23.000

<i>Speaker 1</i>: That's what I was kind of trying to do; was establish a bit of history and tell you who we were and where we've come from, and we've been through that.

00:06:23.000 --> 00:06:39.304

<i>Speaker 1</i>: The Spanish, then the Mexican, then the American. And at all costs, we've retained our Indian-ness; at least we've tried. At times when it was very difficult to resist, the only thing we had to resist with was our hearts. [[chuckle]] So, back to Velanna. [[laughter by both]]



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